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REV. THOMAS SCOTT'S

COMMENTARY

ON THE HOLY BIBLE.

THE

HOLY BIBLE

CONTAINING

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS,

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION;

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES, PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS,
AND COPIOUS MARGINAL REFERENCES,

BY

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THE BOOK

OF

R U T H.

THIS book is a kind of appendix to that of Judges; and an introduction to the subsequent history: and it is most probable, that it was written by Samuel, after he had anointed David to be king.—Ruth, a Moabitess, having been married to the son of Elimelech, of the tribe of Judah; after the death of her husband and father-in-law, accompanied Naomi, her mother-in-law, into the land of Israel, from love to her, and to true religion: there she was married to Boaz, a near kinsman, and thus brought into the line of David, and consequently of Christ the Son of David. The chief events occurred at Beth-lehem, the city of David; whose genealogy from Pharez, the son of Judah, concludes the book, and is attested by the Evangelists Matthew and Luke.—It is not easy to fix the Chronology of these events: they occurred in the days when the judges ruled; but there is no evidence to determine exactly under which of them. —The narrative itself is very interesting and instructive. It shews the condescending providential care of God to the minutest concerns of his people: and the circumstance of a Moabitess becoming an ancestor of Christ, seems to have been a pre-intimation of the calling of the Gentiles into his church.

CHAP. I.

Elimelech induced by famine to sojourn in Moab dies there, 1—3. His two sons, having married women of Moab, die without children; and Naomi, Elimelech's widow, prepares to return to Israel, 4—6. Orpah and Ruth, her daughters-in-law, propose to accompany her; she dissuades them, and Orpah returns back, 7—14. Ruth determines to go with her, 15—18. They arrive at Beth-lehem, and Naomi answers the enquiries of her neighbours, 19—22.

B. C. 1322.

1 NOW it came to pass, in the days [a] when [*] the judges ruled, that there [b] was a famine in the land: and a certain man of [c] Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

2 And the name of the man *was* Elimelech, and the name of his wife [d] Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, [e] Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah: and they came into the country of Moab, and [†] continued there.

B. C. 1322.

3 And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; [f] and she was left, and her two sons.

4 And they took them [g] wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other [h] Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

B. C. 1312.

5 And [i] Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; [k] and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

a Judg. ii. 16.
* Heb. *judged.*
b Gen. xii. 10. xxvi. 1. xliii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 19. Deut. xxviii. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 1 Kings xvii. 1—12. xviii. 2. 2 Kings viii. 1. 2. Ps. cv. 16. cvii. 34. Jer. xiv. 1. Ez. xiv. 13. 21. Joel i. 10, 11. 16—20. Am. iv. 6.
c Judg. xvii. 8. xix. 1, 2.
d 20.
e Gen. xxxv. 19. 1 Sam. i. 1. xvii. 12. Mic. v. 2.
† Heb. *were.*
f 2 Kings iv. 1. Ps. xxxiv. 19. Heb. xii. 6. 10, 11.
g Deut. vii. 3. xxiii. 3. 1 Kings xi. 1, 2.
h Matt. i. 5.
i Deut. xxxii. 39. Ps. lxxxix. 30—32. Jer. ii. 19.
k Is. xlix. 21. Matt. xxii. 25—27. Luke vii. 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. Elimelech seems to have been blameable, in removing from the ordinances and people of God. The famine was not so extreme but that others could endure it; and he evidently was a person of property, and not likely to want the necessaries of life, though Jewish traditions of his rank and dignity are entitled to little credit. (*Note*, 19—21.) Probably, he thought that he could live better and at less expense in the land of Moab, than in Canaan; but it terminated in the impoverishing and wasting of his family.—"Elimelech signifies *my God a king*, and "Mahlon" and "Chilion" seem to denote *sickness* and *consumption;* they having perhaps been children of a weakly constitution.

V. 4, 5. There is no reason to think, that either Orpah or Ruth was proselyted to the religion of Israel, before marriage; and consequently Mahlon and Chilion directly

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country* of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab, how
l Gen. xxi. 1. Ex. iii. 16. iv. 31. 1 Sam. ii. 21. Luke i. 68. xix. 44. 1 Pet. ii. 12.
that the LORD had [l]visited his people
m Gen. xxviii. 20. xlviii. 15. Ex. xvi. 4—6. Ps. civ. 14, 15. cxi. 5. cxxxii. 15. cxiv. 15. cxlvi. 7. Prov. xxx. 8. Is. lv. 10. Matt. vi. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 8.
[m]in giving them bread.

7 Wherefore [n]she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her: and [o]they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

n 2 Kings viii. 3.
o 10. 14. Ex. xviii. 27.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, [p]Go, return each to her mother's house: [q]the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with [r]the dead, and with me.

p Josh. xxiv. 15, &c. Luke xiv. 25, &c.
q Phil. iv. 18, 19. 2 Tim. i. 17, 18.
r 5. ii. 20. Eph. v. 22. vi. 2, 3. Col. iii. 18. 24.

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find [s]rest, each *of you* in the house of her husband. Then [t]she kissed them: and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

s iii. 1.
t Gen. xxvii. 27. xxix. 11. xlv. 15. Acts xx. 37.

10 And they said unto her, [u]Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

u Ps. xvi. 3. cxix. 63. Zech. viii. 23.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? *are* there yet *any more* sons in my womb, [x]that they may be your husbands?

x Gen. xxxviii. 11. Deut. xxv. 5.

12 Turn again, my daughters, go *your way*; for I am [y]too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, *if* [*]I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

y Gen. xvii. 17. 1 Tim. v. 9.
* Or, *I were with an husband.*

13 Would ye [†]tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters: for [‡]it grieveth me much for your sakes, that [z]the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

† Heb. *hope.*
‡ Heb. *I have much bitterness.*
z Deut. ii. 15. Judg. ii. 15. 1 Sam. v. 11. Job xix. 21. Ps. xxxii. 4. xxxviii. 2. xxxix. 9, 10.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and [a]Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but [b]Ruth clave unto her.

a Gen. xxxi. 28. 55. 1 Kings xix. 20. Matt. x. 37. xix. 22. 2 Tim. iv. 10.
b Deut. iv. 4. x. 20. Prov. xvii. 17. xviii. 24. Is xiv. 1. Zech. viii. 23. Matt. xvi. 24. John vi. 66—69. Acts xvii. 34. Heb. x. 39.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law [c]is gone back unto her people, and unto [d]her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

c Ps. xxxvi. 3. cxxv. 5. Zeph. i. 6. Matt. xiii. 20, 21. Heb. x. 38 1 John ii. 19.
d Judg. xi. 24.

16 And Ruth said, [§]Intreat me not [f]to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for [g]whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: [h]thy people *shall be* my people, and [i]thy God my God.

e Josh. xxiv. 15. 2 Sam. xv. 19, 20. Luke xiv. 26—33.
§ Or, *Be not against me.*
f 2 Kings ii. 2. 4. 6. Acts xxi. 13.
g 2 Sam. xv. 21. Matt. viii. 19. John xiii. 37. Rev. xiv. 4.
h iii. 11, 12. Ps. xlv. 10. Is. xiv. 1.
i Josh. xxiv. 18. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 29. iv. 37. Hos. xiii. 4. 2 Cor. vi. 16—18. 1 Thes. i. 9.

17 Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: [k]the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* [l]but death part thee and me.

k 1 Sam. iii. 17. xxv. 22. 2 Sam. iii. 9. 35. xix. 13. 1 Kings ii. 23. xix. 2. xx. 10. 2 Kings vi. 31.
l Acts xi. 23. xx. 24.

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violated the divine law; for which some think their premature death without children was a punishment. (*Lev.* xx. 20, 21.) But their marriage with Moabitish women was the natural effect of Elimelech's conduct, in bringing them acquainted with the women of Moab, and removing them to a distance from the worshippers of God. Thus they settled among idolaters; and had they left children, there would have been great danger of their being incorporated among them. (*Notes, Gen.* xiii. 10—12. xix. 1. 14. 26. 31—38.) Probably Elimelech died soon after he came into the land of Moab, and his two sons followed him before ten years were expired; but it does not appear, how long after their marriage this took place.

V. 6—10. Perhaps Naomi had staid in Moab contrary to her inclination, from regard to her husband while he lived, and afterwards to her sons: and she was now encouraged to return into Canaan, by hearing that the Lord had visited the land with plenty; for it would have been very discouraging for a destitute widow to return home in a time of great scarcity. (*Note,* 19—21.)—She seems to have been a person of eminent faith and piety; and to have diligently instructed her daughters-in-law in true religion, which she recommended by her example. They both had a great affection for her, and at first purposed to go with her, notwithstanding her afflicted condition; though Orpah's resolution failed upon the trial. Their good behaviour to their husbands, and to Naomi, likewise endeared them to her, and excited her affectionate wishes and fervent prayers for them; and they were all greatly distressed at the thoughts of parting.

V. 11—14. The custom of the surviving brother marrying the widow of the deceased, who had left no children, seems to have prevailed in other countries besides Israel; but no prospect of a settlement according to it, could possibly be held out by Naomi to her daughters-in-law. She therefore expressed great concern at the afflictions with which God had visited her, because she was deprived of all power to help them: and she intimated, that if they were not disposed to accompany her out of disinterested love to God, and to the people of Israel, she could hold out no other inducement. Upon this Orpah, not being prepared to venture all consequences, and renounce all her worldly prospects for the sake of religion, returned back to her country, her relations, and her gods, though with reluctance and tokens of affection for Naomi. (*Marg. Ref.* a—c.)

V. 15. Naomi was doubtless very far from desiring that Ruth should return: but she intended to make trial of her sincerity, and to lead her to consider how she could bear poverty and hardship, for the sake of the God of Israel; that if she were not in earnest, and only induced by affection for her, and some general convictions, it might now be discovered; or that she might set out with steady determination of mind, and entire dependence on the grace of God. (18. *Notes, Josh.* xxiv. 15—19. *Luke* xiv. 25—33.)

V. 16, 17. The example and instructions of Naomi

18 When she saw that she [*] was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that [o] all the city was moved about them; and they said, [p] *Is* this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not [†] Naomi, call me [‡] Mara: for [q] the Almighty hath [r] dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, [s] and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, seeing [t] the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in [u] the beginning of barley-harvest.

[*] Heb. *strengthened herself.* Acts ii. 42. Eph. vi. 10.

[o] Matt. xxi. 10.

[p] Is. xxiii. 7. Lam. ii. 15.

[†] That is, *Pleasant.*

[‡] That is, *Bitter.*

[q] Gen. xvii. 1. xliii. 14. Job v. 17. xi. 7. Rev. i. 8. xxi. 22.

[r] Job vi. 4. xix. 6. Ps. lxxiii. 14. lxxxviii. 15. Is. xxxviii. 13. Lam. iii. 1—20. Heb. xii. 11.

[s] 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Job i. 21.

[t] Job x. 17. xiii. 26. xvi. 8. Mal. iii. 5.

[u] ii. 23. Ex. ix. 31, 32. 2 Sam. xxi. 9.

seem to have given Ruth the most favourable opinion of the character and religion of the Israelites, so that she desired to have her lot with them at any rate: and for the sake of this, she was willing to renounce all her connexions and prospects in the land of Moab, and to embrace hardship and penury in a strange country. (*Notes, Josh.* ii. 4—6. 8—11.) She was also determined to cleave to Naomi, however destitute and afflicted, until death separated them. For her sincerity in this profession she called the LORD to witness, and to multiply her troubles if she did not fulfil this solemn engagement. Thus she renounced idolatry, and became a worshipper and servant of the living God, and "counted all but loss" for the sake of his favour and salvation; and her subsequent conduct proved that her faith was genuine and her profession sincere. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xv. 18—22. 1 *Chr.* xii. 16—18. *John* vi. 66—71.)

V. 19—21. Naomi had probably lived in affluence, and been much respected: her neighbours were therefore greatly surprised to see her return home, so altered in her circumstances and appearance; for she and Ruth seem to have travelled on foot, without any attendants, all the property which Elimelech had taken with him having been spent.—"Naomi" signifies *pleasant*, and "Mara," *bitter*. She humbly considered her afflictions as coming from the Lord's hand upon her and her family, for sin. For thus "the LORD testified against her, and the Almighty afflicted "her." Perhaps she considered herself as guilty, in not having left Moab immediately on the death of her husband.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

No judgment can be formed from mere outward circumstances, whether we have, or have not, "found favour "with God;" for whom he loves he often chastens for their profit, and leaves his enemies to be hardened in prosperity.—Afflictions should be submitted to as the Lord's rebuke, and they call on us, as by the voice of the Lord, to exercise repentance, and seek forgiveness: (*Notes, Am.* iv. 6—13. *Mic.* vi. 9:) for every endeavour, by carnal policy, to evade correction, will eventually entangle us in greater difficulties.—Those who, by inconveniences or hardships, are easily induced to change their situations, seldom prosper in this world; and prove that they do not understand the real causes of their uneasiness. For the displeasure of God, and the pride and impatience of our hearts, cannot be avoided by change of place or situation; and while these remain, they will produce misery whithersoever we remove. But when we are tempted to quit the ordinances of God, and the communion of his people, out of secular motives, we should remember Lot and Sodom. In such measures our children and families are deeply concerned; for if they are estranged from the servants and house of God, and brought acquainted with persons of no religion, or of a false religion, it cannot be expected, but that they will conform to their ways, and have their portion with them living and dying. Better would it be to be pinched with poverty, and worn down with labour, in the Lord's land, than to live in luxury and ease by hazarding such consequences. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxvii. 3. 16, 17.) For our earthly trials or enjoyments are of short continuance; death is continually removing those of every age and situation, suddenly breaking in upon the most endeared unions, and marring all our outward comforts: we cannot therefore too decidedly prefer those advantages which shall endure for ever, that we may be ready for every separating stroke. If however, we be constrained to dwell for a season in places of temptation, we should retire when the necessity ceases; and consider every rebuke in Providence as a call to us, to "come out and be separate" from the workers of iniquity.—When "the Lord visits his people in giving "them bread," they ought to be content and thankful, though they have not abundance of silver and gold: and the assurance, that he will supply the real necessities of his true servants, should encourage us cheerfully to cast our lot among them. In every situation and relation in life, especially among such as are strangers to the truths of the gospel, believers should aim to "adorn the doctrine "of God our Saviour in all things." (*Note, Tit.* ii. 9, 10.) And when they behave with prudence, integrity, meekness, and kindness; when they well perform the duties of relative life, and shew attention to the temporal comfort, and compassion for the sufferings, of those around them; and when they commend what is right in the moral and relative conduct of those who are not acquainted with spiritual things; they win much upon them, and render them more disposed to take in good part any endeavours made to do good to their souls. And thus, (beside the comfort of domestick harmony, which cannot easily be valued too highly,) the Lord often blesses such conduct, as the means of bringing those who were ignorant, careless, or prejudiced, to enquire after his truth and salvation; while the contrary behaviour of too many professors of the gospel, forms a grand objection against it in the minds of thousands and tens of thousands.—Many feel an affection for such believers as have been kind to them, and entertain favourable sentiments of religion, who are not decided in renouncing

CHAP. II.

Ruth is lead, without design, to glean in the field of Boaz, 1—3. He comes to see his reapers, and piously salutes them, and is saluted by them, 4. He shews kindness to Ruth; who behaves respectfully towards him, 5—10. He states what he had heard of her, prays for her, and shews her further kindness, 11—17. She returns to Naomi, and informs her of what had passed, 18—23.

AND Naomi had a [a] kinsman of her husband's, [b] a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name *was* [c] Boaz.

[a] iii. 2. 12.
[b] Deut. viii. 17, 18. Job i. 3. xxxi. 25.
[c] 1 Chr. ii. 10—12. Matt. i. 5. Luke iii. 32. *Booz.*

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and [d] glean ears of corn after *him*, in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

[d] Lev. xix. 9, 10. xxiii. 22. Deut. xxiv. 19—21.

3 And she went, and came, and [e] gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her [*] hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech.

[e] 1 Thes. iv. 11, 12. 2 Thes. iii. 12.
[*] Heb. *hap happened.* 2 Kings viii. 5. Esth. vi. 1, 2. Matt. x. 29. Luke x. 31.

4 And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, [f] The LORD *be* with you. [g] And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.

[f] Ps. cxviii. 26. cxxix. 8. Luke i. 28. 2 Thes. iii. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 22. 2 John 10, 11.
[g] iv. 11. Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. cxxxiii. 1—3. 1 Tim vi. 2.

all their worldly pleasures, connexions, and prospects, and joining themselves to the poor and despised people of God, for the sake of Christ and his salvation. They more desire "rest in the house of a husband," or in some worldly settlement or satisfaction, than that rest to which Jesus invites our souls; and therefore when fully tried, they depart from him, though sorrowful and reluctant. (*Note, Matt.* xi. 28—30. xix. 16—22.)

V. 15—22.

Nothing but a deep sense of the importance of eternal things, and a conviction of our guilt, and need of a Saviour; nothing but that faith, which is inseparably connected with true repentance and hatred of sin, and which works by love of Christ, and his people, his truth, ordinances, and precepts; will, in such a world as this, carry a man through all possible temptations. And therefore the Lord proves those who profess themselves his disciples, by setting the consequences before them in his word, and by some experience of them in his providence; by which they, who have not faith, are discouraged, and go back to their own people and idols: and this, though lamentable, is principally their own loss. We ought indeed greatly to desire the increase of true Christians; yet we should be cautious in our endeavours to multiply *professors*, lest we engage those who will betray the cause, which they are expected to defend. (*Notes, Deut.* xx. 5—9. *Judg.* vii. 2—7.) Especially we ought to examine, whether we ourselves are thus stedfastly minded, and determined to cast in our lot with the people of God, however poor, despised, or persecuted; and that living and dying, and for ever. We should enquire, whether this be our aim and prayer; whether the prospect of secular advantage have not some influence upon our minds; and whether, if that were withdrawn, or changed for the prospect of poverty and suffering, we should not be tempted to draw back. But if we are thus decided in our judgment for the Lord and his service and salvation, he will assuredly accept and provide for us; he will make up all our losses, support us under all our trials, and communicate unspeakable consolations; and while many "draw back unto perdition, we shall be-"lieve unto the saving of our souls:" nay, we shall even grow more determined by their apostasy, and by our own difficulties and temptations. If reduced in our circumstances, we shall often be more grieved for the sake of others, than for ourselves; the consciousness of our sins will teach us to submit to our trials, without murmuring; and our mourning will be mingled with heavenly sweetness.—While we remark, with compassion, the sad changes which numbers suffer, we should be reminded to prepare for changes ourselves, especially for our last great change; when the true believer will certainly find that all things have worked together for his everlasting good. (*Note, Rom.* viii. 28—31.)

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. *Marg. Ref.—Job* i. 2, 3.

V. 2. When Naomi and Ruth were settled in some homely lodging at Beth-lehem; the latter, expecting nothing in Canaan but a life of hard labour and mean fare, proposed to go and glean in some field, where she might obtain permission, for her own subsistence, and that of her mother-in-law, who probably was unable to endure the fatigue and heat of such an employment. The Lord indeed intended other things for Ruth: but he was pleased thus to prove her sincerity, humility, industry, and patience; and her dutiful affection to Naomi for his sake. Orpah could not have stood this trial: but had she been assured of a settlement in Israel, as desirable as that which Ruth at length obtained, she would have come also, and have made a hypocritical profession of religion for the sake of secular advantage. (*Note, Matt.* viii. 18—20.)

V. 3. *Her hap.*] This circumstance was *with Ruth* merely accidental, and not the result of choice or contrivance; but it was the effect of the Lord's secret direction, in whose providence great events depend upon apparently trivial incidents. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ec.* ix. 11, 12. *Luke* x. 30—37, *conclusion.*)

V. 4. *The LORD be with you.*] *Note, Ps.* cxxix. 6—8.—This emphatical expression occurs here for the first time in Scripture.—(*Marg. Ref.* f.) The name of Boaz signifies, *Strength is in him*, (*Note,* 1 *Kings* vii. 15—22;) and he was a "mighty man of wealth;" yet he personally superintended his own reapers.—The pious and affectionate language interchanged between him and his reapers, and which appears to have been familiar to them, shews that there were many godly persons in Israel, notwithstanding national defections: and it beautifully illustrates the genuine effect of true religion, in producing affability in superiors, and respect and affection in inferiors, and mutual unaf-

5 Then said [h] Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel *is* this?

6 And [i] the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, [k] It *is* the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab;

7 And she said, [l] I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath [m] continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, [n] my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but [o] abide here fast by my maidens.

9 *Let* thine eyes *be* on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not [p] touch thee? and when thou art athirst, [q] go unto the vessels, and drink of *that* which the young men have drawn.

10 Then she [r] fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, [s] Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, [t] seeing I *am* a stranger?

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, [u] all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and *how* [x] thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

12 The LORD [y] recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose [z] wings thou art come to trust.

h iv. 21. 1 Chr. ii. 11, 12.

Gen. xv. 2. xxiv. 2. xxxix. 4. Matt. xx. 8. xxiv. 45.

k i. 16. 19. 22.

l Prov. xv. 33. xviii. 23. Matt. v. 3. Eph. v. 21. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

m Prov. xiii. 4. xxii. 29. Ec ix. 10. Rom. xii. 11. Gal. vi. 9.

n 1 Sam. iii. 6. 16. 2 Kings v. 13. Matt. ix. 2. 22.

o Matt. x. 7—11. Phil. iv. 8.

p Gen. xx. 6. Job xix. 21. Ps. cv. 15. Prov. vi. 29. 1 Cor. vii. 1. 1 John v. 18.

q Gen. xxiv. 18—20. Matt. x. 42. John iv. 7—11.

r Gen. xviii. 2. 1 Sam. xxv. 23.

s 2. 13. 2 Sam. ix. 3. xix. 28. Luke i. 43. 48. Rom. xii. 10.

t Is. lvi. 3—8. Matt. xv. 22—28. xxv. 35. Luke vii. 6, 7. xvii. 16—18.

u i. 11. 16, 17. Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6.

x Ps. xlv. 10. Luke v. 11. 28. xiv. 33. xviii. 29, 30. Heb. xi. 8, 9. 24—26.

y 1 Sam. xxiv. 19. Ps. xix. 11. lviii. 11. Prov. xi. 18. xxiii. 18. *Marg.* Matt. v. 12. vi. 1. x. 41, 42. Luke vi. 35. xiv. 12—14. Col. ii. 18. 2 Tim. i. 18. iv. 8. Heb. vi. 10. xi. 6. 26.

z i. 16. Ps. xvii. 8. xxxvi. 7. lvii. 1. lxi. 4. lxiii. 7. xci. 4. Matt. xxiii. 37.

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fected good-will in all.—It is lamentably true, that such language as this is seldom heard in our fields, while the bounty of Providence is gathering in: but frequently the reverse; yea, whatever can inflame the passions, and corrupt the morals. So that a stranger, who should be occasionally present, would be apt to form a very different opinion respecting the religion of England, than Ruth did concerning that of Israel, from the conversation and conduct of Boaz and his reapers.

V. 5—10. There is a beautiful simplicity in this narrative. The servant's account of Ruth was suited to give Boaz a high opinion of her modesty, humility, and industry; and the discourse of Boaz with Ruth exhibits genuine humanity, kindness, and consideration for the stranger and destitute.—It seems evident, that the same language was understood by all parties, whether Moab, as descended from Lot and Heber, retained the language of their ancestors, or a dialect of it; or whether Ruth had learned the language of Israel, in Elimelech's family." (*Notes, Gen.* xi. 6—9. *Neh.* xiii. 23—30.)—"Seeing I am "a stranger." 'I am not of Israel, but a heathen, born and brought up; a Moabitess, unworthy the regard, and unmeet for the society of the people of God, even for that of the hand-maidens (13), the poorest of them; much less of the attention of one so eminent in Israel as thou art.' (*Note, Matt.* viii. 8, 9.)

V. 11, 12. Ruth had renounced the idols of Moab, and become the worshipper and servant of the God of Israel. In proof of her sincerity, she had left "the land "of her nativity," where she might have expected a comfortable settlement; and her parents, (who it seems were still living,) as well as her other relations and friends, to come to a people, with whom she had had no previous acquaintance, but against whom she had been educated in prejudice and enmity; and to attach herself to a poor widow, whom by her industry she must help to maintain. This she had done, because she believed that JEHOVAH was the only true God, and Israel his people: and therefore she desired to be associated with them, and to have the benefit of the ordinances and instructions with which they were favoured. (*Note, Josh.* ii. 8—11. *P. O. Zech.* viii. 16—23.) Thus she came "to trust under the wings "of the LORD God of Israel;" depending on his power, care, and love, both for the blessings of salvation, and for the things which were needful for the body; and seeking protection in every danger and alarm, as the chickens shelter themselves under the wings of the hen, from whatever incommodes or affrights them. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Matt.* xxiii. 37—39.) This conduct of a Moabitess had been greatly noticed; and Boaz had thence formed a very favourable opinion of her faith and piety. He therefore shewed her much kindness, encouraging her industry and affording her protection; and praying for her, "that the "LORD would recompense her work, and give her a full "reward."—In all ages and nations, conversion is substantially the same: irreligion or false religion is exchanged for the spiritual worship of the true God, through the appointed Mediator, and in his instituted ordinances; the practice of sin, for the pursuit of true holiness; self-dependence, for reliance in every thing on the mercy, grace, and providence of God; the expectation of felicity from the world, for his favour as our portion; and the company of the workers of iniquity, for the society of those who love and serve him. But many *circumstances* depend upon men's outward situation. Such as have godly parents and relations, are engaged in lawful and useful employments, and live in peaceable times, will not be immediately required to make the same sacrifices, as those who are called out of the families of embittered opposers, from occupations inconsistent with the precepts of Scripture, or in times of furious persecution. The more, however, men venture, renounce, or suffer for the Lord's sake, the clearer

13 Then she said, [a] Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken [†] friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be [a] not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

14 And Boaz said unto her, [b] At meal-time come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her [c] parched *corn*, and [d] she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and [‡] reproach her not:

16 And [e] let fall also *some* of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.

17 So [f] she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an [g] ephah of barley.

18 And she took [h] *it* up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that [h] she had reserved, after she was sufficed.

19 And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? [i] blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to-day *is* [k] Boaz.

20 And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, [l] Blessed *be* he of the LORD, who [m] hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, [§] one of our next kinsmen.

21 And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, [n] Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.

22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, [o] *It is* good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they [‖] meet thee not in any other field.

23 So she [p] kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley-harvest and of wheat-harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

[a] Or, *I find favour.* Gen. xxxiii. 8. 10 15. xliii. 14. 1 Sam. i. 18. 2 Sam. xvi. 4.
[†] Heb. *to the heart.* Gen. xxxiv. 3. Judg. xix. 3. *Marg.*
[a] 1 Sam. xxv. 41. Prov. xv. 33. Phil. ii. 3.
[b] Job xxxi. 16—22. Prov. xi. 24, 25. Is. xxxii. 8. lviii. 7. 10, 11. Luke xiv. 12—14.
[c] 1 Sam. xvii. 17. xxv. 18. 2 Sam. xvii. 28.
[d] Deut. viii. 10. xi. 15. 2 Kings iv. 43, 44. Matt. xiv. 20.
[‡] Heb. *shame her not.*
[e] Deut. xxiv. 19—21. Ps. cxii. 9. Prov. xix. 17. Matt. xxv. 40. Rom. xii. 13. 2 Cor. viii. 5—11. Philem. 7. Heb. vi. 10. 1 John iii. 17, 18.
[f] Prov. xxxi. 27. 2 Thes. iii. 10.
[g] Ex. xvi. 36. Ez. xlv. 11, 12.
[h] 1 John vi. 2, 13. 1 Tim. v. 4.
[i] Ps. xli. 1. 2 Cor. ix. 13—15.
[k] 1 Kings vii. 21.
[l] Isa. lx. 6. Job xxix. 12, 13. 2 Tim. i. 16—18.
[m] 2 Sam. ix. 1. Prov. xvii. 17. Phil. iv. 10.
[§] Or, *one that hath right to redeem.* iii. 9. iv. 6. Lev. xxv. 25. Deut. xxv. 5—7. Job xix. 25.
[n] 7, 8. 22.
[o] Prov. xxvii. 10. Cant. i. 8.
[‖] Or, *fall not upon thee.*
[p] Prov. vi. 6—8. xiii. 1. Eph. vi. 1—3.

evidence they have, that their faith is genuine, and that they shall "receive a full reward." The principle and the precept are in all cases alike; but the application varies, according as different trials are allotted in the providence of God. (*Notes, Heb.* xi. 8—10. 24—26.)

V. 14. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The *Midrasch*,' (an ancient Jewish book,) 'makes these words, "Come thou hither," 'to signify as much as *Come to thy kingdom;* and the morsel 'dipt in vinegar, to denote *the reproaches and torments of* 'the *Messiah*. Which is an argument, that they expected 'such a King as should be exposed to such sufferings, as 'our blessed Saviour endured; who saith in the Psalmist, '"They gave me vinegar to drink."' *Bp. Patrick.* The interpretation is indeed most absurd; yet it is remarkable as tending to prove that point.

V. 15—17. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Lev.* xix. 9, 10.

V. 18, 19. (*Marg. Ref.*) The quantity of barley which Ruth had gleaned, and the residue of her plentiful meal, which she brought to Naomi, shewed that she had met with uncommonly kind usage.

V. 20. Boaz had been kind to Elimelech's family, before his removal to the land of Moab: and Naomi rejoiced that his care of her had revived after the death of her husband, when she so much needed his assistance; and she besought the Lord to repay him with his blessing. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* ix. 1—3. *Phil.* iv. 10—13.)

V. 22. If Ruth had gone into any other field to glean, it would have seemed a slight put upon the kindness shewn her, as well as an evidence of an inconstant temper of mind, which might have given Boaz and his family an unfavourable opinion of her. (*Note, Matt.* x. 11—15.) Ruth persevered in her labour, and endeavoured to maintain herself and Naomi, by her industry for a considerable time; and was evidently prepared to do it permanently; before a favourable turn, as to her wholly unexpected, was given to her affairs.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The distinctions which we are apt to form concerning the persons and affairs of men, do not comport with the judgment of the Lord: and the gleaning of a poor Moabitess, who trusted in him, was deemed more worthy of his condescending notice, than the transactions of the greatest princes then living, which are now almost entirely consigned to oblivion! We ought not therefore to "mind "high things, but to condescend to men of low estate." —Honest industry, humble patience in poverty and hardship, and a willingness to labour for aged parents, relations, or benefactors, who are unable to provide for themselves, if these spring from faith, are both honourable and acceptable to God.—True religion will teach men to behave with propriety in every circumstance and relation of life: it will form kind masters, faithful servants, and harmonious families: it will produce mutual love among persons of different ranks; and while it engages the rich to

CHAP. III.

By Naomi's instruction Ruth lies down in the night at the feet of Boaz, 1—7. He acknowledges that he owes the duty of a kinsman, but shews that another has a prior claim, 8—13. He sends her away in the morning with six measures of barley, and she confers with Naomi, 14—18.

THEN Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, [a] shall I not seek rest for thee, that it [b] may be well with thee?

2 And now [c] *is* not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor.

3 Wash thyself therefore, and [d] anoint thee, and [e] put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and * uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

6 And she went down unto the floor, [f] and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.

a i. 9. 1 Cor. vii. 36. 1 Tim. v. 8. 14.
b Gen. xl. 14. Deut. iv. 40. Ps. cxxviii. 2. Jer. xxii. 15, 16.
c ii. 20—23. Deut. xxv. 5, 6. Heb. ii. 11—14.
d 2 Sam. xiv. 2. Ps. civ. 15. Matt. vi. 17.
e Esth. v. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10.
* Or, *lift up the clothes that are on his feet.* 1 Thes. v. 22.
f Ex. xx. 12. Prov. i. 8. John ii. 5. xv. 14.

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condescension, it will teach the poor to be humble and respectful in their behaviour to their superiors and benefactors: above all it will naturally express itself in prayer and praise. This return the poorest may render for favours bestowed; and for the neglect of it, no liberality can excuse the affluent.—The good examples of those placed in eminent stations, and who employ many in their service, are most extensively beneficial.—With what gratitude to God and liberality to the poor, should the bounty of a kind Providence be received by us unworthy sinners! and how inexcusable are those who abuse plenty in intemperance, or covetously neglect the indigent, or allow themselves in wickedness, when they are thus experiencing the goodness of the Lord!—In shewing kindness to the destitute, we ought ourselves to avoid, and try to prevent in others, every thing that may appear like reproaching them: for a generous mind in distress has very exquisite sensibilities.

V. 11—23.

All persons should be careful what connexions they form, and what places they frequent; but especially young women, both for conscience and credit's sake: and parents, and other superior relations should have a watchful eye over them, and require an account, where, and with whom, they have spent their time.—In the path of duty is safety; and we should keep close to those employments and situations, in which the Lord has blessed us, without being desirous of change. He will not suffer those who trust in him to want the necessaries of life, and will often far exceed their expectations; and an abundant recompence for every loss, and of every really good work, yea a full but gracious reward shall surely be given to all those, "who "come to trust under the wings of the LORD our God."—A tender concern for each other's welfare, affectionate and edifying conversation, with true piety and contentment, will render the lowest circumstances and the meanest fare comfortable.—The Lord will prove those, who enter upon a religious profession, whether they are sound hearted, and willing to stoop and suffer for his sake; and then he will stir up the minds of his more experienced servants to speak comfortably to them, and deal kindly with them. This is a good work, which all Christians should embrace every opportunity of performing; especially to those who are cheerfully industrious, and willing to endure hardship for conscience-sake.—But to accommodate this subject, ought not parents to ask their children what they have *gleaned* from the sermons which they have heard, the books which they have read, and the conversation that they have joined in? May we not also ask ourselves the same question? He that would increase in wisdom must be always thus *gleaning*, and call himself frequently to account respecting it; determining if possible, to get some profitable hint from every person and occurrence. And those, who thus daily collect knowledge from others, and keep close to the word and ordinances of God, will become "thoroughly "furnished for every good work."—Finally let us, in the kindness of Boaz to Ruth, contemplate the kindness of Jesus to poor sinners; to whose meanness he most freely condescends; on whom, though most unworthy, he liberally confers his benefits; and whom he neither upbraids himself, nor suffers others to upbraid, with their former transgressions.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—6. If the measure, here proposed by Naomi, had been of as ill appearance in those days, as it would be at present; it can hardly be supposed that she would have advised it, or that Ruth would have complied with it.—The law, concerning a man's marrying his brother's widow when he died childless, was by custom extended, as it seems, to the other near relations, when there were no brethren: and it required the woman to do several things, widely different from modern usages. (*Note*, *Deut.* xxv. 5—10.) This law gave Ruth, now proselyted to the true religion, a legal claim upon Boaz, as Naomi supposed; who either did not know of another nearer kinsman, or was aware that it would be in vain to apply to him. (*Note*, iv. 1—8.) It was customary for widows to assert this claim; and, considering Boaz's character and superiority of station, she supposed that this was best done in a private manner. She deemed herself bound to promote this desirable settlement for Ruth, and had an entire confidence both in her and Boaz; whose character in all respects appears to have been very excellent, and who seems to have been advanced in life. And as Ruth supposed Naomi to be well acquainted with the laws and cus-

7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and [g] his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and [*] turned himself; and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

9 And he said, Who *art* thou? and she answered, I *am* [h] Ruth thine handmaid: [i] spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou *art* [†] a near kinsman.

10 And he said, [k] Blessed *be* thou of the LORD, my daughter; *for* thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than [l] at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for [m] all the [‡] city of my people doth know that thou *art* a virtuous woman.

12 And now it is true that I *am thy* near kinsman: howbeit, [n] there is a kinsman nearer than I.

13 Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, *that* [o] if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, *as* [p] the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

14 And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, [q] Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

15 Also he said, Bring the [s] veil that *thou hast* upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, [r] he measured six *measures* of barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city.

16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who *art* thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

17 And she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me; for he said to

[g] Gen. xliii. 34. Judg. xvi. 25. xix. 6. 9. 22. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Esth. i. 10. Ps. civ. 15. Ec. ii. 24. iii. 12, 13. 1 Cor. x. 31. Eph. v. 18, 19.

[*] Or, *took hold on.*

[h] ii. 10—13. 1 Sam. xxv. 41. Luke xiv. 11.

[i] Ez. xvi. 8.

[†] Or, *one that has right to redeem.* ii. 20.

[k] ii. 4. 20. 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5.

[l] 1. 8.

[m] Prov. xii. 4. xxxi. 10. 29—31.

[‡] Heb. *gate.*

[n] iv. 1. Matt. vii. 12. 1 Thes. iv. 6.

[o] ii. 20. iv. 5. Deut. xxv. 5—9. Matt. xxii. 24—27.

[p] Judg. viii. 19. Jer. iv. 2. 2 Cor. i. 23. Heb. vi. 16.

[q] Ec. vii. 1. Rom. xii. 17. xiv. 16. 1 Cor. x. 32. 2 Cor. viii. 21. 1 Thes. v. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 12.

[s] Or, *sheet, or, apron.*

[r] Is. xxxii. 8. Gal. vi. 10.

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toms of Israel, she implicitly followed her counsel. Yet, when all allowances are made, perhaps neither party can be entirely exculpated. At least, though their plan was graciously rendered successful, it was not recorded for imitation in the present state of society; nor must it be judged of by modern customs and maxims. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. When the work of the day was finished, it seems that Boaz feasted with his labourers; and, according to the simplicity and hardiness of the times, afterwards lay down to sleep on some couch prepared for him in the barn, or in an adjoining tent. It is said "his heart was merry;" but it may be translated, 'his heart was good;' and may be used to mark his cheerfulness, and thankfulness for the plenty which the Lord had sent after the famine; and his subsequent conduct shews that his feast was consistent with temperance and piety. In the mean time Ruth concealed herself, till he was left alone; and then lay down *at his feet*, waiting her opportunity of speaking to him; and by that very action she implicitly preferred a claim to be received by him into the marriage-relation.

V. 9. *Spread...thy skirt.*] This is supposed to have been a customary ceremony in contracting marriage, and implied the woman's being taken under the protection of her husband, and admitted to share all his comforts. (*Note, Ez.* xvi. 6—8.) It was therefore a direct claim upon Boaz to marry her; which she grounded on the law of God, and on his being the nearest relation of her deceased husband.

V. 10—13. The conduct of Boaz in this transaction is worthy of the highest encomiums. He neither attempted to take advantage of Ruth's exposed situation, nor reproached her with impropriety of conduct, nor disdained her as a poor destitute stranger, nor suggested that she was swayed by interested motives in preferring her claim. On the contrary, instead of suspecting her of any ill intentions, he imputed her whole conduct to her affection to the family of Elimelech, and to Naomi; as if she had thus shewn her greater kindness, than in coming with her into the land of Israel: and he commended her, for giving him, an elder man, the preference to younger persons, whether rich or poor, Moabites or Israelites; and for her regard to the law of God. Perceiving her confused, as it is probable, upon the recollection of her situation, he also obviated her fears, applauded her as a woman of known and approved virtue, and made her a promise of marriage, in case a still nearer kinsman who had a prior claim, would wave it, as it might be supposed he would. This he confirmed, for her fuller satisfaction, with a solemn oath; and in the morning he sent her away with a present to her mother-in-law (15).

V. 14. *Let it not be known*, &c.] We may consider these words as containing his reasons for dismissing her so early; for he said within himself, "Let it not be known, "that a woman came into the floor:" or as his caution to Ruth not to speak of it to any one. For it does not appear that there was any servant privy to the interview.

V. 15. This present was a token of the favourable construction which Boaz put upon the transaction, and of his affectionate regard for Ruth and Naomi.—It is not known of what quantity these *measures* consisted.

V. 16. *Who art thou?*] Or, "What hast thou done?" *What has passed?* For so the words may be interpreted.

me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.

[s] Ps. xxxvii. 3—5. Is. xxviii. 16. xxx. 7.

18 Then said she, [s] Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

CHAP. IV.

Boaz proposes to the kinsman of whom he had spoken to redeem Elimelech's land, and to marry Ruth; which he declines to do, 1—8. Boaz buys the inheritance and marries Ruth, 9—12. She bears Obed the grandfather of David, 13—17. The genealogy from Pharez to David, 18—22

THEN went Boaz up [a] to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, [b] the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, [c] Ho, such a one, turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

[a] Deut. xvi. 18. xvii. 5. xxi 9. xxv. 7. Job xxix. 7. xxxi. 21. Am. v. 10—12. 15.
[b] iii. 12
[c] Is. lv. 1. Zech. ii. 6.

2 And he took ten men of [d] the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

[d] Ex. xviii. 21, 22. Deut. xxix. 10. xxxi. 28. 1 Kings xxi. 8. Prov. xxxi. 23. Lam. v. 14. Acts vi. 12.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It behoves aged persons to recollect their younger days, and not to exclude young persons from those lawful satisfactions, of which themselves have given up all thoughts. (i. 12.) Indeed we ought not to make our own conduct a standard for that of others, in any matter which the law of God leaves to our choice; but should, without censure, allow them in many things which we deem inexpedient for ourselves.—The word of God has pronounced "marriage honourable in all;" and therefore those who from inclination, prudential regard to the interests of their families, a pious desire of being more at leisure, and having more in their power for the service of God, and preparation for the eternal world, choose to abide in a single state, should not condemn those, who may have as good reasons for preferring a married life. If they are imprudent, they "will have trouble in the flesh: but their brethren should "spare them," and not censure what the divine law does not condemn. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* vii. 25—28. 1 *Tim.* v. 13—15.)—The married state, when properly entered into, is *a rest*, as much as any thing on earth can be so called; seeing it ought to fix the affections, and form a connexion for life: it therefore should be engaged in with great seriousness, and with earnest prayers for the direction and blessing of God upon it, and with an eye to his precept and providence: and parents should carefully advise their children in this important concern, "that it may be well with "them," especially as to the interests of their souls.—The more willing any one is, for conscience-sake, to renounce worldly interests, the greater care should others employ in promoting his advantage.—But good intentions will not justify improper means; and it is well for us, that we have to do with a God of mercy, who takes better care of our interest, purity, credit, and peace, than we often do of our own and of each other's.—Parents should be very cautious what injunctions they lay upon their children; lest filial affection and deference should ensnare their consciences, and lead them into temptation: for the authority even of a parent will not justify a sinful action.—Few men have such command of their passions, and candour of mind, as to injure neither the virtue nor the reputation of females, who indiscreetly put themselves in their way: and yet to take advantage of a woman's affection and confidence, for her irreparable detriment, is much baser than defrauding those who implicitly trust in us. They, however, who value either their chastity or their character, should flee from such situations; in which they can only be preserved by the same power, that preserved the young men in the fiery furnace.—All our plenty should be shared with the poor and industrious: and all our feasting should be so moderated, that it may neither unfit us for our ordinary employments, nor for the exercises of devotion. When in such circumstances, men can retain the dominion over their passions, and conduct themselves with tenderness, prudence, piety, justice, and regard to the law of God, their wealth may be pronounced blessed, and their use of it honourable.—We must not, however, rest satisfied even with a clear conscience in the sight of God; but should endeavour to preserve a clear character, and to avoid whatever may occasion slander, or excite suspicion: (2 *Cor.* viii. 20, 21. 1 *Thes.* v. 22:) and we ought to be as tender of the reputation of others as of our own.—In every undertaking we should be diligent in using proper means, and then calmly leave the whole to the Lord's decision.—But without any impropriety, we poor polluted sinners may apply to Jesus Christ, our nearest Kinsman and Brother, as dwelling in human nature, to spread his skirt over us, and to espouse our souls to himself; to take us under his almighty care, and to admit us to share in all his unsearchable riches. If we truly desire to be his, though many defects and mistakes attend our application to him, he will not reject us; we cannot do it unseasonably; he will condescend to encourage and assist us; and graciously accept all our endeavours to serve him; and most kindly notice our love to him, and our desire of his salvation. When we have applied to him, he will not rest till he has accomplished our desires; and in the mean time he will communicate blessings to us and ours, in answer to our prayers: nor can we too earnestly desire and seek this same rest for our children and friends, that it may be well with them also. (*Note*, *Matt.* xi. 28—30.)

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—8. Considerable difficulties arise, in explaining this transaction consistently with the laws before given; and indeed it does not appear in whose possession the estate of Elimelech was at this time. It is however probable, that it had been sold till the year of jubilee: (*Notes*, *Lev.* xxv. 14—17. 25—28:) and as Elimelech had no male issue surviving, and it could not be alienated from his family, the nearest relation would have a right to redeem it, by repaying the proportion of the purchase-money; except as Ruth, Elimelech's daughter in-law, was entitled to his inheritance, according to the law given in the case of those who left daughters only.

3 And [c] he said unto the kinsman, Naomi that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land which *was* our brother Elimelech's:

4 And [*] I thought to advertise thee, saying, [f] Buy *it* [g] before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*; but if thou wilt not redeem *it*, *then* tell me, that I may know: [h] for *there is* none to redeem *it* beside thee; and I *am* after thee. And he said, I will redeem *it*.

5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy *it* also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, [i] to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

6 And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem *it* for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem *it*.

7 Now this *was the manner* in former time in Israel, concerning redeeming, and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; [k] a man plucked off his shoe, and gave *it* to his neighbour: and this *was* a testimony in Israel.

8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee: so he drew off his shoe.

9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and *unto* all the people, [l] Ye *are* witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, [m] have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that [n] the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: [o] ye *are* witnesses this day.

11 And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, *We are* witnesses. [p] The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like [q] Rachel and like Leah, which two did [r] build the house of Israel: and [†] do thou worthily in [s] Ephratah, and [‡] be famous in Beth-lehem:

12 And let thy house be like [t] the house of Pharez, (whom Tamar bare unto Judah,) of [x] the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

13 ¶ So Boaz [y] took Ruth, and she

[c] Ps. cxii. 5. Prov. xiii. 10.

[*] Heb. *I said I will reveal in thine ear.*

[f] Jer. xxxii. 7—9. Rom. xii. 17. 2 Cor. viii. 21. Phil. iv. 8.

[g] Gen. xxiii. 18. Jer. xxxii. 10—12.

[h] Lev. xxv. 25—29.

[i] iii. 13. Gen. xxxviii. 8. Deut. xxv. 5, 6. Matt. xxii. 24. Luke xx. 28.

[k] Deut. xxv. 7—10.

[l] Gen. xxiii. 16—18. Jer. xxxii. 10—12.

[m] Gen. xxix. 18, 19. 27. Prov. xviii. 22. xix. 14. xxxi. 10, 11. Hos. iii. 2. xii. 12. Eph. v. 25.

[n] Josh. vii. 9. Ps. xxxiv. 16. cix. 15. Is. xlviii. 19. Zech. xiii. 2.

[o] Is. viii. 2, 3. Mal. ii. 14. Heb. xiii. 4.

[p] Gen. xxiv. 60. Ps. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 3—6.

[q] Gen. xxix. 32—35. xxx. 1—24. xxxv. 16—20. xlvi. 8—27. Num. xxvi.

[r] Deut. xxv. 9. Prov. xiv. 1.

[†] Or, *get thee riches*, or, *power*.

[s] i. 2. Gen. xxxv. 19. Ps. cxxxii. 6. Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 6.

[‡] Heb. *proclaim thy name.*

[t] Gen. xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 20—22.

[u] Gen. xxxviii. 29. 1 Chr. ii. 4. Matt. i. 3.

[x] 1 Sam. ii. 20.

[y] iii. 11.

(*Notes*, *Num* xxvii. 1—11.)—To obviate therefore all doubt and difficulty in this matter, Boaz proposed to this kinsman of Elimelech, that he should both redeem the estate and marry Ruth; in which case the estate would certainly belong to his eldest son by her: but if he was unwilling to do it, he desired him to renounce his claim, and he would marry her, and redeem the land for himself. The kinsman however was not willing to marry the poor widow, lest he should injure his circumstances, or create himself disturbance; for perhaps he had at this time a wife and family: he therefore resigned all claim to the estate also. This transaction respects all the several laws above referred to; and doubtless the whole was settled in the most regular, legal, and customary manner: and as the pulling off the shoe was not done by Ruth with the prescribed ceremonies, but, as it appears, by the kinsman himself; it seems not to refer merely to the law about refusing to marry a brother's widow, but to have been the custom in transferring inheritances. (*Note*, *Deut.* xxv. 5—10.)—The manner in which Boaz brought forward this business, evinced a strict regard to openness, fairness, and equity; and also an affection for Ruth, whom it is evident he was desirous of marrying, provided the kinsman was willing to relinquish his prior claim.

V. 9, 10. As Orpah had preferred her connexions in Moab to her prospects in Israel, she was not considered in this transaction; and Naomi transferred all her claim to Ruth. Consequently, when the nearest kinsman, before the elders of his city, by legal process, gave up his claim; Boaz, by marrying Ruth, possessed the whole right of Elimelech. Yet according to the law of God, and the custom in Israel, the eldest son of this marriage must be considered as the heir of Elimelech, and of Mahlon the former husband of Ruth: so that the land would be called by the name of one of them, and not by that of Boaz, that the family might not be considered as extinct.

V. 11, 12. *Gate.*] (*Marg. Ref.* on *v.* 1, a.—*Note*, *Job* xxix. 7—11.) The publick recognition of Boaz's taking Ruth to wife, by the elders of his city, accompanied by benedictions and prayers, may be considered as the customary method of distinguishing honourable marriage from illicit connexions.—It is observable, that only Rachel and Leah are mentioned, as having "built the house of Israel;" and that Bilhah and Zilpah, Jacob's concubines, are not named.—The law, forbidding the admission of Moabites into the congregation of Israel, seems not to have related to marriages with such as embraced the true religion; especially in such peculiar circumstances: for there is no intimation in Scripture that Boaz acted improperly on this occasion. (*Note*, *Deut.* xxiii. 3—5.)

V. 13—15. Naomi was congratulated on this occasion, more than either Boaz or Ruth; as she had the ruins of her family thus providentially repaired, and her old age solaced after the death of her husband and sons, through

was his wife: and when he went in unto her, [z] the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

14 And [a] the women said unto Naomi, [b] Blessed *be* the LORD, [c] which hath not * left thee this day without a † kinsman, [d] that his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of *thy* life, and ‡ a nourisher of thine old age: [e] for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is [f] better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

17 And [g] the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 ¶ Now these *are* the generations of Pharez: [h] Pharez begat Hezron,

19 And Hezron begat [i] Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

20 And Amminadab begat [k] Nahshon, and Nahshon begat § Salmon,

21 And [l] Salmon begat Boaz, [m] and Boaz begat Obed,

22 And Obed begat [n] Jesse, and Jesse begat [o] David.

z 12. Gen. xxi. 1—3. xxv. 21. xxix. 31. xxx. 2. 22, 23. xxxiii 5. 1 Sam. i. 27. ii. 5. Ps. cxiii. 9. cxxvii. 3.
a Luke i. 58. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26.
b Gen. xxix. 35. Ps xxxiv. 1—3. ciii. 1, 2. 1 Thes. v. 18. 2 Thes. i. 3.
c Gen. xxiv. 27.
* Heb. *caused to cease unto thee.*
† Or, *redeemer.*
d 21, 22. Gen. xii. 2. Is. xi. 1—4. Matt. i. 5—10.
‡ Heb. *to nourish thy grey hairs* Gen. xlv. 11. xlvii. 12. Ps. lv. 22. Is. xlvi. 4.
e i. 16—18.
f 1 Sam. i. 8. Prov. xviii. 24.
g Luke i. 58—63.
h 1 Chr. iv. 1. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Phares. Esrom.*
i 1 Chr. ii. 9, 10. Matt. i. 4. Luke iii. 33. *Aram. Aminadab.*
k Num. i. 7. Matt. i 4. Luke iii. 32. *Naasson.*
§ Or, *Salmah.*
l 1 Chr. ii. 11. *Salma.* Matt. i. 5. Luke iii. 32.
m 1 Chr. ii. 12. Matt. i. 5. Luke iii. 32. *Booz.*
n 1 Sam. xvi. 1. Is. xi. 1.
o 1 Chr. ii. 15. Matt. i. 6. Luke iii. 31.

her daughter-in-law, who had loved her, and been a greater blessing to her than seven sons. The piety of the language, and the conduct of all parties on this occasion, should not pass unnoticed.—The term *kinsman*, or *redeemer*, seems here applied to Naomi's grandson, as inheriting the rights of the whole family. (14, 15.)

V. 17. The women named the child, doubtless by the approbation of all parties. "Obed" signifies *a servant*, or *serviceable;* probably intimating a confidence, that Obed would be very useful to his family and people. From him Christ descended: and thus peculiar blessings and honour redounded to Boaz, who had not disdained the low estate of Ruth, but had paid due honour to his deceased relations, and their decayed family; while the kinsman, who refused so to do, is not allowed a name in the book of God, but is disgracefully consigned to oblivion.

V. 18—22. Pharez was born about 1714 years before Christ, and David was born about 630 years after, and ten generations seem too few for such a length of time. But the difficulty is very greatly increased, when it is recollected, that Salmon married Rachab, (doubtless the same as Rahab, *Matt.* i. 5,) about 1450 B. C. leaving 365 years or more, to only four generations! Some learned men have attempted to shew, that *possibly* Salmon, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse, were remarkably long-lived; and that Boaz, Obed, Jesse, and David were born in the extreme old age of their respective fathers: but this at least is not *probable*, and it is certain that Jesse lived till David arrived at full manhood. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 12, 13. xxii. 3, 4.) It is therefore much more natural to suppose, that some names are omitted in the genealogy; as we know the case to have been in the genealogies given by the evangelists. (*Note*, *Matt.* i. 2—17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Diligence in business, punctuality to engagements, integrity, and fair dealing in the affairs of common life, not only adorn a profession of godliness, but tend to prosperity in the ordinary course of Providence.—Men are generally ready to embrace opportunities of increasing their estates, but few know the value of godliness: nor can it be expected, that those, who supremely value carnal things, will make a due estimate of spiritual excellency in the character of others. Such are frequently the wise men of this world; they do not attend to the concerns of their souls, and they reject the salvation of Christ, for fear of "marring their inheritance!" Indeed, selfishness not only obliterates all charity and justice, but extinguishes natural affection; and causes men to treat with disdain their nearest relatives, however excellent, if poor and in need of their assistance. But the loss, in the final event of things, will be entirely their own; as the Lord will raise up other friends for such as love and trust in him, and especially for those who have shewn themselves willing to bear hardship for his sake. Nay, such persons, however poor, are a blessing to all connected with them. Especially they are to be valued in the marriage-relation: "A prudent "wife is from the LORD," and "the price of a virtuous "woman is above rubies." (*Notes*, *Prov.* xix. 14. xxxi. 10,) —As marriage is honourable in the sight of God, it ought to be publickly contracted and recognized, that it may be distinguished from those deeds of darkness which require concealment: and it is likely to be comfortable when the law of God is regarded, and his blessing supplicated. In this important concern, (as in all others,) pious people should pray for each other, that the parties may live together in peace, be good examples, do worthily in the church and in the world, and train up families for future usefulness, when they have served their generation, and are fallen asleep.—The birth of children also calls for united prayers, that they may be indeed a comfort to their parents, blessings to society, and blessed themselves: for without the blessing of God, none of these things can be expected; and the general disuse of this pious language and behaviour, by professing Christians, too plainly evinces that true religion is at a low ebb among us.—We should never promise ourselves much comfort from any earthly object; for our heaviest trials often arise from those quarters whence we expected most satisfaction, and our greatest solace from those whence we expected none: indeed one truly Christian friend may be better to us, than all our children and relations.—But if these streams are so refreshing, what may we not expect from the Fountain? Let us then look to Jesus, our Redeemer, who "though "he was rich, for our sakes became poor," and at the price of his sufferings both ransomed our inheritance, and

purchased us to be espoused unto him in truth and righteousness; not induced by our worthiness or excellence, but by his own unfathomable love to our polluted souls. To this union he invites the perishing sinner: this relation to the poor despised believer, he avows and glories in. May we therefore joyfully accept of his salvation, expect all our felicity from him, and devote ourselves to his service; and, being "bought with a price, let us glorify him "with our bodies and spirits, which are his;" obeying his commandments, imitating his example, and recommending him and his salvation by word and deed to all around us!

THE FIRST BOOK OF

SAMUEL,

OTHERWISE CALLED

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THIS book and the following form but one in the Hebrew canon, and derive their name from Samuel; though he could not write more than the former part (perhaps twenty-four chapters) of the first book.—The remainder of them is, with great probability, ascribed to the prophets Nathan and Gad: for we read in Chronicles, "Now the acts of "David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan "the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer." (1 *Chr.* xxix. 29.) It is therefore very reasonable to conclude, that Samuel wrote the *first acts* of David; and Nathan and Gad, continuing the history after Samuel's death, wrote his *last acts*, or the records of his reign till near his death; and that the whole was formed into one book, which was ascribed to Samuel, as the more eminent person, and as the latter part formed a sort of appendix to the history which he had begun.—It may also be observed, that in the time of Samuel a new epoch commenced: the government by judges was changed for that of kings: and Samuel anointed both those kings whose history is here given, and was himself a principal person in all these transactions.—From the Vulgate Latin translation, these books are also called "The "first and the second books of Kings;" and consequently the two following are "The third and fourth books of Kings." —When Eli was judge and high priest of Israel, Samuel was born: and while Eli's indulged sons were bringing destruction on themselves and their family, and almost on the nation; Samuel was growing up in wisdom and piety, to be an illustrious prophet, and the reformer, deliverer, and judge of Israel. Yet the people, at length ungratefully weary of his mild government, desired a king: and Saul having been placed over them, his family was soon set aside for his disobedience to God; and David was anointed as his successor. The rest of the book is taken up with an account of David's illustrious actions, and the harassing persecutions which he endured, till the death of Saul opened his way to mount the throne. It is not agreed, how many years elapsed during these events; some confining them within eighty years, and others extending them to a hundred and fifteen.—It is evident that this book was extant, when the first book of Kings was written. (Compare ii. 35, 36, with 1 *Kings* ii. 27.) Almost every subsequent part of Scripture refers to the events recorded in it, as of undoubted certainty: especially very many of the Psalms are poems made on occasion of one or other of them.—Our Lord and his apostles quote it, as a part of the sacred Oracles. (*Matt.* xii. 3, 4. *Acts* vii. 45, 46. xiii. 21, 22.)—The history of David, the son of Jesse, forms a sort of introduction to all the prophecies concerning his family; and especially concerning Christ, who sprang from the root of Jesse, was distinguished as the Son of David, and inherited the throne of David. (*Ps.* ii. lxxii. lxxxix. 19—37. *Is.* ix. 6, 7. xi. 1—10. *Acts* ii. 25—31.) The narrative itself may in some sense be considered as *prophetical*, recording many typical events, which had their accomplishment in Christ. The book likewise contains several direct prophecies concerning the families of Eli and Saul, which were speedily fulfilled: and the song of Hannah concludes, with a prophecy of our Lord, in which he is, for the first time, predicted expressly as the Messiah, the anointed of God. (ii. 10.)

CHAP. I.

Elkanah a Levite has two wives, 1, 2. He goes yearly to worship at Shiloh, 3. He favours and comforts Hannah, when insulted by Peninnah on account of her barrenness, 4—8. Hannah in grief prays for a son, and vows to devote him to God as a perpetual Nazarite, 9—11. Eli through mistake at first rebukes, but afterwards blesses her, 12—18. She bears Samuel, stays till he is weaned, and then presents him to God, according to her vow, 19—28.

NOW there was a certain man of [a] Ramathaim-zophim, of [b] mount Ephraim, and his name *was* [c] Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an [d] Ephrathite:

2 And he had [e] two wives; the name of the one *was* Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, [f] but Hannah had no children.

3 And this man went up out of his city [*] yearly [g] to worship, and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in [h] Shiloh: and the [i] two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, *were* there.

4 And when the time was that Elkanah [k] offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions.

5 But unto Hannah he gave a [†] worthy portion: for [l] he loved Hannah: but the LORD had [m] shut up her womb.

6 And her [n] adversary also [‡] provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.

7 And *as* he did so [o] year by year, [§] when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her: therefore she wept, and did not eat.

8 Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, [p] why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? [q] *am* not I better to thee than ten sons?

a 19. Matt. xxvii. 57. *Arimathea.*
b Judg. xvii. 1. xix. 1.
c 1 Chr. vi. 25—27. 34.
d xvi 12. Ruth i 2. 1 Kings xi. 26.
e Gen. iv. 19. xxix. 23—29. Judg viii. 30. Matt. xix. 8.
f Gen. xvi. 1, 2. xxv. 21. xxix. 31 Judg. xiii. 2 Luke i. 7.
* Heb. *from year to year.* Ex. xxiii. 14. 17. xxxiv. 23. Deut. xvi. 16. Luke ii. 41.
g Deut. xii. 5—7. 11—14.
h Josh. xviii. 1. Judg. xviii. 31. Ps. lxxviii. 60. Jer. vii. 12—14.
i 9. ii. 12—17. 34. iii 13. iv. 4. 11. 7, 18.
k Lev. iii. 4, 5. vii. 15. Deut. xii. 17, 18. xvi. 11.
† Or, *double.* Gen. xliii. 34. xlv. 22.
l Gen. xxix. 30, 31. Deut. xxi. 15.
m Gen. xx. 18. xxx. 2.
n Lev. xviii. 18. Job vi. 14.
‡ Heb. *angered her.*
o ii. 19.
§ Or, *from the time that she, &c.* Heb. *from her going up.*
p 2 Sam. xii. 16, 17. 2 Kings viii. 12. Job vi. 14. John xx. 13. 15. 1 Ther. v. 14.
q Ruth iv. 15. Ps. xliii. 4. Is. liv. 1, 6.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. Elkanah appears to have been a Levite of the family of Kohath. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 1 *Chr.* vi. 16—38.)—Ramathaim-zophim was the place which is afterwards called Ramah; (19) and from the dual number here used, it is supposed to have been divided into two parts, upon distinct hills. The word "Zophim" signifies *watchmen,* perhaps because some watch-towers and watchmen were stationed there; for "Ramah" signifies *exaltation:* or it might be so called from Zuph, Elkanah's ancestor.—Ephrath is the same as Beth-lehem; and probably Elkanah, or his ancestor Zuph, was called an Ephrathite, from being allied in the female line to a family of the tribe of Judah, whose inheritance lay there; or because he was born at Ephrath. (*Gen.* xlviii. 7.)

V. 2. Hannah seems to have been the first wife of Elkanah: but as she was barren, he probably took Peninnah, (as Abraham took Hagar,) from an impatient desire of children: (*Note, Gen.* xvi. 1—3:) but the event shewed, that in deviating from the orignal law of marriage, though in a manner then tolerated, he little consulted his own peace and comfort.

V. 3. The stated worship at Shiloh was observed, but probably in an irregular manner; otherwise Elkanah, a Levite, would have had employment at the sanctuary. In those times of apostasy and idolatry, when "men abhorred the offering of the LORD," through the wickedness of Eli's sons, (ii. 17,) it was commendable in Elkanah to go up, though but once a year, perhaps at the Passover, to worship the Lord; the original words, however, may mean, that he went up *at stated times,* probably at the three great feasts. The Israelites were confined to one place, one altar, and one priesthood; and therefore Elkanah could not go elsewhere. But, though the wickedness of ministers does not deprive the pious Christian of the blessing, nor furnish a sufficient excuse for neglecting the ordinances of God; yet we, not being under a similar limitation, should certainly prefer attending on the ministry of those, who appear at least to be walking heaven-ward themselves, as well as teaching others the true way thither; and not countenance either heretical teachers, or ungodly men. (*Notes, Prov.* xix. 27. 1 *John* iv. 1—3. 2 *John* 7—11.)

V. 4—7. After the other appointed sacrifices had been brought, the peace-offerings were presented, on part of which the offerer feasted with his family, having given to each a portion. On these occasions Elkanah shewed his peculiar attention to Hannah by the customary indications; which probably excited the envy and jealousy of Peninnah, as well as her proud contempt of Hannah's barrenness; and thus great uneasiness was occasioned. (*Notes, Gen.* xvi. 4—6. xxxvii. 3.) For Hannah laid it far more to heart than she ought; and her perpetual sorrow distressed Elkanah, and greatly interrupted the comfort and benefit of their religious ordinances; and this might be one reason why Hannah refused to partake of the sacrifices, lest the Lord should be displeased with her for eating them mourning. (*Deut.* xxvi. 14. *Hos.* ix. 4. *Mal.* ii. 13. *Notes, Neh.* viii. 9—12.)

V. 8. Elkanah seems to have endured Peninnah's angry and malevolent tempers and conduct with great patience: and he most tenderly remonstrated with Hannah concerning her immoderate grief; and reminded her, that, though she had no children, she possessed his affection, which would conduce more to her real comfort than ten sons would without it: and that therefore her situation was more desirable than that of Peninnah.—This gentle rebuke pre-

9 ¶ So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk: (now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of [r] the temple of the LORD:)

10 And she *was* [*] in bitterness of soul, and [s] prayed unto the LORD, [t] and wept sore.

11 And she [u] vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed [x] look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and [y] remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid [†] a man-child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and [z] there shall no razor come upon his head.

12 And it came to pass, as she [‡] continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.

13 Now Hannah, she [a] spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought [b] she had been drunken.

14 And Eli said unto her, [c] How long wilt thou be drunken? [d] put away thy wine from thee.

15 And Hannah answered and said, [e] No, my lord; I *am* a woman [§] of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have [f] poured out my soul before the LORD.

16 Count not thine handmaid for [g] a daughter of Belial; for [h] out of the abundance of my [‖] complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.

17 Then Eli answered and said, [i] Go in peace: and [k] the God of Israel grant *thee* thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

18 And she said, [l] Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman [m] went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more *sad*.

19 ¶ And [n] they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; [o] and the LORD remembered her.

20 Wherefore it came to pass, [*] when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name [†] Samuel, *saying*, [p] Because I have asked him of the LORD.

21 And [q] the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.

22 But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, *I will not go up* until the child be weaned, [r] and *then* I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, [s] and there abide [t] for ever

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[r] iii. 3. 15. 2 Sam. vii. 2.

[*] Heb. *bitter of soul.* Ruth i. 20. 2 Sam. xvii 8. Job vii. 11. ix. 18. x. 1. Is. xxxviii. 15. liv. 6. Lam. iii. 15.

[s] Ps. l. 15. xci. 15. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7.

[t] Gen. l. 10. Judg. xxi. 2 2 Sam. xiii. 36. 2 Kings xx. 3. Jer. xiii. 17. xxii. 10.

[u] Gen. xxviii. 20. Num. xxi. 2. xxx. 3—8. Judg. xi. 30 Ec. v. 4.

[x] Gen. xxix. 32. Ex. iv. 31. 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Ps. xxv. 16.

[y] 19. Gen. viii. 1. xxx. 22. Ps. cxxxii. 1, 2.

[†] Heb. *seed of men.*

[z] Num. vi. 5. Judg xiii. 5.

[‡] Heb. *multiplied to pray.* Luke xi. 8—10. xviii. 1. Eph. vi. 18. Col. iv. 2. 1 Thes. v. 17. Jam. v. 16.

[a] Gen. xxiv. 42—45. Neh. ii. 4. Ps. xxv. 1. Rom. viii. 26.

[b] Zech. ix. 15. Acts ii. 13. 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

[c] Josh. xxii. 12—20. Job viii. 2. Ps. lxii. 3. Prov. vi. 9. Matt. vii. 1—3.

[d] Job xi. 14. xxii. 23. Prov. iv. 24 Eph. iv. 25. 31. Prov. xv. 1. xxv. 15.

[§] Heb. *hard of spirit.*

[f] Ps. xlii. 4. lxii. 8. cxlii. 2, 3. cxliii. 6. Lam. ii. 19.

[g] ii. 12. x. 27. xxv. 25. Deut. xiii. 13.

[h] Job vi. 2, 3. x. 1, 2. Matt. xii. 34, 35.

[‖] Or, *meditation.*

[i] xxv. 35. xxix. 7. Judg. xviii. 6. 2 Kings v. 19. Mark v. 34. Luke vii. 50. viii. 48.

[k] 1 Chr. iv. 10. Ps. xx. 4, 5.

[l] Gen. xxxii. 5. xxxiii. 8. 15. Ruth ii. 13.

[m] Ec. ix. 7. John xvi. 24. Rom. xv. 13. Phil. iv. 6, 7.

[n] ix. 26. Ps. v. 3. lv. 17. cxix. 147. Mark i. 35.

[o] 11. Gen. viii. 1. xxi. 1. Ps. xxv. 7. cxxxvi. 23. Luke xxiii. 42.

[*] Heb. *in revolution of days.*

[†] That is, *Asked of God.*

[p] Gen. iv. 25. v. 29. xvi. 11. xxix. 32—35. xxx. 6—21. xli. 51, 52. Ex. ii. 10. 22. Matt. i. 21.

[q] 3. Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. ci. 2.

[r] Deut. xvi. 16. Luke ii. 22. 41, 42.

[s] 11. 28. ii. 11. 18. iii. 1. Ps. xxiii. 6. xxvii. 4.

[t] Ex. xxi. 6. Lev. xxv. 23. Josh. iv. 7. Ps. cx. 4. Is. ix. 7.

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vailed with her to repress her grief, and perhaps to partake of the sacrifice: but that did not comfort her heart, till she had poured it out in prayer. (18. *Note*, 9—11.)

V. 9—11. The tabernacle, now become stationary, was sometimes called "the temple." (iii. 3. *Ps.* xxvii. 4. xxix. 9.)—Hannah, with great earnestness and importunity, intreated the Lord to grant her a son, and vowed that he should be a perpetual Nazarite, devoted to the service of God alone, all his days. (*Notes, Judg.* xiii. 4, 5. xvi. 17—21.) Some learned men compute that Samuel was born before Samson, whom God thus separated to himself, and for a special purpose, before his birth; but others think he was born about the same time, or a few years after him. The chronology of this part of the history, however, is extremely obscure, and the attempts of learned men to elucidate it are peculiarly unsatisfactory, and often widely discordant from each other.

V. 12—16. Probably Eli had many times seen instances of such intemperance as he here charged upon Hannah; and perhaps he sat near the tabernacle to repress these enormities, though he did not adopt the only effectual method. (*Note*, ii. 23—25.) Perceiving her great discomposure, and observing that her lips moved, he too hastily attributed it to drunkenness. But Hannah had now obtained such inward consolation, that this severe reflection neither distressed her, nor excited her anger: so that she intimated her abhorrence of the crime with which she had been charged, and calmly and respectfully explained to him the real cause of her agitation. In doing this, she emphatically described the nature of fervent prayer: "I "have poured out my soul before the LORD." (*Marg. Ref.* f.) For prayer does not consist merely in using good words, but in opening before the Lord the inmost soul, and in unreserved confidence, pouring out before him all our fears, sorrows, desires, and purposes; as a child would before a loving father, from whom alone he had expectations of relief, and who, he was satisfied, was able and disposed to help him.

V. 17, 18. The character of Eli was very defective; yet there are several traces in it of true piety, and this answer is one. He was open to conviction, and willing to acknowledge himself mistaken, and by his commendation, blessing, and prayers, to make Hannah amends for the injury which he had done her. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19—22. It is probable that Elkanah established Hannah's vow, in a solemn act of worship, before he left

23 And Elkanah her husband said unto her, [u] Do what seemeth thee good: tarry until thou have weaned him; only [x] the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her [y] son suck until she weaned him.

24 And when she had weaned him, [z] she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the [a] house of the LORD in Shiloh: and the child *was* young.

25 And they slew a bullock, and [b] brought the child to Eli.

26 And she said, O my lord! [c] *as* thy soul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.

27 [d] For this child I prayed; and [e] the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

28 Therefore also I have [*] lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth [†] he shall be lent to the LORD. And [f] he worshipped the LORD there.

u Num. xxx. 7—11.
x 2 Sam. vii. 25. Is. xliv. 26.
y Gen. xxi. 7, 8. Ps. xxii. 9. Matt. xxiv. 19. Luke xi. 27.
z Num. xv. 9, 10. Deut. xii. 5, 6. 11. xvi. 16.
a iv. 3, 4. Josh. xviii. 1.
b Luke ii. 22. xviii. 15, 16.
c xvii. 55. xx. 3. Gen. xlii. 15. 2 Sam. xi. 11. xiv. 19. 2 Kings ii. 2. 4. 6. iv. 30.
d 11—13. Matt. vii. 7.
e Ps. lxvi. 19. cxvi. 1—5. cxviii. 5. 1 John v. 15.
* Or, *returned him, whom I have obtained by petition, to the LORD.*
† Or, *he whom I have obtained by petition shall be returned.*
f Gen. xxiv. 26. 48. 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Shiloh. (*Note, Num.* xxx. 3—8.) Samuel's name would remind his mother, every time it was mentioned, of the Lord's kindness in remembering her affliction, and in answering her prayer.—The women were not commanded to go up to the sanctuary; and Hannah, after Samuel's birth, had a sufficient engagement at home.

V. 23. *Establish his word.*] As no promise of God respecting Samuel is recorded, it is thought that the clause may be rendered, "Only the LORD complete his work;" namely, in accepting of the child given in answer to prayer, as his devoted servant all his days. (*Note,* 9—11.)

V. 24, 25. One of these bullocks might be intended for a burnt-offering; and the other two for thank-offerings or peace-offerings, on part of which, and of the flour and wine, Elkanah with his family and friends, and with the Levites, might feast before the Lord. (*Notes, Lev.* iii. vii. 12—18. *Deut.* xii. 5—7.) After the burnt-offering had been sacrificed, they seem to have presented Samuel to Eli, before the other offerings were slain.—The original words rendered, "The child was young," seem to imply that he was exceedingly dear to his parents; who exercised great self-denial, in leaving him at the sanctuary at so early an age. (*Note,* ii. 18, 19.)—Some think he was about three years old; others that he was seven. (*Note, Gen.* xxi. 8—12.)

V. 26, 27. Hannah's heart was too full of joy and gratitude upon this occasion, to notice the injurious reflection Eli had cast upon her: but she well remembered her prayer and vow, and the Lord's gracious answer.—The words rendered, "as thy soul liveth," are supposed by some to have been intended merely as an expression of good-will; *May thy soul live.* (*Marg. Ref.* c.)

V. 28. The word rendered "lent," is nearly similar to that translated *asked;* and refers to the name of Samuel.—Hannah had *asked* him of God, and now she *returned* him to him. (*Marg.*—*Notes, Ex.* iii. 21, 22. xi. 2, 3. xii. 35, 36.) It was her intention, that, as a Levite and a Nazarite, he should spend all his life in the immediate service of the sanctuary; but the Lord was pleased afterwards to employ him as a prophet, and a judge in the publick affairs of Israel.—Some think that Elkanah is meant, when it is said, "He worshipped the LORD:" but others understand it of Samuel, who thus gave some early indications of piety.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Experience universally evinces the kindness, as well as equity, of the original institution of marriage, and the divine law concerning it: for every deviation makes way for domestick contention, envy, malice, impatience, and every evil work, to the interruption of the worship of God, and the ruin of family-religion.—None of our troubles, however, should be allowed to interfere with our attendance on the ordinances of God: for if Satan can induce us to yield to discouragement in one respect, he will attempt it in another, and never cease to harass us, when engaged in the duties of religion, till he has driven us from every means of grace, and solemn act of holy worship: so that resolute resistance and perseverance, with earnest cries to the Lord for his assistance, are our only successful weapons: and we should not in the least degree "give place to the devil."—The human heart can neither bear prosperity without insolence, nor adversity without impatience. Instead of being contented and thankful in our appointed situation, and rejoicing in the happiness of others, we are prone to murmur and to vex ourselves, because others are more favoured or prospered, than we suppose ourselves to be: yet could we change conditions in every respect with them, we should generally increase our uneasiness; whereas impartial reflection upon our own situation in life, compared with our unworthiness, and with the condition of others, would silence our complaints, or convert them into thankful praises.—All inordinate passions are irrational, as well as inimical to our comfort; and even pious Christians, who are shocked at the thought of yielding to other temptations, often rebelliously and ungratefully indulge excessive grief, against which they ought especially to watch and pray. But if our earthly comforts, when duly estimated, being greater than our sorrows, should console us under our trials; surely the favour of God is better to his people, than all beloved relations or outward satisfactions, and sufficient to compensate for the loss or the want of them all.—Every one should comfort those who are in bitterness of soul: yet a mild and tender rebuke is frequently the greatest kindness, when we see our friends forgetting their mercies, or their duty.

V. 9—18.

Nothing can give solid comfort to those who are in anguish of spirit, but the assurance and experience of the love of God in their hearts; nor will that cordial in general be communicated, till they have "poured out their "souls" repeatedly in earnest secret prayer. This must

CHAP. II.

Hannah's thankful song of praise, 1—10. The sin of Eli's sons, 11—17. Samuel ministers before God, 18, 19. Eli blesses Elkanah; and Hannah, who bears more children, 20, 21. Eli reproves his sons, but far too gently, 22—26. A prophet foretels the ruin of Eli's house, 27—36.

AND Hannah [a]prayed, and said, [b]My heart rejoiceth in the LORD; [c]mine horn is exalted in the LORD; [d]my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies: because [e]I rejoice in thy salvation.

[a] Neh. xi. 17. Hab. iii. 1. Phil. iv. 6.
[b] Luke i. 46, 47. Rom. v. 11. Phil. iii. 3. iv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 8.
[c] Ps. xviii. 2. lxxxix. 17. xcii. 10. cxii. 9. Luke i. 69.
[d] Ex. xv. 1. 21. Judg. v. 1, 2. Ps. li. 15. lxxi. 8. Rev. xviii. 20. cxviii. 14. Is. xii. 2, 3. Hab. iii. 18.
[e] Ps. ix. 14. xiii. 5. xx. 5. xxxv. 9.

bring down the blessings, which flow from the atoning blood of Christ, and are vouchsafed through his intercession; and it is necessary to render publick ordinances profitable and joyful: nor can a concurrence of all possible distresses and temptations render that man miserable, or long uncomfortable, who rightly improves the precious privilege of access to the mercy-seat of a reconciled God in Christ Jesus. Yet, through Satan's temptations, and the evil of our hearts, we are often reluctant to begin, slight in presenting, and hasty in concluding our petitions! Hence it is that we go mourning all the day long, instead of "casting our burden upon the LORD:" and our miseries will increase upon us, till we take this course. (*Notes, Phil.* iv. 5—7. 1 *Pet.* v. 5—7.)—The more we experience the sweet consolations which are communicated while the soul is poured out before the Lord, the more we shall determine "to call upon him as long as we live." (*Note, Ps.* cxvi. 2.)—We ought to be very cautious how we condemn those, who are uncommonly earnest in religion, as if guilty of hypocrisy, enthusiasm, or some other iniquity; and ministers especially, in their zeal against sin, ought to be careful, that they do not grieve such as are "in bitterness of spirit:" but if we have rashly censured those who are not faulty, we should be ready to hear their plea, to retract our decision, to give them encouragement, and to assist them with our prayers.—Among the various trials, to which we are exposed, none is in general more bitter, than the suspicions and censures of those whom we love and esteem. But while "the God of all grace" hears our prayers, we may bear even this with patience, and answer it with meekness: for though it is painful to be counted "children of Belial" by our brethren; yet if our loving Father sees that correction needful, and favours us with the assurance of his acceptance and the light of his countenance, we may thankfully submit to his will.—Even before those blessings which we have asked in prayer are vouchsafed, or expected with certainty, he sometimes communicates such supports to the soul, as exceed every temporal advantage, can be destroyed by no outward trouble, and give a relish for those mercies which before we undervalued or overlooked.—We are also most likely to obtain all our warranted desires, when we are rendered most willing to submit them to the will of God.

V. 19—28.

No temporal satisfaction can be durably comfortable, which we cannot name, "Asked of the LORD;" and which we do not receive from him with gratitude as an answer to our prayers, and uprightly desire to use to his glory and in his service. If he give us children, we shall have the most comfort in them, when they are most entirely his: and therefore we should devote them to him from the first; bring them up for him; and pray continually that we may see early proofs of his having received them into his family, and made them his to serve him all their days.—The vows that we have mingled with the prayers made in our distress, must be performed with gratitude, when our desires have been granted; that others may praise our God along with us, and be encouraged to trust and call upon him.—It does not become the worshippers of God to be soon weary of his ordinances; but to leave them reluctantly, when called to attend on other duties: and when men are in such haste to set out on journeys, or to engage in business, that they have not time to worship God, they are likely to proceed without his presence and blessing.—There are times, when domestick employments may render it a duty, to be occasionally absent from publick ordinances: but those seasons should abound the more in the exercises of secret devotion; and when special blessings have been conferred, and restraints are removed, the true believer will go with more longing desires to the courts of the Lord, to pay his vows, and render his grateful praises. With what transport then will he at last leave this distant land below, to ascend to the courts above, to receive the full answer of all his prayers, and to offer everlasting praises, with an uninterrupted flow of holy affections and ineffable delight!

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. The word *prayer* is sometimes used for any act of devotion, whether it be confined to petition, or include thanksgiving and praise, or chiefly consist of the latter. (*Marg. Ref.* a.)—When Hannah requested a son, she spake in her heart, and "her voice was not heard;" but when, according to her vow, she presented Samuel to God, his glory and the edification of his people required a publick acknowledgment. Whilst her heart was enlarged with love and gratitude, she was led on, by the Holy Spirit, so speak with great enlargement and fervency, and with clear discernment of divine things, on the gracious dealings of God towards Israel, and of his dispensations towards men in general in every age.—"Her heart rejoiced," not in Samuel, but "in the LORD;" in his power, faithfulness, and love.—"Her horn" (the weapon for defence and annoyance in some animals,) "was exalted in the LORD, and "her mouth was enlarged over her enemies:" being delivered from the taunts and reproaches of her rival, she took that as an earnest of more important victories, and rejoiced in the hope of triumphing over the adversaries of her soul; for she "rejoiced in the salvation of the LORD," and in looking for the coming of Him, who is the Salvation of his people. (*Notes, Hab.* iii. 17—19. *Luke* i. 46—55. *Phil.* iv. 4.)

2 *There is* [f] none holy as the LORD; for *there is* [g] none beside thee; neither *is there* any [h] rock like our God.

3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; [i] let *not* [*] arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD *is* [k] a God of knowledge, and [l] by him actions are weighed.

4 The [m] bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and they that [n] stumbled are girded with strength.

5 *They that were* [o] full, have hired out themselves for bread; and *they that were* hungry ceased: so that [p] the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is [q] waxed feeble.

6 The LORD [r] killeth, and maketh alive: [s] he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

7 The LORD [t] maketh poor, and maketh rich: he [u] bringeth low, and lifteth up.

8 He raiseth up [x] the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to [y] set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for [z] the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them.

9 He [a] will keep the feet of [b] his saints, and the wicked shall [c] be silent in darkness; for [d] by strength shall no man prevail.

f Ex. xv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps. xcix. 5. 9. cxi. 9. Is. vi. 3. lvii. 15. 1 Pet. i. 16. Rev. iv. 8. xv. 4.
g Deut. iv. 35. 2 Sam. xxii. 32. Ps. lxxiii. 25. Is. xliii. 10, 11. xliv. 6. 8.
h Deut. iii. 24. xxxii. 30, 31. 39. Ps. xviii. 2. lxxi. 3. 19. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6. Is. xl. 18. Jer. x. 6.
i Ps. xciv. 4. Prov. viii. 13. Is. xxxvii. 23. Dan. iv. 30, 31. 37. Mal. iii. 13. Jude 15, 16.
* Heb. *hard.*
k 1 Kings viii. 39. Ps. xliv. 21. xciv. 7—10. cxlvii. 5. Jer. xvii. 10. Heb. iv. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 23.
l Job xxxi. 6. Is. xxvi. 7. Dan. v. 27.
m Ps. xxxvii. 15. 17. xlvi. 9. lxxvi. 3.
n Is. x. 4. Jer. xxxvii. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 9, 10. xii. 9, 10. Eph. vi. 14. Phil. iv. 13. Heb. xi. 34.
o Ps. xxxiv. 10. Luke i. 53. xvi. 25.
p i. 20. Ps. cxiii. 9.
q i. 6. Is. liv. 1. Jer. xv. 9. Gal. iv. 27.
r Deut. xxxii. 39. 2 Kings v. 7. Job v. 18. Ps. lxviii. 20. Hos. vi. 1, 2. John v. 25—29. xi. 25. Rev. i. 18.
s xx. 3 Ps. cxvi. 3. Is. xxvi. 19. Jon. ii. 2—6. Matt. xii. 40. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.
t Deut. viii. 17, 18. Job i. 21. v. 11. Ps. cii. 10.
u Ps. lxxv. 7. Is. ii. 12. Jam. i. 9, 10. iv. 10.
x Job ii. 8. xlii. 10—12. Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. Dan. iv. 17. Luke i. 51, 52.
y xv. 17. Gen. xli. 14. 40. 2 Sam. vii. 8. Job xxxvi. 6, 7. Ec. iv. 14. Dan. ii. 48. vi. 3. Jam. ii. 5. Rev. i. 6. iii. 21. v. 10. xxii. 5.
z Job xxxviii. 4—6. Ps. xxiv. 2. ci. 25. civ. 5. Heb. i. 3.
a Job v. 24. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. xci. 11, 12. xciv. 18. cxxi. 3. 5. 8. Prov. xvi. 9. 1 Pet. i. 5.
b Deut. xxxiii. 3. Ps. xxxvii. 28. xcvii. 10. Prov. ii. 8. Jude i. 3.
c Job v. 16. Ec. v. 17. Jer. viii. 14. Zeph. i. 15. Matt. viii. 12. xxii. 12, 13. Rom. iii. 19. 2 Pet. ii. 17. Jude 13.
d xvii. 49, 50. Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17. Ec. ix. 11. Jer. ix. 23. Zech. iv. 6.

V. 2. From *personal* mercies, Hannah proceeded to contemplate the perfections of God. *Holiness*, which comprises perfect wisdom, purity, justice, truth, goodness, and mercy, is in him alone underived, immutable, and complete. "There is none holy as the LORD:" all created holiness is derived, dependent, mutable, and scanty; all human holiness mixed with impurity; and all the idols of the nations are abominable demons. Nay, says she, "there "is none beside thee," no other God; and all creatures are "less than nothing, and vanity" in the comparison with him: "neither is there any rock, like our God;" he is our only Protector, Refuge, and Support; and they only are safe and strong, who trust entirely in him. (*Notes, Ex.* xv. 11. *Deut.* xxxii. 4. *Is.* xliii. 8—13. xliv. 6—8. xlv. 1—7.)

V. 3. With allusion to Peninnah's misconduct, Hannah seems here to address the enemies of true religion; who, confiding in numbers, courage, or ability, glory in themselves and insultingly despise believers. Bet let them cease from such proud boastings, arrogance, and reproaches; remembering, that "the LORD is a God of knowledge, "and by him actions are weighed." (*Note, Is.* xxx. 18, 19.) He distinguishes men's characters, and weighs their actions in the balance, and knows when to interpose in behalf of his people: he also knows those, who despise and hate him, and will in due time effectually punish them, though for a season they may seem to prosper.—The last clause may be rendered, "By him works are regulated:" he orders every thing in perfect wisdom and power, and none can defeat his purposes. Or, still more exactly according to the text, *Are not works by him regulated?* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4—8. The events which these verses speak of, are often called the caprices of blind fortune: but they in fact are the settled purposes of God, thus manifesting his own perfections by saving those who trust in him; and pouring contempt upon all the distinctions, in which ungodly men confide and glory. Are they proud of valour, military skill, or strength? their bows shall be broken, and themselves crushed by an inferior and despised company. Do they glory in riches, and riot in ease and luxury, while they despise and oppress the poor? they are often impoverished, and reduced to the necessity of hiring themselves out for bread, whilst the poor and hungry are suprisingly advanced to affluence. Do any glory, as Peninnah did, in the increase of their families, and despise the childless? Providence may soon by unexpected death reduce their numbers; whilst the desolate are as wonderfully increased. The Lord gives life, and takes it away: the most vigorous are by the stroke of his hand brought down to the gates of the grave; and the feeble are unexpectedly restored to health and strength. Such vicissitudes may likewise be often observed in men's circumstances and families; in which capacity and industry prove utterly unavailing to prevent the adversity of some; while others are wonderfully prospered, and rise even from the lowest and most abject condition to the throne of glory. (*Notes, Ps.* cvii. 33—43. cxiii. 7—9. *Ec.* ix. 11, 12.) Events of this kind occasion surprise, and many attempt to account for them; but "the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath "set the world upon them:" and the same power, which first created and established the earth in its settled course, without human help, and in such a manner as no human power can change; by his secret over-ruling providence does every thing, and should be acknowledged in every thing. (*Notes, Job* xxxiv. 20—30. *Dan.* iv. 34—37. *Rom.* xi. 33—36.)—These things are equally applicable to the dispensations of his kingdom of grace; in which he respects, not men's wisdom, learning, greatness, or imagined excellency, but selects the base, the poor, the foolish of the world, having taught them to feel their guilt and misery, and to value his free and precious salvation. Thus he "taketh the poor out of the dust, and the beggar from the "dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them "inherit the throne of glory;" and all this "according "to the eternal purpose, which he hath purposed in Christ "Jesus our Lord." (*Notes, Matt.* xix. 29, 30. 1 *Cor.* i. 26—31. *Eph.* i. 3—12.)

V. 9. The *saints* are those, whom the grace of God has

10 The [e] adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall [f] he thunder upon them: the LORD shall [g] judge the ends of the earth; and [h] he shall give strength unto his King, and [i] exalt the horn of his [k] Anointed.

11 ¶ And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house; and the child did [l] minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.

12 Now [m] the sons of Eli *were* [n] sons of Belial; they [o] knew not the LORD.

13 And the priests' custom with the people *was, that* when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a flesh-hook of three teeth in his hand;

14 And he struck *it* into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; [p] all that the flesh-hook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither.

15 Also [q] before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.

16 And *if* any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat [*] presently, and *then* take *as much* as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, *Nay*; but thou shalt give *it me* now: and if not, [r] I will take *it* by force.

[e] Ex. xv. 6. Judg. v. 31. Ps. ii. 9. xxi. 8, 9. lxviii. 1, 2. xcii. 9. Luke xix. 27.
[f] vii. 10. xii. 18. Job xl. 9. Ps. xviii. 13, 14.
[g] Ps. l. 1—6. xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9. Ec. xi. 9. xii. 14. Matt. xxv. 31, 32. John v. 21, 22. Rom. xiv. 10—12. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rev. xx. 11—15.
[h] xii. 13. xv. 28. xvi. 1. 2 Sam. vii. 8. 13. Ps. ii. 6. xxi. 1. 7. Is. xxxii. 1. xlv. 24. Matt. xxv. 34. xxviii. 18.
[i] Ps. lxxxix. 17. 24, xcii. 10. cxlviii. 14. Luke i. 69.
[k] xii. 3. Ps. ii. 2. xx. 6. xxviii. 8. xlv. 7. Acts iv. 27. x. 38.
[l] 18. i. 28. iii. 1. 15. m Hos. iv. 6—9. Mal. ii. 1—9.
[n] x. 27. xxv. 17. Deut. xiii. 13. Judg. xix. 22. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13. 2 Cor. vi. 15.
[o] iii. 7. Judg. ii. 10. Jer. ii. 8. xxii. 16. John viii. 55. xvi. 3. xvii. 3. Rom. i. 28—30.
[p] 29. Ex. xxix. 27, 28. Lev. vii. 34. Is. lvi. 11. Mal. i. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 13—15.
[q] Lev. iii. 3—5. 16. Rom. xvi. 18. Phil. iii. 19. Jude 12.
[*] Heb. *as on the day.* Lev. iii. 16. vii. 23—25.
[r] Judg. xviii. 25. Neh. v. 15. Mic. ii. 1, 2. iii. 5. 1 Pet. v. 2, 3.

separated from a sinful world, and sanctified unto himself: and "he will keep their feet," so that they shall be directed and upheld in his ways; they shall not so stumble as utterly to be cast down, nor be so snared as finally to be taken captive by their enemies. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxvii. 23, 24. 1 *Pet.* ii. 2—5.) But, however sinners may now boast, and fill the world with disturbance and confusion, they will ere long be put to silence, and sink speechless, under the divine sentence of condemnation, into everlasting darkness and despair. (*Notes, Matt.* xxii. 11—14. *Rom.* iii. 19, 20.) "For by strength shall no man prevail," either to injure and overturn the interest of true religion, or to secure themselves from merited destruction. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. While the adversaries of God shall be destroyed for ever, his church shall prosper, not only as it did under the government of David, his king, whom Samuel by his command anointed; but under the government of his Son, the Messiah, who hath "all power given him in heaven "and earth," who shall go on conquering, till all the ends of the earth submit to his mediatorial sway, and till he come "to judge the quick and dead at his appearing." Then shall all enemies finally be put under his feet, and his glory be displayed in their destruction, and in the complete salvation of his people. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 20—28. *Rev.* vi. 1, 2. xi. 15—18. xix. 11—21. xx. 11—15.)—When Hannah spake this song, there was no king over Israel, so that her words here must be prophetical, both of David the type, and Christ the Antitype.—'Who 'doth not see that the spirit of this woman (whose name 'was *Anna*, which signifies *grace*,) prophesied of the 'Christian religion, the city of God, whose King and 'Founder is Christ; and of the grace of God, from which 'the proud are estranged, that they may fall; but the 'humble are filled with it that they may rise?' *Augustine.* —'Indeed this is the first time that the name of *Mes-* 'siah, or *Anointed*, is found in Scripture. With this song, 'that of the blessed Virgin hath such a perfect resem- 'blance, that one cannot but think Hannah had a respect 'to something higher than the quarrel between her and Peninnah, &c.' *Bp. Patrick.*—This indeed is *expressly* saying very little: but it shews what the mind of the writer had in contemplation.—As to Peninnah, on any interpretation, she can be considered no further, than merely as having given *an occasion* for this most sublime and sacred song, which may bear a comparison, or even competition, with the most beautiful and magnificent productions of any other inspired writer.

V. 11. The Levites were not called to any of their peculiar services, until they were twenty-five years of age; but Samuel, being devoted to God in an especial manner, was, from a child, employed about the sanctuary in those things of which he was capable, and thus "did minister "unto the LORD." (*Notes, Num.* viii. 24—26.)

V. 12. The sons of Eli had been brought up in the courts of God, and instructed out of the law, and probably had some general speculative knowledge of God and divine things: yet being sons of Belial, men of a rebellious and disobedient spirit, (*Marg. Ref.* n. *Note, Deut.* xiii. 13—18,) it is said, that "they knew not the LORD." They had neither that acquaintance with the divine perfections, nor that disposition of heart to love them, which are essential to true religion; nor that *experience* of the faithfulness and loving-kindness of God, to which those attain, who trust him and call on him, and have real communion with him. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 9. *John* xvii. 1—3.)—Eli appears to have been a godly man, and probably set his sons a good example in private life, and gave them good advice and instruction: but he yielded to a natural timidity and feebleness of mind, and shunned trouble and exertion. Thus he was induced to indulge his children, instead of exercising his parental authority to restrain and correct them when young: and he connived at many abuses in the service of the sanctuary, till they became *customs*, and made way for greater abominations; and even then he did not exert himself, as it became the high priest and judge of Isreal, to punish and repress them. (*Notes*, 23—29. iii. 13.)

V. 13—16. The priests had the whole breast, the right shoulder, the cheeks, and the maw, allotted to them by the law, out of every peace-offering. (*Notes, Lev.* vii. 29—

17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great [s] before the LORD; for men [t] abhorred the offering of the LORD.

18 ¶ But Samuel [u] ministered before the LORD, *being* a child, girded with [x] a linen ephod.

19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought *it* to him [y] from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

20 And Eli [z] blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman, for the [*] loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home.

21 And the LORD [a] visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel [b] grew before the LORD.

22 ¶ Now Eli [c] was very old, and heard all that his sons [d] did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that [†] assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

s Gen. vi. 11. x. 9. xiii. 13. 2 Kings xxi. 6. Ps. li. 4. Is. iii. 8.
t Mal. ii. 8. 13. Matt. xviii. 7.
u ii. iii. 1.
x xxii. 18. Ex. xxviii. 4. Lev. viii. 7. 2 Sam. vi. 14.
y i. 3. 21. Ex. xxiii. 14.
z Gen. xiv. 19. xxvii. 27—29. Num. vi. 23—27. Ruth ii. 12. iv. 11.
* Or, *petition which she asked, &c.* i. 27, 28.
a i. 19, 20. Gen. xxi. 1. Luke i. 68.
b 26. iii. 19. Judg. xiii. 24. Luke i. 80. ii. 40. 52.
c viii. 1.
d 13—17. Jer. vii. 9, 10. Ez. xxii. 26. Hos. iv. 9—11.
† Heb. *assembled by troops.* Ex. xxxviii. 8.

34. *Deut.* xviii. 3.) But in addition to this, it had become customary for the servants of the priests to come, while the flesh was boiling, for the use of the offerer and his friends, in vessels of various sizes, according to the nature of the oblation, placed in the court of the tabernacle; and to carry away whatever the flesh-hook, or three-pronged fork, brought up: and the people in veneration for the priesthood quietly submitted to it; by which the appetites of the priests were gratified with greater variety, and their avarice with an additional perquisite. The sons of Eli, however, were not satisfied with this innovation, which did not always secure the choicest parts: but, while they neglected or postponed "burning the fat," (which, typifying the sacrifice of Christ, and being the appointed expression of the offerer's repentance and faith, was essential to the acceptance of the sacrifice;) they insisted upon having such portions of the flesh as they chose, for roasting: and when any one, however conscientiously and mildly, remonstrated against this abuse in a sacred ordinance, though willing to yield every other point, the very servants were so insolent, as to threaten to take it by force! Thus these priests "lorded it over God's heritage," and "kicked at his sacrifice which he had commanded!" (*Notes, Is.* lvi. 9—12. *Hos.* iv. 6—11. *Mal.* i. 12—14. 1 *Pet.* v. 1—4.)

V. 17. The contempt of God and his ordinances, shewn by the sons of Eli, was in all respects very great; and the sin was aggravated by their publick character and eminent station. But it is especially noted, that through them "men abhorred the offering of the LORD." Many were so prejudiced by their scandalous behaviour, as entirely to neglect religion: others would deem it unnecessary to put themselves to the trouble and expense of going up to Shiloh with their sacrifices, there to witness such enormities; which would prove a temptation to sacrificing in other places, contrary to the law: and even those who persevered in attending, were so grieved, that they hated to go, and had no comfort in the ordinances. So that the stated worship of God was likely to be quite forsaken, and general ignorance, ungodliness, profligacy, or idolatry, to ensue. It does not appear that Eli reproved his sons for these things, or refused feasting with them on those portions which they sacrilegiously obtained. (*Notes*, 29. *Mal.* ii. 4—9.)

V. 18, 19. The contrast between the child Samuel and the wicked sons of Eli, between his docility and early piety and their daring impiety, seems *intentionally* marked, by the accounts of them being thus interwoven.—It was a trial of the faith of Elkanah and Hannah, to leave their son with such abandoned priests: but they were performing a vow, and the Lord, with whom they trusted him, preserved him from the contagion. Eli likewise was peculiarly pleased with him, and clothed him when employed at the sanctuary in a linen ephod, such as the ordinary priests wore, and others occasionally in the service of God; (*Notes*, xxii. 18. *Ex.* xxviii. 40, 41. 2 *Sam.* vi. 14, 15;) thus denoting the great expectations that he had from him. His parents also, who persevered in coming to the courts of the Lord, notwithstanding the misconduct of the priests, supplied him with every thing further that he wanted.

V. 20, 21. It seems that Elkanah and Hannah, having so hopeful a son, (whom however they seldom saw,) were satisfied, though for several years they had no more children. It appears also that Eli, notwithstanding his misconduct in respect of his sons, really loved those who loved the Lord; and was so pleased with the conduct of Samuel, and with the piety of his parents, that his heart was enlarged in blessing them, and in praying that they might be recompensed, for devoting their only son to the service of God's sanctuary, by the comfort of more children: and his prayer in this respect was abundantly answered.

V. 22. (*Note, Ex.* xxxviii. 8.) These "women that "assembled at the door of the tabernacle," are said by some writers to have dedicated themselves, by courses, to the service of the sanctuary, doing any work pertaining to it, which belonged to their sex; such as spinning, weaving curtains, washing the garments, and various services of a similar nature: and by their attendance for these purposes, the priests at the sanctuary had an opportunity of forming an acquaintance with them. Their business, however, was doubtless professedly of a religious nature: but when those, who ought to have been their instructors in piety, used their influence to solicit them to wickedness, the most shameful consequences followed.—A more horrible abomination can scarcely be conceived: and it could hardly have been deemed credible, did not every age produce examples in some respects similar and not less atrocious, to the great dishonour of the gospel, and to the hardening and rejoicing of the hearts of infidels and profligates. (*Notes, Jer.* xxiii. 13—15. *Hos.* vi. 8—10. *Matt.* xviii. 7—9. 2 *Pet.* ii. 12—14.)

23 And he said unto them, [e] Why do ye such things? for [*] I hear of your evil dealings [f] by all this people.

24 Nay, my sons; for *it is* [g] no good report that I hear: [h] ye make the LORD's people to [†] transgress.

25 If one man [i] sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but [k] if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they [l] hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.

26 And the child Samuel [m] grew on, and [n] was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.

27 ¶ And there came [o] a man of God unto Eli and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [p] Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt, in Pharaoh's house?

28 And [q] did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and [r] did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?

29 Wherefore [s] kick ye at my sacrifice, and at mine offering, which I have commanded *in my* [t] habitation; and [u] honourest thy sons above me, to [x] make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?

e 1 Kings i. 6. Acts ix. 4. xiv. 15.
* Or, *I hear evil words of you.*
f Is. iii. 9. Jer. iii. 3. viii. 12. Phil. iii. 19.
g Acts vi. 3. 2 Cor. vi. 8. 1 Tim. iii. 7. 3 John 12.
h 17.22. Ex. xxxii. 21. 1 Kings xiii. 18—21. xv. 30. 2 Kings x. 31. Mal. ii. 8. Matt. xviii. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Rev. ii. 20.
† Or, *cry out.*
i Deut. xvii. 8—12. xxv. 1—3.
k iii. 14. Num. xv. 30. Ps. li. 4. 16. Heb. x. 26.
l Deut. ii. 30. Josh. xi. 20. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Prov. xv. 10. John xii. 39, 40.
m 21.
n Prov. iii. 4. Luke i. 80. ii. 40. 52. Acts ii. 47. Rom. xiv. 18.
o ix. 6. Deut. xxxiii. 1. Judg. vi. 8. xiii. 6. 1 Kings xiii. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Pet. i. 21.
p Ex. iv. 14. 27.
q Ex. xxviii. 1. 4. 6—30. xxix. 4. &c. xxxix. 1. &c. Lev. viii. 7. 8. Num. xvi. 5. xvii. 5—8. xviii. 1—7. 2 Sam. xii. 7.
r Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 16. vii. 7, 8. 32. 35. x. 14, 15. Num. v. 9, 10. xviii. 8—19. Deut. xviii. 1—8.
s 13—17. Deut. xxxii. 15. Mal. i. 12, 13.
t Deut. xii. 5, 6. Josh. xviii. 1.
u Lev. xix. 15. Deut. xxxiii. 9. Matt. x. 37. xxii. 16. Luke xiv. 26. 2 Cor. v. 16. Jam. iii. 17.
x 13—16. Is. lvi. 11, 12. Ez. xiii. 19. xxxiv. 2. Hos. iv. 8. Mic. iii. 5. Rom. xvi. 18.

V. 23—25. This last enormity induced Eli to reprove his sons; which he did in language very reasonable, and suited to the case of those who, though faulty, possess a tender conscience; but far too mild for such atrocious offenders. Indeed no *words* ought in this case to have sufficed: the execution of condign punishment upon them was absolutely due to the insulted honour of God, and needful to counteract, by a salutary example, the fatal effects of their crimes upon the minds of the people. To have finally excluded them from the execution of every priestly office, was the least that Eli, as the high priest and the judge of Israel, ought to have done: and if he had imitated the zeal of his tribe, "who said to his father and "mother, I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge "his brethren, nor know his own children;" (*Notes, Ex.* xxxii. 27—29. *Deut.* xxxiii. 9;) and if he had honoured God more than his ungodly sons, he would have done it (29). There were priests enough without employing such monsters of iniquity: and his neglect was chastised in the most terrible manner, in their destruction, with the slaughter of thirty thousand Israelites, in the captivity of the ark, in his own violent death, and in the ruin of his family. (*Notes*, iv.) His words, however, are worthy of consideration: he endeavoured to convince his sons, that their conduct was notoriously evil; that their characters were publickly infamous; that religion was scandalized; and that the Lord's people were in various ways made to transgress. If their crimes had only injured their fellow-creatures, the judge might have appointed a penalty, which being paid, or submitted to, the guilt might have been taken away: or if their sin had been of an ordinary kind, the priest, who was judge in such cases, having offered their sin-offering and intreated the Lord for them, they might have been forgiven. But their offence was so directly against the Lord, and so interwoven with their ministrations as priests, in offering the sacrifices for sin, that no expiation could be accepted for the presumptuous crime; no intreaty nor intercession could be made for them; and none could dare to stand between them and the wrath of God to which they were exposed. For the intercession for sinners with a holy God, was grounded upon the atonement of the promised Saviour, which was typified by the sacrifices that they had so horribly polluted. (*Notes, Heb.* x. 26—31.) This seems to be the meaning couched under Eli's words, though through his timidity, and perhaps indistinct views of the subject, not very clearly expressed.—The case of these wicked men was indeed bad, when their own father could not intreat the Lord for them, though he had not resolution to restrain and punish them!—It seems that they utterly disregarded his reproof; for the Lord was determined to restore the honour of his own ordinances by executing signal vengeance upon them, and therefore he left them to total obduracy. (*Notes, Deut.* ii. 30. *Josh.* xi. 19, 20. 2 *Sam.* xvii. 7—14. 2 *Chr.* xxv. 14—16.)—The original signifies, that *it was pleasing* to the Lord to slay them.

V. 27, 28. This prophet was sent, as an extraordinary messenger from God, to reprove the neglect and wickedness of his ordinary ministers the priests; and even of the high priest, the divinely constituted head of the church and ruler of the nation of Israel; and indeed, in some or all of these respects, the subsequent prophets were the same. This humiliating circumstance was in itself a token of the Lord's displeasure, and a preparation for Eli's being further warned by the mouth even of the child Samuel. (*Notes*, iii. 8—14.) The signal favours, which the Lord had conferred on the house of Aaron, and the family of Eli, were mentioned as an aggravation of his sin, which was thus marked with black ingratitude.—"Wearing an "ephod," here refers to the sacred ephod with the breastplate of judgment, with which the high priest consulted the Lord. (*Note, Ex.* xxviii. 30.)

V. 29. Eli, as high priest and judge, was bound to repress wickedness without partiality, and to maintain the worship of God in purity; so that he was deemed an accomplice in the crimes of his sons, because he connived at them. He therefore, as well as they, was charged with "kicking at" and despising the sacrifices; only regarding them as the means of their gratification. (*Note*, 13—16.) This arose especially from undue regard to his sons, whom

30 Wherefore the LORD God of Israel
y Ex. xxviii. 43. xxix. 9. Num. xxv. 11—13.
saith, [y] I said indeed *that* thy house,
z Num. xiv. 34. *Marg.* 2 Chr. xv. 2. Jer. xviii. 9, 10.
and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the
a Judg. ix. 9. Ps. l. 23. Prov. iii. 9. Is. xxix. 13. Dan. iv. 34. Mal. i. 6. John v. 23. viii. 49. xiii. 31, 32. xvii. 4, 5.
LORD saith, [z] Be it far from me; for [a] them that honour me, [b] I will honour,
b Ps. xci. 14. John v. 44. xii. 26. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 1 Pet. i. 7.
and they [c] that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.
c Num. xi. 20. 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10. Mal. ii. 9.
31 Behold, the days come that [d] I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not
d iv. 2. 11. 17—20. xiv. 3. xxii. 17—20. 1 Kings ii. 26, 27. Job xxii. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 17. Ez. xxx. 21—24.
be an old man in thine house.
32 And thou shalt see * an enemy *in my* habitation, in all *the wealth* which *God* shall give Israel: and there
* Or, *the affliction of the tabernacle, for all the wealth which God would have given Israel.* iv. 4. 11. 22. Ps. lxxviii. 59—64.
shall not be [e] an old man in thine house for ever.
e Zech. viii. 4.
33 And the man of thine *whom* I
f xxii. 21—23. 1 Kings i. 7. 19. ii. 26, 27. Matt. ii. 16—18.
shall not cut off from mine altar, *shall be* [f] to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die † in the flower of their age.
† Heb. men.
34 And this *shall be* [g] a sign unto
g iii. 12. 1 Kings xiii. 3. xiv. 12.
thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; [h] in
h iv. 11. 17.
one day they shall die both of them.
35 And [i] I will raise me up a faithful priest, *that* shall do according to *that* which *is* in mine heart, and in my mind: and [k] I will build him a sure
i 1 Kings i. 8. 45. ii. 35. 1 Chr. xxix. 22. Ez. xxxiv. 23. xliv. 15. Heb. ii. 17. vii. 26—28.
k xxv. 28. Ex. i. 21. Num. xxv. 13. 2 Sam. vii. 11. 27. 1 Kings xi. 38. 1 Chr. vi. 8—15. Neh. xii. 10, 11. 1 Ps. ii. 2. xviii. 50.
house; and he shall walk before [l] mine anointed for ever.
36 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that [m] is left in thine house shall come *and* crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, † Put me, I pray thee, into ‡ one of the priests' offices, that I may [n] eat a piece of bread.
m 1 Kings ii. 27. Ez. xliv. 10—12.
† Heb. *Join.*
‡ Heb. *somewhat about the priesthood.*
n 29, 30. Mal. i. 13.

he *honoured* more than God himself; by preferring their safety, interest, authority, and indulgence, to his glory: whereas he ought not to have "known his own children," but to have disregarded even their lives; suppressing paternal tenderness, in his zeal for God and his ordinances. (*Marg. Ref.*—2 *Cor.* v. 16. 1 *Tim.* v. 20—22. *Jam.* iii. 17, 18.)

V. 30. The promise of a perpetual priesthood, given first to Aaron, was afterwards made to Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, Aaron's eldest son: (*Notes, Num.* xxv. 11—13. 1 *Chr.* vi. 4—15:) but Eli was of the line of Ithamar; and it is not known on what account, and at what time, the high priesthood was transferred from Eleazar's family to that of Ithamar. In both instances a tacit *condition* must have been implied; namely, while "they walked before "God," in faith and piety. (*Note, Num.* xiv. 34.)—The reason however, assigned for setting aside Eli's family, is of universal application: "Them that honour me I will "honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly "esteemed." Those who choose God for their Portion, who trust him for salvation, love him above all created objects, renounce worldly interests and connexions for his glory, and count nothing too valuable to part with, too hard to do, or too sharp to suffer, for his sake, and to promote his cause; shall be honoured by him, perhaps in this world, certainly in the world to come: but those, who despise his authority, his salvation, cause, or glory, in comparison of the interests, ease, credit, or pleasure, of themselves or families; shall sink into contempt in this world, or in the world to come, or in both. (*Marg. Ref.* b, c. *Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxiv. 15, 16. xxxi. 20, 21. *Mal.* ii. 1—9.)—*For ever.*] *Note, Gen.* xvii. 7, 8.

V. 31—34. This prediction began to be fulfilled, when the Philistines vanquished the Israelites with great slaughter, and killed Eli's two sons in one day; and afterwards in the massacre of his descendants by Saul, and in the deposition of Abiathar for treason by Solomon, with the subsequent degradation of his family. (*Notes,* iv. 10—18. xxii. 17—19. 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27.) As Eli had so greatly offended in old age, it was also foretold, that his descendants, even in future ages, should die in the prime of life; which no doubt was exactly fulfilled, though little dependence can be placed on the instances mentioned by the Jewish writers as examples of it.—When Eli witnessed the removal of the ark from Shiloh, he might be said, according to the marginal reading, to "see the affliction of the tabernacle, "for," or instead of, "all the wealth which God would "have given Israel:" for thus the tabernacle was spoiled of its chief glory; and when the ark was taken by the Philistines, Israel was deprived of their richest treasure.—The tidings of these events hastened the death of Eli: and had he lived to see the subsequent calamities of his family, the sight would have been most painful to his eyes, and grieving to his heart. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 35, 36. Zadok, of the line of Eleazar, was made high priest by Solomon, whose posterity continued in that office till the captivity; (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* vi. 4—15. xxiv. 1—4. 6;) and concurred with the pious princes in promoting true religion: while the descendants of Eli, being excluded from the more honourable and lucrative parts of their office, would abjectly petition the priests for the lowest services, in order to obtain the meanest maintenance.—The concurrence of the priests of Aaron's line with the kings of David's family, while they thus walked before the anointed of the Lord, typified the union of the kingly and priestly offices in Jesus Christ: which seems also to have been predicted. No mention had been made of *anointing* a king over Israel, when this prophecy was delivered. (*Notes,* 10. *Deut.* xvii. 14, 15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The mercies which we receive in answer to our prayers, should not only be acknowledged with thankful praise, but should lead us to rejoice in the Lord as the Fountain of felicity and the God of salvation; and to anticipate with

CHAP. III.

The Lord reveals himself to the child Samuel, and informs him of his purposes against the house of Eli, 1—14. Samuel, adjured by Eli, tells him the vision; and Eli answers submissively, 15—18. Samuel is established to be a prophet of the Lord, 19—21.

cheerful hope our complete deliverance, and victory over all the enemies of our souls. From what the Lord has done *for us*, we should be led to meditate upon his glorious perfections, as displayed in all his works, but especially in his dealings with sinners who hope in his mercy.—An established judgment, concerning his perfect wisdom, power, love, and faithfulness, as exercised with sovereign authority, in the whole administration of his kingdom of providence and grace; and an habitual regard to his operations in all those events, which take place through the instrumentality of second causes, or rational agents, of whatever kind or character; will confirm our belief, that they, and they only, are safe and happy, who trust in him and enjoy his favour; and that the present success, boastings, and confidence of the wicked, will shortly terminate in disappointment, misery, and despair; and the troubles of every humble believer, in triumph and exultation.—Vain and transitory are all distinctions, except that between the godly and the ungodly, which will swallow up the rest, and endure to all eternity.—"The LORD is a God of "knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." He knows and approves his people, and he marks with abhorrence the presumptuous offender: with uncontroulable authority he dispenses to every man, as he pleases; and in his own most wise and gracious time and manner he will terminate the afflictions of his people, advance their comforts, and over-rule every event for their good. Let us then wait his time, and submissively trust him; and we shall acknowledge at last that "he hath done all things well." Every circumstance of our life and death is already appointed in the secret purpose of our God: we shall live, however exposed, till he pleases to take away our breath; and then we must die, whatever efforts be made to prolong our lives. As this period, unknown to us, cannot be far distant, it is our wisdom and duty to prepare for it: making it our one great business to obtain the favour of God and do his will; in assured hope that, however abject our condition in this world, we shall at length "inherit the "throne of glory."—Though our path be dark and slippery, and beset with snares and enemies, the Lord will keep our feet, and uphold our goings, by the same power which established the earth: nor can any power prevail against his saints, or prevent the destruction of his enemies. May the Lord hasten that day, when his anointed Priest and King shall establish his authority throughout the earth, upon the ruins of all opposition!

V. 11—26.

Our gracious God accepts thanks for mercies received, as prayers for further benefits; and when we offer him his own, he considers the service as a loan, and as such will recompense it. (*Note, Prov.* xix. 17.) Out of the mouth of babes he can perfect his praise, and by their example expose the shame of those sons of Belial who, with every advantage, know him not, and rebel against him. (*Notes, Matt.* xi. 25, 26. xxi. 14—16.)—We have great encouragement to devote our children to the Lord in prayer from their birth, yea from their conception, to bring them early to his courts, and to train them up in his ways; for in this manner he generally takes them into his service, and gives them that *spiritual* and *experimental* knowledge of himself, which fortifies the heart against temptation, and is the source of all godliness. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 9.)—The feeble attempts of children to serve God are noticed with condescending regard, as peculiarly pleasing to him; for in all cases, "where there is a willing mind, it is accepted "according to what a man hath, and not according to "what he hath not:" and the grace of God is sufficient for his feeblest servants, when in their proper place, though in the midst of the worst examples, and struggling with the most powerful temptations. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxix.)—The neglect of properly educating children, and the indulgence of their wayward inclinations, is a sin which God severely chastises in his own people: because it seems to imply a contempt of his authority and special favour, and a disregard to his glory, as well as to *their* immortal souls; and because it tends to the most fatal crimes and apostasies, and to the utter decay of true religion. None are generally more abandoned than the degenerate offspring of pious persons, when they have broken through all the restraints of shame, conscience, and regard to character: and thus the cause of religion suffers, both in losing those families which were its support, and in the prejudice which their base conduct excites in the minds of beholders. And when such children of Belial have been admitted into the sacred ministry, and are allowed to go on with the forms of godliness, for the sake of emolument or authority; they prove the most fatal enemies to the cause of God, and the most destructive murderers of the souls of men. Many they mislead, but more they set against all religion; they furnish infidels and scoffers with their most formidable weapons; they supply excuses to the careless and slothful; they discourage the hearts, and damp the zeal, of those who are seriously disposed, and "cause even the LORD's people "to transgress;" they buoy up the confidence of hypocrites, and by their enticements and examples tempt many to those sins, which they would otherwise have trembled to think of.—We ought not, however, on account of such men, to neglect the ordinances, truths, or precepts of God's word: but by persevering in a contrary conduct, we should enter our protest against them, and evince the difference between the name and the reality of religion.—Abuses, when once introduced, are soon sanctioned by custom, and conformed to without hesitation. Thus *customs* and *precedents* acquire *authority* in the church, which it is deemed by a great majority very sinful to dissent from or object to, even in the most peaceful manner.—Yet when wicked men have thus gained one point for their own lucre or ambition, they will attempt another, and not shrink from the basest crimes to serve their selfish purposes. And is it not evident, that the whole system of papal antichristianity grew up in this manner, to its full stature of spiritual domination and iniquity?—The beginnings should therefore be steadily resisted; and in such a case mild arguments and gentle rebukes are feeble weapons; the coercive arm of authority should impartially and

a 15. ii. 11. 18. AND a the child Samuel ministered
b 21. Ps. lxxiv. 9. Is. xiii. 12. Am. viii. 11. 12. unto the LORD before Eli. And b the word of the LORD was precious in those days; *there was* no open vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli *was* laid down in his place,
c ii. 22. iv. 15. Gen. xxvii. 1. xlviii. 10. Ps. xc. 10. Ec. xii. 3. and c his eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not see;

d Ex. xxvii. 20, 21. xxx. 7, 8. Lev. xxiv. 2—4. 2 Chr. xiii. 11.
e i. 9. Ps. v. 7. xxvii. 4. xxix. 9. 3 And ere d the lamp of God went out in e the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God *was*, and Samuel was laid down *to sleep*;

4 That the LORD f called Samuel: and he answered, Here *am* I.
f Gen. xxii. 1. Ex. iii. 4. Ps. xcix. 6. Acts ix. 4. 1 Cor. xii. 6—11. 28. Gal. i. 15, 16.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, g my son; lie down again.
g iv. 16. Gen. xliii. 29. 2 Sam. xviii. 22. Matt. ix. 2.

decisively interpose: for, though the magistrate must not use his sword in matters simply of conscience towards God; yet he ought to use it in punishing atrocious immorality in persons of every description: and the rulers of the church are bound, by the strongest responsibility, to exercise their spiritual authority, in excluding them from the sacred office. If, however, they escape with impunity, through the false tenderness or partial negligence of those who ought to execute condign punishment upon them, they will not escape the vengeance of God: and wretched indeed is the case of those, who, by their contempt of the sacrifice of Christ, are excluded from the benefit of his intercession; and who have so long hardened themselves, as to be left to judicial hardness, in the righteous judgment of God, because he has determined to destroy them! (*Note*, 2 *Thes.* ii. 8—12.)

V. 27—36.

If the servants of God yield to temptation, and repeatedly commit iniquity; he will persevere in his rebukes and chastenings, till he has brought them to repentance: and in this process the offenders will suffer unspeakable anguish. The dishonour which they have occasioned to the name of the Lord, shall redound in disgrace upon themselves and their families; the crimes which they have connived at in others, through self-indulgence or partial affection, will be corrected in themselves; their expectations will be blasted, their distinctions withered, their usefulness precluded, and their honour laid in the dust, or rather transferred to those who honour God: and perhaps the repeated and severest strokes of the Lord's chastising rod, shall pursue them down to the grave.—That improper regard to the interests of his family, which induces a man to offend God, often proves the immediate cause of its ruin; whilst a disregard shewn by any one, to all personal or relative interests, when the glory of God is concerned, forms the best method of promoting the welfare of his posterity.—Many of the Lord's offending people live to witness terrible effects of their misconduct; but how would it grieve their hearts, if they could foresee all the future consequences of every kind, to their families, and to the church, and in hardening sinners to their destruction! Let us endeavour to conceive of them, that we may be led to greater abhorrence and dread of sin, and to more constant watchfulness and prayer: for these things were written for our warning, that we might the more earnestly resist temptation, and strive against the beginnings of iniquity, and train up our families "in the nurture and admonition "of the Lord."—But whosoever misbehaves, or is degraded, the work of the Lord shall not be stayed for want of instruments: and though others have been and are useful and faithful, as servants, in their several generations; yet the Son of God is the faithful and merciful High Priest, who doeth according to all that is in the heart of his heavenly Father, and whose priesthood shall be unchangeable and eternal. The meanest office under him is great preferment; his pleasant service is perfect freedom: he will here feed, and hereafter glorify, all who disinterestedly serve him; but the hirelings he will utterly exclude.—May he furnish and send forth many faithful ministers, who may seek his glory, and follow his example; and never henceforth suffer any, who resemble Hophni and Phinehas, to prostitute the sacred ministry to their avarice and ambition, or to disgrace it by their crimes!

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Samuel, under the direction of Eli, diligently performed such services at the tabernacle as he was capable of. (*Notes*, ii. 11. 18, 19.) He is supposed at this time to have been about twelve years of age; and he was early prepared to enter on the prophetical office, for which the Lord intended him. (*Note, Jer.* i. 5.)—From the death of Moses, no more than two prophets have been mentioned; (except Deborah, who is called a prophetess:) and these only delivered an occasional message, and then retired; so that their names are not recorded. (ii. 27. *Judg.* vi. 8—10.) Samuel was therefore the first eminent prophet after Moses; and with him prophecy was openly established: so that for several ages prophets were raised up in Israel by a regular succession. But before this time there had been "no open vision:" whatever revelation might be made to individuals, or occasional messages publickly delivered, there was no acknowledged prophet, to whom the people might resort, to know the mind and will of God: and therefore such intimations, as were then given, were more highly valued, than when the gift of prophecy became more common. (*Note*, *Am.* viii. 11—14.)

V. 2, 3. The lamp in the sanctuary, ought to have been constantly kept burning. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Ex.* xxvii. 20, 21. xxx. 7, 8.)—Eli being old and infirm had lain down long before; but Samuel was just retired to rest, in some room adjoining that of Eli, and near to the sanctuary.

V. 4—6. The Lord called Samuel by name, in an

7 * Now Samuel [h] did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8 And the LORD called Samuel again [i] the third time. And he arose, and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, [k] Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went, and lay down in his place.

10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak, for thy servant heareth.

11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, [l] I will do a thing in Israel, at which [m] both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

12 In that day [n] I will perform against Eli all *things* which I have spoken concerning his house: [†] when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 [‡] For I have told him, that [o] I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity [p] which he knoweth: because [q] his sons made themselves [§] vile, and he [‖] restrained them not.

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that [r] the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

15 ¶ And Samuel lay until the morning, and [s] opened the doors of the house of the LORD: and Samuel [t] feared to shew Eli the vision.

16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here *am* I.

17 And he said, What *is* the thing that *the LORD* hath said unto thee? [u] I pray thee hide *it* not from me: [x] God

* Or, *Thus* did *Samuel before he knew the LORD, and before the word of the LORD was revealed unto him.*

h Jer. ix. 24. Acts xix. 2.

i Job xxxiii. 14, 15.

k Ex. xx. 19. Ps. lxxxv. 8. Is. vi. 8. Dan. x. 19. Acts ix. 6.

l Is. xxix. 14. Am. iii. 6, 7. Hab. i. 5. Acts xiii. 41.

m 2 Kings xxi. 12. Is. xxviii. 19. Jer. xix. 3. Luke xxi. 26.

n ii. 27—36. Num. xxiii. 19. Josh. xxiii. 15. Zech. i. 6. Luke xxi. 33.

† Heb. *beginning and ending.*

‡ Or, *And I will tell,* &c. ii. 27, &c.

o 2 Chr. xx. 12. Ez. vii. 3. xviii. 30. Joel iii. 12.

p 1 Kings ii. 44. Ec. vii. 22. 1 John iii. 20.

q ii. 12—17. 22.

§ Or, *accursed.*

‖ Heb. *frowned not upon them.* ii. 23—25. 1 Kings i. 6. Prov. xix. 18. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15. Matt. x. 37.

r ii. 25. Num. xv. 30, 31. Is. xxii. 14. Jer. vii. 16. xv. 1. Ez. xxiv. 13. Heb. x. 26—31.

s i. 9. Mal. i. 10.

t Jer. i. 6—8. 1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11.

u Ps. cxli. 5. Dan. iv. 19. Mic. ii. 7.

x xx. 13. Ruth i. 17. 2 Sam. iii. 35. xix. 13. 1 Kings xxii. 16. Matt. xxvi. 63.

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audible voice: (*Marg. Ref.* f:) which he mistook for the call of Eli, who probably often disturbed him in the night through the infirmities of old age. But when Eli assured him, that he did not call him, he went again to his bed, and concluded that he had been mistaken.—His respectful and affectionate assiduity, in waiting on the aged high priest, is well worthy of our notice. For he came, and even ran, at the first call, and that repeatedly: and Eli's language to him is expressive of affection.

V. 7. Samuel was not destitute of the knowledge of God, in that sense which implies the total absence of true piety, as Eli's sons were: (*Note,* ii. 12:) but he did not know his manner of making his will known to the prophets, and therefore was not sensible that this was the voice of God. (*Marg.*) The LORD, however, over-ruled his mistake, to make Eli acquainted with his purpose of revealing himself to Samuel, and to excite his enquiry about it.

V. 8, 9. Eli could not but consider the preference, which the Lord thus shewed to a child, before himself and family, as a severe and humiliating rebuke; especially as he had reason to forebode that the message which he was about to receive, would be a denunciation of judgments on him and his family: yet, without envy, resentment, or impatience, he gave Samuel proper directions how to behave on the occasion.

Speak, LORD. (9) Or, "Speak, O JEHOVAH."

V. 10. *And stood,* &c.] This seems to imply a visible appearance, as well as an audible voice.—It is also mentioned that the name Samuel was twice repeated; and we may observe that Samuel omitted the word LORD, or JEHOVAH, in answering as Eli had instructed him, probably, through uncertainty, timidity, or profound awe and reverence.

V. 11. *Shall tingle.*] The very report would exceedingly affect the hearer, and would seem to thrill in his ears long after; as very loud and stupendous noises are used to do. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* iv. 13—22. *Is.* xxviii. 17—19.)

V. 12. (*Notes,* ii. 27—36.) It is probable, that this message was sent to Eli some years before his death; and this forbearance of God tended to harden the hearts of Eli's sons, in presumptuous expectations of impunity: but when he had once begun to execute the threatened vengeance, he repeated his strokes till the whole had been accomplished.

V. 13. Eli did not use coercive measures to restrain his sons, as he ought to have done: and by this omission he brought ruin on his family. (See *marg. readings.*—*Notes,* ii. 12. 22—25. 29, 30.)

V. 14. The sins of pious individuals among Eli's posterity would be pardoned, through the sacrifice of Christ, for their eternal salvation: but the Lord had irrevocably determined, that no number of sin-offerings or oblations should prevail with him, to continue that family in the high priesthood, or to deliver them from the awful temporal judgments which had been denounced; as perhaps both Eli and his sons hoped would be the case. (*Notes, Num.* xv. 30, 31. *Is.* xxii. 8—14.)

V. 15. In the morning, Samuel opened the gates of the court of the tabernacle, into which the people came to worship, as if nothing had occurred; neither elated with the distinction, nor neglecting his business, nor mentioning the matter, nor shewing the least disrespect to Eli; but rather through his great deference and affection for him, being reluctant to inform him of the distressing message.

V. 16—18. Eli was solicitous to know the revelation which God had made to Samuel, and afraid that he would not *fully* inform him of it: but he must no doubt have been greatly alarmed and distressed, when he heard the awful message, from the mouth of a child, who was

do so to thee, and * more also, if thou hide *any* † thing from me, of all the things that he said unto thee.

18 And Samuel told him ‡ every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, y It *is* the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.

19 And Samuel z grew, and a the LORD was with him, and did b let none of his words fall to the ground.

20 And all Israel, from c Dan even to Beer-sheba, knew that Samuel *was* ‖ established *to be* a prophet of the LORD.

21 And the LORD d appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by e the word of the LORD.

* Heb. *so add.*
† Or, *word.*
‡ Heb. *all the things*, or, *words.*
y Gen. xviii. 25. Judg. x. 15. 2 Sam. xvi. 10—12. Job i. 21. ii. 10. Ps. xxxix. 9. Is. xxxix. 8. Lam. iii. 39. 1 Pet. v. 6.
z ii. 21. Judg. xiii. 24. Luke i. 80. ii. 40. 52.
a xviii. 14. Gen. xxxix. 2. 21—23. Is. xliii. 2. Matt. i. 23. Luke i. 28. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 22.
b ix. 6. 1 Kings viii. 56. Is. xliv. 26.
c Judg. xx. 1. 2 Sam. iii. 10. xvii. 11.
‖ Or, *faithful.* 1 Tim. i. 12.
d Gen. xii. 7. xv. 1. Num. xii. 6. Am. iii. 7. Heb. i. 1.
e 1. 4.

CHAP. IV.

The Israelites, smitten by the Philistines, send for the ark, 1—4. The Philistines are affrighted on account of it; but encourage one another, 5—9. Israel is again smitten, with great slaughter; the ark is taken, and Eli's two sons are slain, 10, 11. On

so respectfully affectionate to him, and dependent on him; and whom he could not possibly suspect of artifice, or corrupt motives, or harshness of language. Yet his answer is very remarkable. He reflected on the wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness of God, as well as on his sovereignty. He acknowledged that he had a right to do as he saw good, and was assured that he would do nothing wrong. He was conscious that he deserved the terrible sentence, and acquiesced in the will of God, casting himself entirely on his mercy.—The meekness, patience, and humility of these words are very admirable, and prove that Eli was truly penitent and pious: (*Marg. Ref.* y. *Notes*, *Lev.* x. 3. *Job* i. 20. 22. *Ps.* xxxix. 9, 10:) though in his old and infirm age, he had not sufficient courage, vigour, or even authority, to execute punishment upon his sons, who would now set him at defiance. (*Notes*, *2 Sam.* iii. 38, 39. *2 Chr.* xxxiii. 15—17.)

V. 19—21. Samuel, it seems, was after this frequently favoured with revelations from God, which he delivered to the people: and as these were punctually accomplished, his appointment to be "a prophet of the LORD" was known and acknowledged, throughout the land. (*Marg. Ref.*) "The word of the LORD," may either mean, an audible voice from God; or the appearance of him, "whose name is called the WORD of GOD."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Men are seldom duly sensible of the value of their mercies, till they are deprived of them: and this perversity operates even in matters pertaining to religion. We, who are favoured with the written word, and the publick preaching of the gospel by ministers of varied talents and endowments, can scarcely conceive how greatly our forefathers, in days of ignorance and persecution, valued a Bible, or the opportunity of hearing a faithful sermon; and how much numbers still value them in different parts of the world. (*Note*, *Deut.* xxxi. 10—13.) This should teach us to be thankful, and to improve our privileges, lest the Lord should shew us their *preciousness*, by the *loss* of them.—He disposes of his special favours in wise and holy sovereignty, without confining himself to age, station, or office in his church; but he orders every thing so as to correct or punish such as offend him, and to "honour those "who honour him."—Docility, diligence, and a humble self-denying disposition in youth, are happy indications of an honourable and useful life.—They, who reduce to practice what they have been already taught, shall be favoured with further discoveries concerning the truth and will of God: and where the heart is upright, mistakes and infirmities will be pardoned, rectified, and over-ruled for good.—Young persons ought to behave with assiduous and attentive kindness to the aged; and to shew a submissive respect to their superiors, even when faulty and under divine rebukes. But no deference to men, because every way superior to themselves, must influence those, whom the Lord employs as his messengers, to conceal or mutilate their message: and they are most unwise in their spiritual concerns, who wish to be flattered; nay, who do not desire above all things to know the whole of the revealed will of God, and the worst of their own state and case. For though temporal punishment may be unalterably determined; yet, blessed be God, the blood of Jesus cleanses the penitent believer from all sin, and assuredly delivers him from eternal misery; and this most gracious Saviour casts out none that come to him, however guilty, vile, or accursed they have made themselves.—Presumptuous hopes of impunity, because the Lord is long-suffering, ruin multitudes who postpone repentance till God hath "sworn "in his wrath that they shall not enter into his rest:" and when he begins to take vengeance, he will also fully execute his most tremendous threatenings.—If temporal sufferings may be so terrible, as to "cause the ears of all "who hear of them to tingle," what will be the everlasting punishment of the wicked! Let us then humble ourselves before God, ere the door of mercy be for ever shut: let us accept of his chastisement, however sharp: let us submit to him, because he is a mighty Sovereign, and because he is perfectly wise, righteous, and merciful: let us cast ourselves upon his mercy and seek his salvation; and study to shew our repentance, not only by good words, but by good works; by restraining others from sin and *frowning* upon them, however otherwise near and dear to us, as well as by avoiding it ourselves, and by faithfully improving every talent committed to us. Then, though the infirmities of age disable us for usefulness, and we meet with many humiliating dispensations, we may rejoice to see others likely to be useful when we are gone; and should willingly impart to them the best counsel we can, though their rising reputation be attended with our dishonour. In this case, should the prospect for our families, our country, or the church of God, be gloomy; we may encourage ourselves in the hope of that state, "where "the wicked "cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest." (*Note*, *2 Sam.* xxiii. 5.)

hearing these tidings Eli falls and breaks his neck, 12—18. The wife of Phinehas travails, names the child I-chabod, and dies, 19—22.

* Or, *came to pass.* Heb. *was.* iii. 11.

AND the word of Samuel * came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside [a] Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in [b] Aphek.

2 And the Philistines [c] put themselves in array against Israel: and when [†] they joined battle, [d] Israel was smitten before the Philistines; [e] and they slew of [‡] the army in the field about four thousand men.

3 And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, [f] Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to-day before the Philistines? [§] Let us [g] fetch [h] the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, [i] it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, [k] which dwelleth *between* [l] the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, [m] Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there [n] with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, [o] all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.

6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, [p] What *meaneth* the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?

a v. 1. vii. 12.
b xxix. 1. Josh. xix. 30. 1 Kings xx. 30.
c xvii. 8. 21.
† Heb. *the battle was spread.*
d Josh. vii. 5—8. 12. Ps. xliv. 9, 10.
e Ps. lxxix. 7, 8. cvi. 40, 41. Lam. iii. 40.
‡ Heb. *the array.*
f Deut. xxix. 24. Ps. lxxiv. 1. 11. Is. l. 1, 2. lviii. 3.
g xiv. 18. Num. xxxi. 6. Josh. vi. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xv. 25. Is. i. 11—15. Jer. vii. 4. 8—15. Matt. iii. 9, 10.
§ Heb. *take unto us.*
h Num. x. 33. Deut. xxxi. 26. Josh. iv. 7. 1 Chr. xvii. 1. Jer. iii. 16. Heb. ix. 4.
i Jer. vii. 8—11. Am. v. 21, 22. Matt. xxiii. 25—28. Rom. ii. 28, 29. 1 Cor. x. 1—5. 2 Tim. iii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Jude 5.
k 2 Sam. vi. 2. 2 Kings xix. 15. Ps. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1
l Ex. xxv. 18—22. Num. vii. 89.
m ii. 12—17. 22. Ps. l. 16, 17. Mal. i. 9. Acts xix. 15, 16.
n Num. iv. 5. 15.
o Judg. xv. 14. Job xx. 5. Jer. vii. 4. Am. vi. 3. Mic. ii. 11.
p Ex. xxxii. 17, 18.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. The word, which the Lord had spoken to Samuel, concerning Eli's family; or the word which from time to time the Lord sent by him to the people, declaring his will and calling them to repentance; was heard throughout the land, and excited great attention. (*Note*, iii. 19—21.)—Some learned men suppose, that the events recorded in this chapter occurred immediately after the death of Samson; and that the slaughter at that time made of the Philistines encouraged the Israelites to attack them. If so, Eli judged Israel during the whole life of Samson, who lived about forty years; as he too judged Israel twenty years. (18. *Notes, Judg.* xv. 20. xvi. 30, 31.) Again, some are of opinion, that these events happened about the middle of the forty years, during which the Philistines oppressed Israel: but on that supposition, Samson must have been born at least twenty years before that oppression began, which does not accord with the narrative: (*Notes, Judg.* xiii. 1. 4, 5:) and if his exploits only made way for the defeats recorded in this chapter; how could it be said that he began to deliver Israel?—Others, however, think that the forty years, during which the Philistines oppressed Israel, ended about seven months after Eli's death, when the ark of God was restored: and in that case the subsequent oppression by the Philistines must be considered, as distinct from that mentioned in the book of Judges. The chronology of these times is, in fact, to us abstruse and uncertain. (*Notes, Judg.* iii. 11. xi. 26.)—Perhaps Samuel was at this time about twenty years of age; but it does not appear that he was consulted on this occasion.—*Eben-ezer.*] *Note*, vii. 12.

V. 3. These elders seem to have been miserably sunk in ignorance and formality, which was the genuine consequence of the impiety of the priests. Though the nation was ripe for dreadful judgments, they had no idea that the defeat which they had received was intended as a warning to repent; and they proposed a very ignorant and presumptuous expedient to secure the assistance of JEHOVAH. They had heard what wonders had formerly been wrought for Israel, when the ark, the symbol of the Lord's presence, was *by his command* carried before the people, under the care of *holy men*, who trusted and glorified him; and when Israel was comparatively an obedient people, fighting under his banner: and they did not make the obvious distinction, between the outward sign or token, and the invisible presence of the Almighty, as assisting his servants: a distinction little noticed, by formalists, either in ancient or modern times; but of the highest importance in all respects, and under every dispensation. In fact they made an idol of the ark, as numbers have done, and do, in respect of the New Testament sacraments; and not only papists, by worshipping the bread, but protestants, by trusting in the outward and visible sign, to the neglect of the inward and spiritual grace: and they imagined that, (without humiliation before God or repentance of their sins,) by fetching the ark into the army, carried by two sons of Belial, who were doomed to destruction, and whose presence brought a curse into the camp, they could induce God to fight for them, though he was evidently contending against them! (*Notes*, ii. 12. 31—34. *Josh.* vii. 10—12. xxii. 20. *P. O. Josh.* vii. 10—15.) Nay, they spake, as if the ark itself could deliver them! (*Marg. Ref.* i.)

V. 4, 5. It is probable, that Hophni and Phinehas did not so much as ask the consent of their aged father on this occasion. Being hardened to their destruction, they were left to venture presumptuously into the holy of holies, and to carry the ark into the army; and thus, without any proper call, they were found within the reach of the sword of the Philistines, by which they were destined to be slain. (ii. 25. *Notes*, ii. 31—34. *Lev.* xvi. 2. *Num.* iv. 5. xxxi. 8.) Doubtless they were much pleased with the service, and proud of coming as the supposed deliverers of Israel, bearing the ark of the covenant. (*Notes, Lev.* x. 1—3.) And when they entered the camp, the whole army was infatuated with the same groundless presumption, and shouted for joy as if already triumphant!—It is very doubtful, whether it was ever lawful to carry the ark into the army, without the express command of God. (*Notes*, xiv. 16—23. 2 *Sam.* xi. 10, 11.)

And they understood that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp.

7 And the Philistines [q] were afraid; for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing [*] heretofore.

8 Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these *are* the Gods that [r] smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

9 [s] Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, [t] as they have been to you: [†] quit yourselves like men, and fight.

10 And the Philistines fought, and [u] Israel was smitten, and they fled [x] every man into his tent; and there was [y] a very great slaughter: for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

11 And [z] the ark of God was taken, and [a] the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, [‡] were slain.

12 And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day, [b] with his clothes rent, and [c] with earth upon his head.

13 And when he came, lo, Eli [d] sat upon a seat by the way-side, watching: for [e] his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told *it*, all the city cried out.

14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, [f] What *meaneth* the noise of this tumult? and the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

15 Now Eli was [g] ninety and eight years old; [h] and his eyes [§] were dim, that he could not see.

16 And the man said unto Eli, I *am* he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, [i] What [‖] is there done, [k] my son?

17 And the messenger answered and said, [l] Israel is fled before the Philistines: and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people; and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and the ark of God is taken.

18 And it came to pass, [m] when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward, by the side of the gate, and [n] his neck brake, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy: and he had judged Israel forty years.

19 ¶ And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas's wife, was with child, *near* to [*] be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains [†] came upon her.

20 And about the time of her death, the women that stood by her, said unto

q Ex. xiv 25. xv. 14—16. Deut. xxxii. 30.
* Heb. *yesterday, or the third day.*
r Ex. vii. 5. ix. 14. Ps. lxxviii. 43—51.
s 2 Sam. x. 12. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Eph. vi. 10, 11.
t Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. Judg. x. 7. xiii. 1. Is. xiv. 2. xxxiii. 1.
† Heb. *be men.*
u 2. Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut. xxviii. 25. Ps. lxxviii. 9. 62.
x 2 Sam. xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 16. xxii. 36. 2 Kings xiv. 12.
y 2 Sam. xviii. 7. 2 Chr. xiii. 17. xxviii. 5, 6. Is. x. 3—6.
z ii. 32. Ps. lxxviii. 61.
a ii. 34. Ps. lxxviii. 64. Is. iii. 11.
‡ Heb. *died.*
b 2 Sam. i. 2.
c Josh. vii. 6. 2 Sam. xiii. 19. xv. 32. Neh. ix. 1. Job ii. 12.
d i. 9.
e Josh. vii. 9. Neh. i. 3, 4. Ps. lxxix. 1—8. cxxxvii. 4—6.
g iii. 2. Ps. xc. 10.
h *See* on Gen. xxvii. 1.
§ Heb. *stood.*
i 2 Sam. i. 4.
‖ Heb. *is the thing?*
k *See* on iii. 6. Josh. vii. 19.
l 10, 11. iii. 11.
m 21, 22. Ps. xxvi. 8. xlii. 3. 10. lxix. 9. Lam. ii. 15—19.
n ii. 31, 32. iii. 12, 13. Lev. x. 3. 1 Cor. xi. 30—32. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.
* Or, *cry out.*
† Heb. *were turned.*

V. 7—9. It is no wonder, that the Philistines made no distinction between the ark, and that invisible God, whose presence with his *believing* people this symbol denoted, when the Israelites themselves entirely overlooked it. (*Notes*, 3—5.) The Philistines probably thought, that JEHOVAH was indeed a God, the God of Israel; but then so was Dagon a god, the god of Philistia. (*Notes*, v. 1, 2. *Judg.* xvi. 23, 24.) This therefore did not destroy their hope of gaining the mastery by the help of their god; and it tended on this occasion to increase their intrepidity and resolution.—They spake of the works of JEHOVAH in Egypt and in the wilderness, in language very expressive of their partial information, and confused apprehensions concerning them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10, 11. On the former defeat the Israelites returned to the camp (3): but this was so entire, that the survivors were totally dispersed. Probably Hophni and Phinehas fell fighting in defence of the ark. (*Note*, 4, 5.)

V. 13—18. Though Eli had been most criminally indulgent to his sons, and had abundant reason to expect to hear of their death, as well as of the defeat of Israel, yet his chief anxiety appears to have been about the ark of God. Accordingly he bore the tidings of Israel's calamity, and of the death of his sons, in the midst of their unrepented crimes, with fortitude and resignation. (*Notes*, iii. 16—18. 2 *Sam.* xviii. 28—33.) But when he heard that "the ark of God was taken;" his reflections on the dishonour to God and to religion, and the dreadful loss to his people, which his sins and negligence had occasioned, were more than he could support; and falling down in a swoon, his neck brake and he died. Thus his death, under a divine rebuke for his sins, has been a salutary warning to others, even to this present day: yet, in the circumstances of it he testified his supreme regard to the honour of God, and the interests of religion, above all personal and relative considerations; and notwithstanding all his faults, he died in a lively exercise of love to God and his ordinances, and even by occasion of it.

V. 19—22. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxv. 17, 18.) The wife of Phinehas, (though married to so wicked a priest,) appears to have been a person of eminent piety. The death of her father-in-law and of her husband contributed to hasten her

her, [o] Fear not, for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, [n] neither did she regard *it*.

21 And she named the child [†] I-chabod, saying, [p] The glory is departed from Israel: (because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law, and her husband.)

22 And she said, [q] The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken.

[o] Gen. xxxv. 17, 18. John xvi. 21.
[n] Heb. *and set not her heart.* Ps. lxxvii. 2.
[†] That is, *Where is the glory?* Or, There is no *glory.* xiv. 3.
[p] Ps xxvi.8.lxxviii. 64. cvi. 20. Jer. ii. 11. Hos. ix. 12.
[q] Ps. cxxxvii. 5, 6. John ii. 17.

CHAP. V

The Philistines place the ark in the temple of Dagon at Ashdod, 1, 2. Dagon falls down before it, and is broken in pieces, 3—5. The Philistines are smitten with emerods at Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, when the ark is brought to those cities, 6—12.

AND the Philistines [a] took the ark of God, and brought it from [b] Eben-ezer unto [c] Ashdod.

2 When the Philistines took the ark

[a] iv. 11. 17, 18. 22. Ps. lxxviii. 61.
[b] iv. 1. vii. 12.
[c] Josh. xi. 22. Acts viii. 40. *Azotus.*

death: [r] but her dying regret was for the captivity of the ark, and the departure of the glory from Israel; for with her parting breath she named her son I-chabod, or *inglorious*. In this her judgment was right: the presence and ordinances of God were the chief glory of Israel; and the loss of them was the departure of that glory. 'This chiefly 'lay at her heart, as the concerns of religion do on all 'pious spirits.' *Bp. Patrick.* But if she supposed that the Lord had finally departed from Israel, she was under a great mistake. From Shiloh indeed the ark, the glory of Israel, was finally removed; for probably the inhabitants of that city had too much resembled the abandoned priests; as is generally the case, when such examples of sacerdotal impiety and profligacy are exhibited: but it was restored to Israel, and established in another place. (*Notes, Ps.* lxxviii. 61—64. 67—69. *Jer.* vii. 12—15.) Neither was the ruin of Eli's family the destruction of the Aaronick priesthood. (*Note,* ii. 35, 36.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the judgments denounced in the word of God do not bring sinners to repentance, the speedy execution of them may be expected.—The nearer any persons are to the Lord in profession, and the greater privileges they are favoured with, the more certain and dreadful will be their punishment, if they thence take encouragement to commit iniquity.—Unhumbled professors of true religion, especially if observant of *forms*, whether of divine appointment or human invention, are apt to think, that they are entitled to help from God, because they are called by his name, though they disgrace it with their crimes; and to murmur at those rebukes, by which they are warned to repent and to amend their lives. As their dependence is placed upon external signs and symbols, the increase of their hypocrisies buoys up their presumptuous hopes: and they often take the name of the Lord in vain, and dishonour him more in attending on his ordinances, than they could do by neglecting them; so that he abhors those services, for which they expect his favour and think themselves entitled to it, or even deserving of it. (*Notes, Ps.* l. 16—21. *Is.* i. 10—20. xlviii. 1, 2. lviii. 1—4. *Jer.* vii. 5—7. 21—23. *Ez.* xx. 39. *Am.* v. 21—24. *Matt.* xxiii. 14.) But he will rather let his avowed enemies triumph for a season, than encourage hypocrites, whose crimes still more dishonour his holy name.—The most avowed infidels and Atheists, and the most atrocious and desperate offenders, have their pangs of conviction and disquietude of mind: with all their efforts, they cannot utterly exclude forebodings of fatal effects from their rebellion against the God of heaven; and though they conceal and quiet this apprehension for a time, and even prosper in their ungodliness; yet their fear will come upon them, and even far worse than they ever foreboded. (*Note, Prov.* x. 24.)—Whilst the impenitent are consigned to final ruin, the offending servants of God, who tremble at his judgments, and for the dishonour which they have occasioned to his name, may die in an awful manner, for a warning to those who are left behind. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xiii. 20—32.) Yet, when death in its most formidable shape finds men humbled for their sins, crying for mercy, and more anxious for the cause of God and truth, than for the most valued earthly comforts, it will eventually prove a blessing; yea, every dispensation is mercy, which rescues the immortal soul from hell. (*P. O. Dan.* iv. 28—37.)—What miseries do some ungodly men entail upon all connected with them! And what an awful lesson is here for parents, who are tempted to connive at the first appearances of vice in their children! Let them reflect on Eli's death, on the far more dreadful condition of his sons, on the dying agonies and sorrows of Phinehas's wife, on the slaughter of Israel, the ark taken captive, "the glory de-"parted," and Shiloh forsaken; and let them tremble to think "how great a matter a little fire kindleth." (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* xi. 1, 2. 2 *Chr.* xviii. 1. xix. 2. xxi. 3, 4.)—'In 'the midst of life we are in death:' some situations however peculiarly remind those placed in them to be ready for a sudden call; and few more than pregnancy.—But those who belong to the Lord, need not desire to survive, when the ordinances of God are withdrawn, and his cause is run down: little comfort can they take in their children, or in life itself, under such circumstances. Yet even these trials will prove blessings, where the ark and cause of God are thus dear to the heart.—Though the glory may successively be withdrawn from sinful nations, cities, or villages; yet it shall never depart from Israel, but shall shine forth in one place, when it has been eclipsed in another: for Jesus, our High Priest, ever liveth to maintain his own cause, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against his church; whatever may be the triumphing boasts of his enemies, or the desponding fears of his people.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. Besides the other wickedness of Israel, the idolatry of the Danites yet remained unpunished and unrepressed: and this might be one reason why the Lord was pleased to deliver his ark into the hand of these idolaters. (*Notes, Judg.* xviii. 30, 31. xx. 8—11. 20—25.) The Philistines concluded that they had overcome the God of Israel, by the help of Dagon, and placed the ark in his

of God, they brought it into the house
d Judg. xvi. 23. 1 Chr. x. 10. Dan. v. 2. 23. Hab. i. 11. 16. of [d] Dagon, and set it by Dagon.

3 And when they of Ashdod arose
e Ex. xii. 12. Ps. xcvii. 7. Is. xix. 1. xlvi. 1, 2. Zeph. ii. 11. Mark iii. 11. Luke x. 18—20. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. early on the morrow, behold, [e] Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the earth, before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and [f] set him in his place
f Is. xl. 20. xli. 7. xliv. 17—20. xlvi. 7. Jer. x. 8. again.

4 And when they arose early on the morrow-morning, behold Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and [g] the
g Is. ii. 18, 19. xxvii. 9. Jer. x. 11. l. 2. Ez. vi. 4—6. Dan. xi. 8. Mic. i. 7. head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands, *were* cut off upon the threshold; only [*] *the stump of* Dagon was left to him.

* Or, *the fishy part.*

5 Therefore [h] neither the priests of
h Ps. cxv. 4—7. cxxxv. 15—18. Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's
i Josh. v. 15. Zeph. i. 9. house, [i] tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

6 ¶ But [k] the hand of the LORD was
k Ex. ix. 3. Ps. xxxii. 4. Acts xiii. 11. heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with
l 9. 11. vi. 5. Deut. xxviii. 27. Job xxxi. 8. Ps. lxxviii. 66. [l] emerods, *even* Ashdod, and the coasts thereof.

7 And when the men of Ashdod
m iv. 8. Ex. viii. 8. 28. ix. 28. x. 7. xii. 33. [m] saw that *it was* so, they said, [n] The
n vi. 20. 2 Sam. vi. 9. 1 Chr. xiii. 11—13. xv. 13. ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us,
o See on 3, 4—Jer. xlvi. 25. xlviii. 7. and [o] upon Dagon our god.

8 They sent therefore and gathered
all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, [p] What shall we do with
p Zech. xii. 3. the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto [q] Gath.
q xvii. 4. Amos vi. 2. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about *thither*.

9 And it was *so*, that after they had carried it about, [r] the hand of the LORD
r 6. vii. 13. xii. 15. Deut. ii. 15. Am. v. 19. ix. 1—4. was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, [s] and
s 6. vi. 4, 5. 11. Ps. lxxviii. 66. they had emerods in their secret parts.

10 Therefore they sent the ark of God to [t] Ekron. And it came to pass
t Josh. xv. 45. Judg. i. 18. 2 Kings i. 2. Am. i. 8. as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to [†] us, to slay us and our
† Heb. *me, to slay me and my people.* people.

11 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay [‡] us not, and our
‡ Heb. *me not, and my people.* people: for there was [u] a deadly de-
u Is. xxii. 7—9. Jer. xlviii. 42—44. struction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.

12 And the men that [x] died not were
x 1 Kings xix. 17. Am. v. 19. smitten with the emerods; and [y] the
y Ex. xii. 30. Is. xv. 3—5. Jer. xxv. 34. xlviii. 3. cry of the city went up to heaven.

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temple, as a trophy of their victory. (*Note, Judg.* xvi. 23, 24.) But they did not attempt to destroy it, as Israel destroyed the images of the Canaanites. (*Note, 2 Sam.* v. 21.) It has indeed been conjectured, that they intended to worship it, in conjunction with their former idol, though in subordination to him.

V. 3—5. The image of Dagon is supposed to have been framed in the upper part like a man, and below like a fish: when therefore the head and hands were broken off, a deformed trunk alone remained. Thus the helplessness and insensibility of the dumb idol were made apparent: yet the Philistines, in this respect as senseless as their idol, instead of despising so contemptible a stock, revered as sacred the very threshold on which the idol had been disgraced and broken; and thus perpetuated the memory of JEHOVAH'S triumph, by their own foolish superstition! They likewise either continued to worship the stump of Dagon; or got a new image of him formed as soon as possible. (*Notes, Ps.* cxv. 3—8. *Is.* xli. 5—7. xliv. 12—20.)

V. 6—12. As the Philistines were not convinced by this defeat of Dagon, that their attempt to keep the ark in captivity was foolish and ruinous; they were visited with some fatal judgment, probably a pestilence, which swept away multitudes: while the rest were afflicted very generally with emerods, which put them to excruciating pain, and extorted the most doleful lamentations. The emerods are supposed to have been the worst sort of the disease now called *the piles*.—Under this terrible visitation, they sent the ark of God from city to city, probably in hopes of thus obtaining deliverance: but the same calamities attended the inhabitants wherever they carried it. (*Notes, Ps.* lxxviii. 65, 66. *Zech.* xii. 2—5.)—Thus, while the Israelites were so degenerate, as to make no attempt for the recovery of this sacred symbol of JEHOVAH'S gracious presence, and indeed were utterly unworthy of being honoured in such a service; he himself rendered the Philistines willing to send back the ark; and so over-ruled these events, as to expose idolatry to the deepest contempt, and to convince the obstinate idolaters, that they could not profane his sacred institutions with impunity. (*Notes, Josh.* vii. 6—9. *Ps.* cxv. 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord may for a season permit his cause to be run down, in order to expose the hypocrisy, to undermine the vain confidence, or to chastise the wickedness, of his professed people: for he knows how, without any human help, and in defiance of all enemies, to recover it from the ruins, and to establish it in greater splendour; and this

CHAP. VI.

At the end of seven months the Philistines consult about sending back the ark, 1—9. They bring it on a new cart, with oblations, to Beth-shemesh, 10—18. The Beth-shemites are smitten for looking into it, 19, 20. They send to the men of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it, 21.

[a] v. 1. 3. 10, 11. Ps. lxxviii. 61.

AND [a] the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months.

[b] Gen. xli. 8. Ex. vii. 11. Is. xlvii. 12. Dan. ii. 2. v. 7. Matt. ii. 4.

2 And the Philistines [b] called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place.

3 And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not [c] empty; but in any wise return him [d] a trespass-offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be [e] known to you, why his hand is not removed from you.

[c] Ex. xxiii. 15. xxxiv. 20. Deut. xvi. 16.
[d] Lev. v. 6. 15—19. vi. 6. vii. 1—7.
[e] 9. v. 7. 9. 11.

4 Then said they, What *shall be* the trespass-offering which we shall return to him? They answered, [f] Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, *according to* the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague *was* on [*] you all, and on your lords.

[f] 5. 17, 18. v. 6. Ex. xii. 35. Josh. xiii. 3. Judg. iii. 3.

[*] Heb. *them.*

5 Wherefore, ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your [g] mice that mar the land; and ye shall [h] give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will [i] lighten his hand from off you, and from [k] off your gods, and from off your land.

[g] Ex. viii. 5. 17. 24. x. 14, 15. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25.
[h] Josh. vii. 19. Ps. xviii. 44. lxvi. 3. *Marg.* Is. xlii. 12. Jer. iii. 13. xiii. 16. Mal. ii. 2. John ix. 24. Rev. xi. 13. xvi. 9.
[i] v. 6. 11. Ps. xxxii. 4. xxxix. 10.
[k] v. 3, 4. 7. Ex. xii. 12. Num. xxxiii. 4. Is. xix. 1.

6 Wherefore then do ye [l] harden your hearts, as [m] the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When he had wrought [†] wonderfully among them, [n] did they not let [‡] the people go, and they departed?

[l] Job ix. 4. Ps. xcv. 8. Rom. ii. 5. Heb. iii. 13.
[m] Ex. vii. 13. viii. 15. ix. 16, 17. 34, 35. x. 3. xiv. 17. xv. 14—16.
[†] Or, *reproachfully.*
[n] Ex. xii. 31—33.
[‡] Heb. *them.*

7 Now therefore make a [o] new cart,

[o] 2 Sam. vi. 3. 1 Chr. xiii. 7.

may account for the successes of infidels and Atheists, through so many countries, which have long professed Christianity, but have corrupted and disgraced it. But the short-lived triumphings of the wicked, on such occasions, will terminate in their deeper disgrace, and more dreadful punishment.—Men may be convinced by the judgments of God, that he is a terrible enemy, and that it is in vain to contend with him; and they may be constrained to render him a feigned submission: (*Notes, Ps.* lxvi. 1—3. lxxxi. 14, 15:) but nothing except his renewing grace, will produce genuine repentance, faith, and love, and conversion from every idol to his worship and service. Yet those confessions, which are extorted by torment or terror, (*Mark* v. 7,) are honourable to God, though useless to the impenitent; and he will glorify his name in the punishment of his enemies, as well as in the salvation of his people. When he contends, he will overcome; and all endeavours to evade or escape his wrath, will only increase the sinner's misery, till he is either brought to true repentance, or sinks under final condemnation.—When the Lord's appointed time shall arrive, all attempts to uphold the falling kingdom of idolatry, superstition, infidelity, or profaneness, will be utterly unavailing; and destruction will overtake all those, who are not led to repentance. It is equally dangerous to oppose those partial revivals of true religion, which take place from age to age: for the ark of God will cause every Dagon to fall down before it, till all of them be broken in pieces.—The zeal and pertinacity, with which the grossest idolatries and most stupid superstitions have been supported against the cause of God and truth, display the blindness of fallen man's understanding, as much as the depravity of his affections.—Thus, convinced sinners also, with perverse assiduity, set up again those false confidences and worldly idols, which seemed to be thrown down under the preaching of the gospel: or when the old delusion will no longer soothe their consciences, they exchange it for another equally absurd, as long as they continue to love sin, and to hate the spiritual service and humbling truth of God. But when Christ, the true Ark of the covenant, really enters the heart of fallen man, (which is indeed Satan's temple,) all idols will fall before his presence and power; every endeavour to set them up again will be in vain; all iniquity will be forsaken; all unrighteous gain restored; and the Lord will claim and possess the throne. Yet pride, self-love, and worldly lusts, though dethroned and crucified, still remain within us. Let us then watch and pray against their prevalency; let us seek to have them more entirely destroyed; and let us consider death, through the mercy of God, and the grace of the gospel, as attended by the final destruction of our worst enemy, "the sin that "dwelleth in us."

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. *Seven months.*] During so long a time the Philistines endured the judgments of God, before they so far yielded as to restore the ark; and the Israelites neglected all endeavours to recover it! But it was far more honourable to the Lord, to constrain the Philistines to send it back of their own accord, than that war should wrest it, or that money should ransom it, out of their hands. (*Note*, v. 6—12.)

V. 2—9. It has been conjectured, that when the emerods and pestilence exceedingly afflicted the inhabitants of each city, to which the ark was carried, the Philistines placed it in the open field: and that then great numbers of mice began to destroy their crops and spoil the land. It is evident that there was a plague of destroying mice sent among them: (*Note, Ex.* viii. 15—17:) but it is not said that the ark was placed in the fields of any city. At length, however, being no longer able to endure their complicated distresses, they determined to send back the ark, and consulted their priests and diviners about it; whose answer contains such an assemblage of inconsistencies, as clearly developes the workings of the human

and take two milch-kine, [p] on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them:

8 And take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart; and put the [q] jewels of gold, which ye return him *for* a trespass-offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go.

9 And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to [r] Beth-shemesh, *then* [*] he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that *it is* [s] not his hand *that* smote us; it *was* [t] a chance *that* happened to us.

10 ¶ And the men did so; and took two milch-kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home:

11 And [u] they laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.

12 And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, *and* went along the high-way, lowing as they went, and turned not aside *to* the right hand or *to* the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh.

13 And *they of* Beth-shemesh *were* reaping their wheat-harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see *it*.

14 And the cart came into the field of Joshua a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where *there was* a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and [v] offered the kine a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

15 And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that *was* with it, wherein the jewels of gold *were*, and put *them* on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD.

16 And when [x] the five lords of the Philistines had seen *it*, they returned to Ekron the same day.

17 And these *are* the golden emerods, which the Philistines returned *for* a trespass-offering unto the LORD; [y] for Ashdod one, [z] for Gaza one, [a] for Aske-

p Num. xix. 2.
q 4, 5.
r Josh. xv. 10. xxi. 16.
* Or, *is.*
s Is. xxvi. 11.
t 2 Sam. i. 6. Ec. ix. 11. Luke x. 31.
u 2 Sam. vi. 3. 1 Chr. xiii. 7. xv. 13—15.
v vii. 9 17. xi. 15. xx. 29. Ex. xx. 24. Judg. vi. 26. xxi. 4. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18. 25. 1 Kings xviii. 30—38
x 4. 12. Judg. iii. 3. xvi. 5. 23—30.
y v. 1. 2 Chr. xxvi. 6. Jer. xxv. 20. Zech. ix. 6.
z Judg. xvi. 1. 21.
a Judg. i. 18. Zech. ix. 5.

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heart in difficult circumstances. From the tradition of Pharaoh's rebellion, and the destruction of him and his subjects, they seriously exhorted the people not to harden their hearts, but to let the ark go (6): but they did not advise them to repent, to renounce idolatry, or to worship JEHOVAH. Nay, they were reluctant to conclude that their afflictions were from him, and framed an artful device for putting it to the trial: and, if not convinced by another complicated miracle, they seemed determined to keep the ark, and ascribe their sufferings to chance. (*Notes, Is.* xxvi. 10, 11. *Matt.* xvi. 1—4.) Some trespass-offerings they supposed to be necessary, if the ark must be restored, in order that "the LORD might lighten his hand from off "them," or that they "might know wherefore he did not." This opinion, that trespass-offerings must be sent with the ark, was probably derived from some slight acquaintance with the ritual law of Moses; or from usages among themselves originally derived from it. The oblations, however, were altogether different from those which God required from his worshippers: (*Notes, Lev.* v. vi. 1—7:) but well suited to be monuments of their shame, and of the Lord's triumph over them. In short, they evinced how unwilling they were to yield, and how unable to resist.—As the Egyptians hired Israel with jewels of gold to depart from them, yet were unwilling to let them go quite away; (*Note, Ex.* xii. 35, 36;) so did the Philistines respecting the ark, in taking which they had so greatly triumphed.

V. 10—16. That two kine, which had never before been yoked, and whose calves were left at home, should draw quietly, and keep the road without a driver, for several miles, neither stopping, nor turning aside, nor attempting to return; and that, while they shewed the force of instinct in lowing for their calves, they should be urged forward with a stronger impulse to the very place, which the Philistines had mentioned (9), and stop there;—these circumstances constituted in all respects a most astonishing miracle, or rather complication of miracles: and the obedience of the animals, in carrying back the ark, reproached the negligence of Israel.—The presumption of the Philistines, in requiring this additional proof of JEHOVAH's power, was very great; but it was over-ruled for the manifestation of his glory, and to their deeper condemnation in still cleaving to idolatry. The triumph of the ark was completed, when it was thus miraculously restored, with oblations, and the distant attendance of the lords of the Philistines.—Beth-shemesh was a city of the priests out of the lot of Judah, in the border of the land nearest the country of the Philistines; (*Josh.* xxi. 16;) and no doubt some of that order, very properly, offered the kine in sacrifice before the ark, though kine in ordinary circumstances were not appointed for burnt-offerings: (*Notes, Lev.* i. 1—4. iii. 1:) but nothing, which had been used in this sacred service, could lawfully be employed for any common use. Their other sacrifices also were suitable expressions of joy and gratitude: but placing the ark upon a great stone, rather than taking it into their houses, or preparing a tent for it, seems to have been improper. The inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim gave it a different reception, and were accepted in so doing. (vii. 1, 2.)

lon one, [b] for Gath one, [c] for Ekron one.

18 And the golden mice, *according to* the number of all the cities of the Philistines *belonging* to the five lords, *both* of fenced cities, and of country-villages, even unto the * great *stone of* Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the LORD; *which stone remaineth* unto this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite.

19 And [d] he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and three score and ten men. And the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten *many* of the people with a great slaughter.

20 And the men of Beth-shemesh said, [e] Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and [f] to whom shall he go up from us?

21 And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of [g] Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the LORD; come ye down, *and* fetch it up to you.

b v. 8. 2 Sam. i. 20. xxi. 22. Am. vi. 2.
c v. 10. 2 Kings i 2. Am. i. 8.
* Or, *great stone.*
d Ex. xix. 21. Lev. x. 1—3. Num. iv. 4, 5. 15. 20. Deut. xxix. 29. 2 Sam. vi. 7. Col. ii. 18. 1 Pet. iv. 17.
e Num. xvii. 12, 13. 2 Sam. vi. 9. 1 Chr. xiii. 11—13. Mal. iii. 2. Luke v. 8. viii. 37.
f v. 8—12.
g Josh. xviii. 14. Judg. xviii. 12. 1 Chr. xiii. 5, 6. Ps. lxxviii 60. Jer. vii. 12—14.

V. 18. It seems evident that no more than five golden mice were sent (4); but the inhabitants of the villages, as well as of the cities, contributed to the expense.—The great stone of *Abel*, or *weeping*, being so called probably on account of the mourning of the people over those who were smitten (19), seems to have been the boundary, at that time, between the land of the Philistines and that of Israel.

V. 19—21. The Beth-shemites availed themselves of the opportunity thus given them, to gratify their curiosity, by presumptuously looking into the ark; even the outside of which was not to be seen uncovered by the Levites who were appointed to carry it. (*Num.* iv. 5, 6. 15.) Perhaps they professed a purpose of examining whether the Philistines had taken away the tables of the law; but it does not appear, that any of the Philistines had so much as looked into it. Some of them might encourage themselves in this presumptuous conduct, by reason of their office as priests, which in fact aggravated their offence: and others, on the circumstance, that the ark had been brought back to them in the first instance, and on their having welcomed it, and offered sacrifices before it. But the Lord was provoked by their irreverent intrusion, to punish many of them with sudden death. (*Notes, Lev.* x. 1—3. *2 Sam.* vi. 6, 7.)—The number, as it stands in our version, is so very large to be found in one small city, and the expression in the original is so uncommon, that it is generally allowed some mistake is made: Josephus mentions only seventy. The passage may be rendered, "He smote ... "seventy men, *even* fifty *out of* a thousand men;" which supposes that about 1400 persons were present, and that a twentieth part was slain: and this appears to be the genuine meaning of the passage. The Beth-shemites were not duly humbled for their offence; but they were so terrified, that, like the Philistines, they wanted to have the ark removed from them, and solicited the men of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it; though that was not a city of the priests. (*Marg. Ref.* e. *Notes, Num.* xvii. 12, 13. *2 Sam.* vi. 8—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When transgressors, under divine rebukes, harden themselves in sin, they are sure to prolong and multiply their own miseries; and it is so much more pleasant to learn wisdom by the experience of others, than by our own, that it would be deemed madness to do otherwise, were it not so general.—Those convictions, which spring from terror without humiliation, never produce more than a reluctant and submissive obedience: and the indignant hearts of proud rebels avail themselves of every pretence to ascribe afflictions to *chance*, rather than to the hand of God, and to infer that it is not absolutely necessary to part with every sin.—If correction be withdrawn, while the heart is thus disposed, the respite proves an encouragement to proceed in transgression: if the affliction be continued after a partial amendment, this is deemed an argument that repentance and reformation are useless. Thus every dispensation of Providence eventually occasions increasing guilt and condemnation.—Natural reason and conscience, with the fragments of traditional revelation, may convince men that some method should be used to appease the anger of God, and may enable them, as priests or diviners, to give plausible advice on the subject: and when sinners are suffering under afflictions, and the terrors of an awakened conscience, they are ready to put themselves to much expense and self-denial, in order to purchase peace with God. But faith alone, appropriating the information of the sacred Scriptures, can discover what oblation he will accept, or in what way he will be approached by his sinful creatures. (*Note, Mic.* vi. 6—8.)—The inconsistencies and superstitions of idolaters, and the lukewarmness of his professing people, will in due season combine to display his glory to greater advantage. The very brute creation, when he pleases, shall shame man's ingratitude and disobedience; his enemies shall furnish memorials of their own disgrace, and all shall be constrained to say, "This "hath God wrought!"—Many appear joyful at the revival of religion, and favourable to its truths and ordinances, who are too busy about the world to be at much trouble or expense about them: and numbers unite in external observances, who have no inward reverence for the divine majesty.—The true glory of religion consists in its spiritual excellency: and that simplicity, which the carnal mind despises, forms its highest ornament. But presumptuous intrusion into "the secret things, which belong to "God," forms a heinous provocation, and springs from a careless and impenitent heart: and the nearer to the Lord such an intruder is in profession and in office, the greater is his guilt, and the more terrible will be his punishment: for though we are not under the same dispensation as Israel was; yet "our God is still a consuming fire," and

CHAP. VII.

The ark is removed to Kirjath-jearim, and remains there a long time, 1, 2. At Samuel's exhortation the Israelites repent, and humble themselves before God at Mizpeh, 3—6. The Philistines prepare to assault them: but, while Samuel prays and sacrifices, the Lord discomfits them with thunder before Israel, 7—11. Samuel calls the place Eben-ezer, and sets up a stone for a memorial, 12. The Philistines are subdued, and Samuel judges Israel, 13—17.

a vi.21. Josh.xviii. 14. 2 Sam. vi. 2. 1 Chr. xiii. 5, 6. Ps. cxxxii. 6.

AND the men of [a] Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of

b 2 Sam. vi. 3, 4. 1 Chr. xiii. 7.

[b] Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

2 And it came to pass while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time

a Judg. ii. 4. Jer. iii. 13. 22—25. xxxi. 9. Zech. xii. 10, 11. Matt. v. 4. 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel [c] lamented after the LORD.

3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do [d] return unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then* [e] put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and [f] prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and [g] serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

d Deut. xxx. 2—10. 1 Kings viii. 48. Is. lv. 7. Hos. vi. 1, 2. xiv. 1. Joel ii. 13.

e Gen. xxxv. 2. Josh. xxiv. 14. 23. Judg. ii. 13. x. 6.

f Deut. xxx. 6. 1 Chr. xxii. 19. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. xxx. 19. Prov. xvi. 1. Jer. iv. 3, 4. Ez. xviii. 31. Matt. xv. 8.

g Deut. vi. 13. x. 20. xiii. 4. Matt. iv. 10. vi. 24. Luke iv. 8.

4 Then the children of Israel did put away [h] Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

h 3. Judg. ii. 11. 13. x. 15, 16. 1 Kings xi. 33. Hos. xiv. 3, 8.

5 And Samuel said, [i] Gather all Israel to [j] Mizpeh, and [k] I will pray for you unto the LORD.

i Neh. ix. 1. Joel ii. 16.

j 12. 16. x. 17. Josh. xv. 38. Judg. xx. 1.

k 2 Kings xxv. 23. xii. 23.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and [l] drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD, and [m] fasted on that day, and said there, [n] We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel [o] judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

l i. 15. Job xvi. 20. Ps. vi. 6. xlii. 3. cxix. 136. Jer. ix. 1. Lam. ii. 11. 18. iii. 49.

m 2 Chr. xx. 3. Ezra viii. 21—23. Neh. ix. 1—3. Dan. ix. 3. Joel ii. 12. Jon. iii.

n Lev. xxvi. 40. Judg. x. 10. 1 Kings viii. 47. Ezra ix. 5—10. Job xxxiii. 27. xl. 4. xlii. 6. Ps. xxxviii. 3—8. cvi. 6. Jer. xxxi. 19. Luke xv. 18. 27. Ez. xx. 4.

o Judg. iii. 10. Neh. ix.

must be "worshipped with reverence and godly fear." (*Note, Heb.* xii. 26—29.) Instead of this reverence, the carnal heart substitutes a slavish fear; and when rebuked for presumption and contempt, or alarmed with discoveries of the justice and holiness of God, it will, with the Gadarenes or these Beth-shemites, request the Saviour to depart, and vainly seek to escape the Lord's displeasure by an entire forgetfulness of him. (*Note, Matt.* viii. 33, 34.) In like manner, numbers, alarmed by the danger of "eating and drinking unworthily" in the Lord's supper, vainly expect security, by habitual and wilful disobedience to the dying command of him, whom they still continue to call their Lord and their Saviour. (*Notes,* 1 *Cor.* xi. 23—34.) In these ways, many smother up and silence their convictions, and put away salvation from them; and by running into one extreme or another, the very truths and ordinances of God, which are the means of life and salvation to some, become the occasion of deeper condemnation to others. Let us always consider what a holy LORD God he is, with whom we have to do; and may he give us a spirit of humble fear, filial love, and heavenly hope, that we may be preserved from fatal mistakes, and profit by the salvation of the gospel, and the sacred ordinances with which we are favoured in his providence!

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1, 2. Kirjath-jearim lay in the road between Beth-shemesh and Shiloh. (*Marg. Ref.* a.) The inhabitants, being convinced that the ark was indeed the pledge of Israel's prosperity, and only dangerous when treated with irreverence, were ready to entertain it. It does not appear that Abinadab, and Eleazar his son, were either priests or Levites; though some expositors take it for granted that they were. But it may be questioned, whether an intended neglect of that tribe, for their ungodliness and wickedness, was not shewn on this occasion; so that no notice was taken of them in a matter, which otherwise peculiarly and entirely belonged to them. It is not so much as said, whether any of them were employed to fetch the ark to Kirjath-jearim, or whether the Lord dispensed with the irregularity of the inhabitants of that city, in carrying it themselves.—Here, however, the ark remained, till David removed it in the beginning of his reign over all Israel: (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 2, 3:) but it is not agreed how many years intervened, certainly many more than twenty; so that the expression *twenty years,* clearly refers to the time that passed previously to the events recorded in the rest of this chapter.—The Israelites continued in subjection to the Philistines; and generally in the beginning of these twenty years, they remained ignorant and inattentive to religion, and careless about the ark or the worship of the Lord: but we may suppose that Samuel was labouring, incessantly and successfully, from town to town, and from village to village, throughout the whole land, to bring them to repentance, and to revive true religion among them; and at length his success was so great, that "all the house of Israel lamented after the "LORD."—Some learned men think that the *tabernacle* had before this been removed from Shiloh, perhaps to Nob. (xxi. 1.)

V. 3, 4. When Samuel, by the divine blessing, had brought large numbers of the people to a sense of their sin and of their duty, he urged the heads of their several tribes to concur in a publick and avowed reformation, and re-establishment of the worship of JEHOVAH, attended by putting away and destroying all their idols and images, of whatever kind: and to this proposal they readily and practically consented. (*Note, Judg.* ii. 11—13.) Few words are indeed used; but they are so expressive, that we cannot hesitate in pronouncing this to have been one of the most general and effectual revivals of religion, which ever took place in the church of Israel.

V. 5, 6. (*Note, Judg.* xx. 1, 2.) The ceremony of "drawing water, and pouring it out before the LORD,"

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were [p] afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, [*] Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

9 And Samuel took [q] a sucking lamb, and offered *it for* a burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel [r] cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD [†] heard him.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD [s] thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and [t] discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until *they came* under Beth-car.

12 Then Samuel [u] took a stone, and set *it* between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it [‡] Eben-ezer, saying, [x] Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

13 ¶ So the Philistines were [y] subdued, and they [z] came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was [a] against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines: and there was [b] peace between Israel and the Amorites.

15 ¶ And Samuel [c] judged Israel all the days of his life.

p xiii. 6. xvii. 11. Ex. xiv. 10. 2 Chr. xx. 3.

* Heb. *Be not silent from us from crying.* xii. 19—24. Is. xxxvii. 4. lxii. 1. 6, 7. Jam. v. 16.

q 17 vi. 14, 15. ix. 12. x. 8. xvi. 2. Judg. vi. 26. 28. 1 Kings xviii. 30—38.

r Ps. l. 15. xcix. 6. Jer. xv. 1.

† Or, *answered.*

s ii. 10. xii. 17. Ex. ix. 23—25. Judg. v. 8. 20. Ps. xviii. 11—14. lxxvii. 16—18. xcvii. 3, 4. Rev. xvi. 18—21.

t Deut. xx. 3, 4. Josh. x. 10. Judg. iv. 15. v. 20. Zech. iv. 6.

u Gen. xxviii. 18. xxxi. 45—52. xxxv. 14. Josh. iv. 9, 20—24. xxiv. 26, 27. Is. xix. 19, 20.

‡ That is, *The stone of help.* iv. 1. v. 1. Gen. xxii. 14. Ex. xvii. 15.

x Ps. lxxi. 6. 17. Is. xlvi. 3, 4. Acts xxvi. 22. 2 Cor. i. 10.

y Judg. xiii. 1.

z xiii. 1—5.

a xiv. 6—16. 20—23. xvii. 49—53. xxviii. 3—5. xxxi. 1—7.

b Deut. vii. 2. 16. Judg. iv. 17. Ps. cvi. 34.

c 6. xii. 1. xxv. 1. Judg. ii. 16. iii. 10, 11. Acts xiii. 20, 21.

might be an emblem of the effects of divine grace upon the heart; which disposes it to pour forth itself as water before the Lord, in penitential confessions, with tears of godly sorrow, and in fervent prayers and thanksgivings. (*Marg. Ref.* l.)—Some indeed think, that the water was used in a kind of baptismal ablution or purification; others, that it was an expression of their holy joy in God; and others, that it was intended to purify the ground on which the altar was built.—On this occasion Samuel began publickly to act as judge, or chief magistrate, in settling differences; and perhaps in punishing criminals and obstinate idolaters: though he seems to have previously exercised authority in a more private manner.—*Fasted.* (6) *Notes, Judg.* xx. 26—28. 2 *Chr.* xx. 3, 4.

V. 7. The Philistines considered this general convention of Israel, as the signal of war; and therefore determined immediately to attack them, before they were prepared for resistance; in consequence of which the Israelites were at first alarmed: but deep repentance of sin, attended by fruits meet for repentance, and earnestness in serving the Lord, formed their best preparation; and the event shewed their enemies the difference, between attacking them while thus employed, and when impenitent and buoyed up with presumption. (*Notes*, iv. 2 *Chr.* xix. 2—11. xx. 1—25.)

V. 9. Samuel was not a priest; but he acted by an extraordinary authority in this and in many other instances, as a prophet of the Lord, and under his immediate direction. (*Marg. Ref.* q. *Notes*, 17. x. 8. *Judg.* vi. 25, 26.) This single lamb, offered in humble faith, was immensely more acceptable, than the most costly sacrifices offered in pride and hypocrisy.

V. 10, 11. It does not appear, that the people came armed to Mizpeh: and it is probable, that they smote the Philistines with the swords of those, who had been killed by the lightning. (*Notes*, ii. 10. *Ex.* xiv. 26—30. *Josh.* x. 11. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 7—16. *Rev.* xvi. 17—21.)

V. 12. The transgressions and chastisements of Israel had been many; they had repeatedly humbled themselves before God and obtained deliverance; and they had again relapsed into sin, and fallen into distress: but they had not been given up to total apostasy, or to utter ruin; and they had now once more been brought to repentance, and made partakers of a singular deliverance, by the immediate interposition of the Almighty. This Samuel and the people acknowledged with gratitude; and set up this stone to be a monument of the Lord's goodness, for his glory, and the encouragement of their descendants, to future ages. (*Notes, Josh.* iv. 3—9. 20—24. *P. O.*) The word *Eben-ezer*, signifies *the stone of help.*—The same place was before-mentioned by anticipation, with reference to the name given it on this occasion. (iv. 1. v. 1.)

V. 13, 14. After this success, the Philistines were constrained to restore such cities of Israel as they had seized, even those which were situated in the neighbourhood of Ekron and Gath.—It is not probable, that the Israelites entered into treaty with the Amorites who dwelt among them; but *they* also were so kept under as to create them no disturbance. This peaceful state, *within the land*, was preserved till the people rejected Samuel, and Saul was made king; and the Philistines were constantly defeated by Israel, till after the death of Samuel. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xiii, xiv. xxviii. 3. xxxi.)

V. 15. Probably Samuel retained considerable influence as a magistrate, as well as a prophet, during the reign of Saul, especially in the neighbourhood of Ramah. Some, however, understand the passage as meaning, that Samuel was so diligent in the discharge of his office, that he sat to judge causes every day. (16. *Notes*, xii. 23. *Ex.* xviii. 13—23.)

16 And he went from year to year * in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.

17 And [d] his return *was* to Ramah; for there *was* his house; and there he judged Israel; and there [e] he built an altar unto the LORD.

* Heb. *and he circuited.* Judg. v. 10. x. 4. xii. 14. Ps. lxxv. 2. lxxxii. 3, 4.

[d] i. 1. 19. viii. 4. xix. 18—23.

[e] xi. 15. Gen. xii. 7, 8. xxxiii. 20. xxxv. 7. Judg. xxi. 4. 1 Kings xviii. 30—36.

V. 17. It is very remarkable, that in this great revival of religion, the ark was neither removed to Shiloh, nor placed with the tabernacle in any other situation.—It is uncertain whether or not the sanctuary-service was carried on at Shiloh, or Nob, or elsewhere, during all this period: but probably it was either neglected, or very improperly conducted. As the ark, the glory even of the tabernacle, was departed, the more pious Israelites seem to have disregarded it; and to have preferred joining with Samuel in the sacrifices and worship, which, doubtless by divine direction, he performed near his own house. This disregard to the Levitical institutions clearly intimated, that the typical meaning formed their chief use; and, when this was overlooked, they became a lifeless carcase, by no means to be compared with repentance, faith, and love to God and man. (*Notes*, ix. 12—14. 2 *Kings* iii. 20. *Ps.* l. 7—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

When the stated ministers of God's word neglect their duty and disgrace their profession, he will render them contemptible in the eyes of the people, (*Mal.* ii. 8, 9;) and employ others to reform religion, and uphold his worship: for it is better that external institutions should be dispensed with, than that irreligion should be permitted to diffuse its baneful influence.—The truths and ordinances of God are dangerous to those alone, who despise and abuse them, and are always profitable to the humble believer: the threatenings therefore of his word, and the judgments, which he has executed on such as profaned his sacred institutions, should not induce us to neglect them; but make us more circumspect and jealous of ourselves in attending on them. (*P. O.* 1 *Cor.* xi. 23—34.)—When the cause of God is deserted in one place, it will be supported in another: and, though the publick and regular administration of divine ordinances is highly desirable; yet the same blessing may redound to individuals, when they are unavoidably driven into corners, and confined to private houses.—The word of God may be faithfully preached, and other proper means used, for a long time, without producing visible or extensive effects: but those who are employed in this important service, should sow the seed in faith and hope, and water it with prayers and tears: they should be "instant in season and out of season;" persevere without weariness or yielding to despondency, and wait the Lord's time; and their labour will not be in vain. (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 11—16.) Nay, perhaps the seed, which has been long sown and considered as lost, will at length spring up with so large an increase, as to exceed their own most sanguine expectations.—It is a pleasing prospect to the faithful labourer, when he perceives men deeply convinced of their sins, and mourning under the tokens of the Lord's displeasure: and this will also afford him the long desired opportunity, of still more closely and particularly addressing their consciences; that such good impressions may not wear off through procrastination, or produce only a partial or external reformation; but that the people may be prevailed upon, to "return to the LORD with all their hearts, "and to serve him only;" expecting all their salvation and comfort from him, and renouncing every false dependence and worldly idol. This blessed frame of mind is the effect of divine grace, but it is *our duty;* and in the use of means, we are required to prepare our hearts, and arm our souls with a stedfast determination thus to trust and serve the Lord. (*Notes, Acts* xi. 23, 24. 1 *Pet.* iv. 1, 2.)—When in the first place every one has "taken heed unto "himself," he ought next to employ his best endeavours to engage his family, and his neighbours also, in the service of God: and when those in high stations and publick employments unite in using their influence and authority, in a mild, intelligent, and scriptural manner, for these purposes, the most extensive blessings may be expected. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxx. 12.)

V. 7—17

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man "availeth much:" and the more men know of God and of themselves, the more earnestly will they desire and value the prayers of every Christian, especially of those who are most eminent for faith and holiness, and particularly in seasons of temporal or spiritual distress.—Blessed be God, that Jesus ever lives to intercede for us, and pleads his own atoning blood in behalf of "all who "come to God by him:" and through his sacrifice and mediation all our prayers, for ourselves and others, are accepted by the Father. But neither his merits, nor the intercessions of his servants, supersede the necessity of our personal repentance, confessions of sin, cries for mercy, and holy obedience: and seasons of deep humiliation, and prayer for special blessings, are very properly attended with fasting, and other indications of self-displacency, and disregard to animal indulgence; that we may "pour out our "souls before the LORD," without having our attention distracted by any outward concern. When we are thus employed in earnest devotion, Satan and his agents may be especially excited to assault us, as both hating our holy engagements, and envying our felicity: but they can do us no harm, unless they can affright us from our duty. Nor can any hostile preparations prevail against that nation, which, in a spirit of true repentance and reformation, and the fervent prayer of faith, has entrusted itself to the Lord's protection.—Through successive generations the church of God has had occasion to set up EBEN-EZERS for renewed deliverances: for neither outward persecutions, nor internal corruptions have yet prevailed against her; because "hitherto the LORD hath helped her;" and he will help her even unto the end of the world.—Every believer should review the records of this preservation, and these deliverances, with admiring gratitude and joyful love; and then looking back on his own experience, he will find an abridgment of the same history. Notwithstanding temptation and outward opposition; notwithstanding the deceitfulness of his own heart, and the power of his inbred lusts;

CHAP. VIII.

Samuel, when old, makes his sons judges; who behave ill, and give the people an occasion of desiring a king, 1—5. Samuel is displeased, and prays concerning it; but the Lord requires him to comply, and to shew them the manner of a king, 6—18. They persist in their request; and Samuel by divine direction yields to them, 19—22.

AND it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he [a] made his [b] sons judges over Israel.

2 Now the name of his first-born was [c] Joel, and the name of his second Abiah: *they were* judges in Beer-sheba.

3 And [d] his sons walked not in his ways, [e] but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

4 Then all [f] the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now [g] make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

6 But the thing * displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel [h] prayed unto the LORD.

7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, [i] Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for [k] they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8 According [l] to all the works which they have done, since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods; so do they also unto thee.

9 Now therefore, † hearken unto their voice; ‡ howbeit, yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them [m] the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

a Deut. xvi. 18, 19. Judg. viii. 22, 23. 2 Chr xix. 5, 6. Neh. vii. 2. 1 Tim. v. 21.
b Judg. v. 10. x. 4. xii. 14.
c 1 Chr. vi. 28. 33. *Vashni.*
d 2 Sam. xv. 4. 1 Kings xii. 6—11. 2 Kings xxi. 1—3. Ec. ii. 19. Jer. xxii 15—17.
e Ex. xviii. 21. Deut. xvi. 19. Ps. xv. 5. xxvi. 10. Is. xxxiii. 15. 1 Tim. iii. 3. vi. 10.
f Ex. iii 16. xxiv. 1. 2 Sam v. 3.
g 6—8. xii. 17. Num. xxiii. 9. Deut. xvii. 14, 15. Hos. xiii. 10, 11. Acts xiii. 21.
* Heb. *was evil in the eyes of.* xii. 17.
h xv.11. Ex.xxxii. 31, 32. Num. xvi. 15. 22. 46. Ezra ix. 3—5. Ps. cix. 4. Luke vi. 11, 12. Phil. iv. 6. Jam. i. 5.
i Num. xxii. 20. Ps. lxxxi. 11, 12. Is. lxvi. 4. Hos. xiii. 11.
k x. 19. xii. 17—19. Ex. xvi. 8. Matt. x. 24, 25. Luke x. 16. xix. 14. 27. John xiii. 16. xv. 20, 21.
l Ex. xiv. 11, 12. xvi. 3. xvii. 2. xxxii. 1. Num. xiv. 2—4. xvi. 2, 3. 41. Deut. ix. 24. Judg. ii. 2, 3. 20. iv. 1. vi. 1. xiii. 1. Ps. lxxviii. 56—59. cvi. 14—21. 34—40. Acts vii. 51—53.
† Or, *obey.*
‡ Or, *notwithstanding when thou hast solemnly protested against them, then thou shalt shew, &c.* Ex. iii. 18.
m 11—18. ii. 13. Ez. xlv. 7, 8. xlvi. 18.

through many transgressions, corrections, deliverances, and relapses; through many fears, conflicts, and difficulties, he has still been preserved from apostasy, and perhaps from disgracing his profession; for "hitherto hath the LORD "helped him." (*Note, 2 Cor.* i. 8—11.) If this be our happy case, let us raise up our Eben-ezers in rendering him our unreserved praise; let us renew our application to God our Saviour for increasing strength in our soul, and power against our enemies: let us speak to the encouragement of others concerning his love and truth, that they may be animated to trust and rejoice in him: let us push still farther every advantage against our enemies, aspiring after entire liberty and complete deliverance: let us submit to those, who have approved themselves faithful, and have been made useful to us, in watching for our souls: let us keep close to the means of grace, and the worship of God, diligently improve our talents, and lay ourselves out for the good of all around us.—At stated seasons, as at the conclusion of the year, when about to approach the Lord's table, or when we have received some remarkable mercy, we shall find it peculiarly useful thus to review our ways, and to wait upon the Lord to renew our strength: and in so doing we may hope ere long to set up our last Eben-ezer in the realms above, and to begin our eternal songs of joyful praise to him, who hath helped us quite through, and made us more than conquerors.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—5. It is not known how old Samuel was at this time: but it is probable, that he felt himself incapable of making the accustomed circuits through the whole land: (vii. 16:) and therefore, residing at Ramah, he superintended the northern division of it, while his sons, being stationed at Beer-sheba, had the charge of the southern.—As we do not find that either God or the people censured him, for "making his sons judges "in Israel;" we may infer, that he had properly educated them, and that they appeared well qualified for the office, and were appointed to it for the good and by the approbation of the people; though they deceived these expectations, and through love of money became unjust judges. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex.* xxiii. 6—9. *Prov.* xvii. 8. 23. *Am.* v. 10—13. *Mic.* iii. 8—12. vii. 1—4.) This was Samuel's affliction, even more than Israel's grievance; and had the elders conferred with him, he would doubtless have agreed to deprive and censure his sons, and to appoint more upright judges. (*Notes,* ii. 23—25. 29.) But the people appear to have been more displeased at this small injury to their temporal interests, than they had been by all the dishonour done to God by the impiety and licentiousness of Eli's sons.—It is probable, that the people in general, and especially the superior persons, were grown weary of being ruled by pious judges and prophets, raised up by God to reform religion; and that they wanted to appear great and powerful in the eyes of the surrounding nations; as they vainly supposed they should do, when governed by a king, attended with the grandeur of a court, and commanding their armies. (*Note,* xiii. 22.) So that the misconduct of Samuel's sons merely served them for an *occasion* of proposing this measure to Samuel.

V. 6—9. Israel never had had so much reason to be satisfied with the government of judges, as under Samuel, who had been the instrument of exceedingly great advantages to them in all respects: and he was therefore much grieved and displeased to see them actuated by an impatient, discontented spirit. "It *was evil in his eyes:*" (*marg.*) he greatly disapproved of the proposal; and probably felt, with great sensibility, their ingratitude to himself. He did not, however, express his displeasure by reproaches, but in prayer; not knowing what answer to re

10 ¶ And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people, that asked of him a king.

11 And he said, [n] This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: [o] He will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* [p] shall run before his chariots.

12 And he will [q] appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, [r] and *will set them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

13 And he will take your daughters *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers.

14 And he will [s] take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, *even* the best *of them*, and [t] give *them* to his servants.

15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his [*] officers, and to his servants.

16 And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put *them* to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

18 And ye shall [u] cry out in that day, because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD [x] will not hear you in that day.

19 Nevertheless, the people [y] refused to obey the voice of Samuel: and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us;

20 That [z] we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and [a] he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

22 And the LORD said to Samuel, [b] Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

n Deut. xvii. 14—20.
o xiv. 52. 1 Kings ix. 22, 23. x. 26. xii. 4. 10. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10—15.
p 2 Sam. xv. 1. 1 Kings i. 5. xviii. 46.
q 1 Chr. xxvii. 1—22.
r 1 Kings iv. 7. 22, 23. 27, 28. 2 Chr. xxxii. 28, 29.
s 1 Kings xxi. 7. 19. Ez. xlvi. 18.
t xxii. 7
* Heb. *eunuchs.* Gen. xxxvii. 36. Is. xxxix. 7. Dan. i. 3. 7—10. 18.
u Is. viii. 21.
x Job xxvii. 9. Ps. xviii. 41. Prov. i. 27, 28. xxi. 13. Is. i. 15. Mic. iii. 4. Luke xiii. 25.
y Ps. lxxxi. 11. Jer. vii. 13. xliv. 16. Ez. xxxiii. 31.
z 5. Ex. xxxiii. 16. Lev. xx. 24—26. Num. xxiii. 9. Deut. vii. 6. Ps. cvi. 35. John xv. 19. Rom. xii. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Phil. iii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
a Judg. xi. 11.
b 7. Hos. xiii. 11.

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turn to their demand, till he was instructed by the Lord: for if he had endeavoured to dissuade them from their purpose, they might have ascribed it to ambition. Accordingly the Lord reminded him, that in rejecting the judge, who had been raised up to rule over them, they actually rejected his divine authority, who as King appointed their judges: that this was no more than a continuation of all their former rebellions and apostasies: and as they had ever been prone to forsake God to worship the idols of the Gentiles; it could not reasonably be wondered at, that they preferred the government of kings, like the surrounding nations, to that of the LORD, by judges. It was therefore proper that they should have their choice, that they might be corrected for their perverseness. (*Note, Hos.* xiii. 10, 11.) Yet Samuel must first solemnly protest against the measure, as resulting from ingratitude and rebellion against God; and also shew them the *manner*, in which kings in general exercised their authority. (*Note, Deut.* xvii. 14.)

V. 10—18. Under the government of Moses, Joshua, and the judges, the people had been exempt from oppression, nay, as far as can be learned by the history, even from taxes of all kinds: (*Notes,* xii. 2—7. *Num.* xvi. 15. xxxi. 47:) but kingly government like that of the nations, could not possibly be thus supported. "The manner of the king" does not, however, mean, 'the way in which kings ought to rule;' but 'the way in which the monarchs of the east actually governed.' (*Note, Deut.* xvii. 16.) In general, they supported their luxury and magnificence, and performed their ostentatious works, and kept up their military force, by burdensome exactions and cruel oppressions; perverting authority into tyranny, and changing subjection into slavery. (*Marg. Ref.*) And as these are the natural effects of absolute authority entrusted with a fallen creature prone to selfishness and folly; we ought consequently to prefer those limitations and restrictions, which are equally beneficial to the governors and the governed.—*Run before his chariots.* (11) *Notes, 2 Sam.* xv. 1—6. 1 *Kings* i. 5, 6.

Tenth. (15. 17) A second, or rather third, tithe out of the clear produce of their lands. (*Notes, Gen.* xlvii. 23—26. *Num.* xviii. 21. *Deut.* xiv. 22—29.)

V. 19—22. The elders of Israel were so resolutely bent on their own measures, that even this solemn protestation from their aged prophet, by the command of God himself, produced no effect! Not perceiving that it was their peculiar privilege to be *unlike* other nations, especially in this respect; they were bent on having a king, in order to become like them. (*Note, Num.* xxiii. 9. *Rom.* xii. 2.)—Amidst the sin and folly of this conduct, it should however be noted to their commendation, that they shewed great respect to Samuel. They did not attempt to set up a king of their own choosing, but sought his counsel and concurrence; and on an intimation from him, that their request would be granted, they put such entire confidence in him, that they departed quietly to their own houses. The history of the world cannot produce another instance, in which a publick determination was formed to appoint a king; and yet no one proposed either himself or any other person to be king, but referred the determination entirely to God. (*Note, Deut.* xvi. 15.) Ambition of royal authority certainly was not the motive, in the leading men who supported this measure. The whole of their proceedings,

CHAP. IX.

The ancestry and personal qualifications of Saul, 1, 2. He is sent to seek his father's asses; but not finding them, he, by the counsel of his servant, purposes going to Samuel, 3—10. He is directed by young maidens where to find him, 11—14. Samuel, prepared by a revelation from God, expects him, and entertains him with great respect, 15—24. On the morrow he privately discourses with him, and brings him on his way, 25—27.

NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name *was* [a] Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, [*] a Benjamite, a mighty man of [†] power.

2 And he had a son whose name *was* Saul, a [b] choice young man, and a goodly: and *there was* not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: [c] from his shoulders and upward *he was* higher than any of the people.

[a] xiv. 51. 1 Chr. viii. 30—33. ix. 36—39. Acts xiii. 21. *Cis.*

[*] Or, *the son of a man of Jemini.*

[†] Or, *substance.* xxv. 2. 2 Sam. xix. 32. Job i. 3.

[b] xvi. 7. Gen. vi. 2. 2 Sam. xiv. 25, 26. Jer. ix. 23.

[c] x. 23. xvii. 4. Num. xiii. 33.

even in this highly improper determination, shewed, how fully they were convinced, that the law of Moses was from God; and that, even in appointing a king, his directions must be observed, or rather that the decision must be referred implicitly to God himself.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our lives are so short, and our faculties so soon impaired, that we ought to be active in the service of God, while we possess health of body and vigour of mind: and then, under disqualifying infirmities, it will be our comfort to reflect, that our youth and strength were spent to some useful purpose.—No instructions or examples can overcome the bias of our fallen nature to evil; and the Lord communicates his sanctifying grace by wise and righteous rules, of which he does not deign to inform us: duty is our part, and consequences must be left with him.—External restraints may produce appearances which impose on the most *discerning*; yet when they are withdrawn, and temptations occur, the evil heart will discover itself; and prosperity has a natural tendency to increase bad propensities. Parents should therefore prepare to bear with resignation disappointments in their children; and not be anxious to prefer or enrich them, lest they should assist in inflaming their passions.—"The love of money is the root "of all evil," and peculiarly odious and mischievous in magistrates and ministers. (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 6—10. *P. O.* 6—12.)—Those who have been most active, disinterested, and useful, must expect to meet with ingratitude and neglect, as their recompence from man for their services; but every loss and injury will prove a real gain to those, who expect their gracious recompence from God alone. And surely we may cheerfully submit to be rejected, despised, and hated by those who reject, despise, and hate the Lord: nay, we should consider it as an honourable testimony, that we are acknowledged to stand on his part. (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* iv. 12—16.)—Grace subdues and mortifies, and convictions restrain, human depravity; but in itself it is the same from generation to generation. Discontent, fondness of change, a desire of conformity to the world and of outward splendour, are natural to man, and follow him from the cradle to the grave, unless regenerated and new created by the Holy Spirit. No change of circumstances can cure these diseases; the dissatisfaction of the present situation is impatiently felt, the comfort of some other is eagerly and ignorantly conceived; and neither the counsels of wise men, nor the testimony of God, will suppress these inordinate desires. When the mind is thus disposed, the slightest circumstance serves as a pretext for rushing upon gratification; yet a pious man would grieve to give others by his conduct even an *occasion* of sin.—The Lord requires his servants rather to yield to the unjust and unreasonable desires of men, than to seem attached to earthly objects. And he frequently gives men their wishes in anger, to chastise their iniquity, and convince them of their folly.—When our grief or displeasure leads us to more fervent prayer and intercession in behalf of those who grieve us, nothing can injure or even long distress us; for the consolation of God will richly repay the injuries of men.—Under the troubles which Providence has allotted us, we may expect the supports of grace: but if we resolutely persist in choosing for ourselves; when we have exchanged slight inconveniences for real grievances, we shall have the aggravation of an accusing conscience and the divine rebuke. And this will often be the case; for those things which at a distant look *pleasant*, are generally most *bitter* when in actual possession.—The *law of God*, and the *manner of men*, are widely different; the former should be the *rule of our conduct* in the several relations of life; the latter *the measure of our expectations* from others.—As magistracy is the appointment of God and a great blessing, and as every form is liable to abuses; it is our wisdom to be thankful for the advantages, and patient under the inconveniences, of that government under which we live: and it is our duty to pray continually for our rulers, that they may govern us in the fear of God, and that we may live in all godliness and honesty; thus "honouring God and the "king, and not meddling with them that are given to "change," or disposed, upon every imaginary grievance, or indeed on any account, to speak evil of the ruler of the people. (*Notes, Rom.* xiii. 1—6. *Tit.* iii. 1, 2. 1 *Pet.* ii. 13—17. 2 *Pet.* ii. 10, 11.)—But the Lord's servants should behave so unexceptionably, that even those who injure them may not be able to impeach their integrity, or to withhold from them respect and confidence. And it is a hopeful symptom even in the evidently distempered state of individuals or collective bodies, when their desires of worldly objects can brook delay; and they can refer the time and manner of their being granted to the determination of Providence.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX, V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref.* a.) It is wonderful, that some chief of the tribe of Judah did not now advance a claim to the kingdom, in virtue of Jacob's blessing: (*Notes, Gen.* xlix. 8—10:) but "it was of the LORD," that he might first give the Israelites such a king as they had set their hearts on, before he raised up for them a king

3 And [d] the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost; and Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses.

4 And he passed through [e] mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of [f] Shalisha, but they found *them* not: then they passed through the land of [g] Shalim, and *there they were* not; and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found *them* not.

5 *And* when they were come to the land of [h] Zuph, Saul said to his servant that *was* with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave *caring* for the asses, and [i] take thought for us.

6 And he said unto him, Behold now, *there is* in this [k] city a man of God, and *he is* [l] an honourable man; [m] all that he saith, cometh surely to pass: now, let us go thither; peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go.

7 Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, *if* we go, [n] what shall we bring the man? for the bread is [*] spent in our vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring to the man of God: what [†] have we?

8 And the servant [‡] answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver; *that* will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way.

9 (Before-time in Israel, when a man went to [o] enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for *he that is* now *called* a Prophet, was before-time called [p] a Seer.)

10 Then said Saul to his servant, [§] Well said; come, let us go: so they went unto the city where the man of God *was*.

11 ¶ *And* as they went up [‖] the hill to the city, they [q] found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here?

12 And they answered them, and said, He is; behold *he is* before you: make haste now, for he came to-day to the city; for *there is* a [*] sacrifice of the people to-day in [r] the high place.

13 As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because [s] he doth bless the sacrifice; *and* afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about [†] this time ye shall find him.

14 And they went up into the city: *and* when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.

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after his own heart. (xiii. 14. *Note*, viii. 19—22.) The tribe of Benjamin, by the fatal catastrophe of Gibeah's wickedness, was reduced to be the least in Israel; but the individuals were enriched in proportion. (*Judg.* xx, xxi. *Note*, xxi. 16—18.) Even, if Kish was of an inferior family in this tribe (21), he might be very wealthy; and his son was possessed of all external accomplishments, suited to that carnal principle which had dictated Israel's request.—The words translated "a choice young man, and "a goodly," may literally be rendered, a chosen and goodly person, there being nothing in the original for *young*: and Saul had sons grown up to man's estate at this time. (xiii. 1, 2.)

V. 3—5. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 6—10. The servant of Saul seems to have known more of Samuel than Saul himself did; and he spoke very respectfully of him: yet both Saul and he looked on him rather as a *diviner*, or *fortune-teller*, than as a prophet, whose office it was to instruct them in the truth and will of God. It was no doubt customary in those days, to shew respect to prophets, and even to princes, by a present; but when they concluded, that Samuel would not be approached without some gift, they appeared to have judged of him by the mercenary diviners or magicians. (*Num.* xxii. 7.)—The ninth verse was evidently inserted, as a comment, in after ages, perhaps by Ezra, who is supposed to have set forth a correct edition of the Scriptures then extant, under the superintendence of the Spirit of prophecy. In the days of Samuel, prophets were emphatically styled *Seers*, or men who are enabled to *see* divin things, that they may shew them to others. The word *prophet* had been used of Abraham: (*Gen.* xx. 7:) but in the time of Samuel, in common conversation, the word *Seer* was more used: for the men of God were also called prophets. (iii. 20.) And at length, the name *Seer* sunk into disuse.

V. 12—14. (*Note*, vii. 17.) Shiloh, the place which God first chose to place his name there, had forfeited that distinction: no other place was appointed: the tabernacle, wherever it was at this time situated, did not contain the ark; and there was no tabernacle or altar at Kirjath-jearim, where the ark remained. (*Note*, vii. 1, 2.) These circumstances occasioned a kind of temporary suspension of the law against sacrificing in any other place, than that which the Lord had chosen: (*Notes*, *Lev.* xvii. 3—7. *Deut.* xii. 5—7:) and the cities of the priests and Levites, where the people resorted for instruction, seemed the most proper for that purpose. The highest parts of these cities were

29 And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at [t] En-gedi.

t xxiv. 1. Josh. xv. 62. 2 Chr. xx. 2. Cant. i. 14. Ez. xlvii. 10.

CHAP. XXIV.

David in a cave, having Saul entirely in his power, cuts off his skirt, but spares his life, 1—7. He proves his innocency to Saul, 8—15. Saul owns his fault, requires an oath of David, and departs, 16—22.

[a] xxiii. 28. * Heb. *after*. [b] xxiii. 19. Prov. xxv. 6. xxix. 12. Ez. xxii. 9. Hos. vii. 3.

AND it came to pass, [a] when Saul was returned from * following the Philistines, that [b] it was told him, saying, Behold, David *is* in [c] the wilderness of En-gedi.

c xxiii. 29.

2 Then Saul took [d] three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and [e] went to seek David and his men upon [f] the rocks of the wild goats.

d xiii. 2. e Ps. xxxvii. 32. xxxviii. 12. f Ps. civ. 18.

3 And he came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where *was* a cave; and Saul went in [g] to cover his feet: and [h] David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

g Judg. iii. 24. h Ps. lvii. *title*. cxlii. *title*.

his persecutors. (*Notes*, xxvi. 1, 2. *Ps.* liv. *title*. 1—3.) The place was called *the rock of divisions*, as separating between David and Saul, on this emergency. (*Marg.*)

V. 29. *Marg. Ref.* t.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

The prayers of true believers are a barrier against hostile invasions; but persecution brings down the judgments of God upon guilty nations. No ill usage, however, should prompt us to revenge ourselves, or prevent us from doing good, as we have an opportunity and ability; even when we are sure to meet with ingratitude, and to be exposed to further trouble, by so doing. Thus Jesus lived and died, "and left us an example that we should follow his steps." —The more particularly we seek direction from God in fervent prayer, and the more carefully we consult the sacred Scriptures, the safer will be our path.—In difficult circumstances we shall often find the unbelief of our professed helpers a very discouraging hindrance: but the most effectual way of answering their objections, and securing their assistance, is to refer them to the precepts and promises of God.—No ties of honour, gratitude, or affection, can secure the heart, under powerful temptations: nay, we none of us know how we should act, if assailed by the terrors of impending death, and left without the immediate supports of divine grace. He, who made the human heart, can alone estimate its deceitfulness: we ought not therefore to confide in our own resolutions, or in the assurances of others; but depend on the Lord to guide and keep us: and if we meet with evil treatment, we need not wonder, and ought not to revile or murmur.—The kindness of those friends, whom he raises up where we could least expect them, may well countervail the malice of our enemies, and the ingratitude and fickleness of those whom we have served. And if the converse of one friend can, at one interview, give so much comfort and strength to our hearts; (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* vii. 5—7;) what may not be expected from the continual supports, and daily visits, and powerful love, of the sinner's Saviour, the believer's covenanted Friend? And what will heaven be, where perfect and universal friendship reigns, without interruption, separation, or alloy? Let us then continually seek the renewed ratification of the covenant of grace, and cultivate the friendship of the Lord and of his people. Our most rational and pleasing expectations of another kind may be frustrated; all other unions must be dissolved; but here disappointment and disunion can have no place for ever.

V. 19—29.

The influence of wickedness, in those who fill exalted stations, widely and fatally diffuses itself among their inferiors, even throughout whole nations: many will pay court to them, by aiding their sinful purposes; nay, some will pride themselves in resembling them in their vices! and those only will be treated as friends, who in fact are their most destructive enemies. Those therefore who are distinguished by this dangerous pre-eminence, have additional reasons for bridling their passions, and exercising themselves unto godliness; lest they should by their crimes occasion the ruin of multitudes, and thus aggravate their own condemnation.—The language of piety, separate from its substantial effects, can only amuse and deceive those who hear, and those who use it.—Malice is ever restless and tormenting; and though disappointed, it still hopes for success: but numbers, power, rage, and subtlety, can never destroy those whom God protects. His methods of preserving his people are unnumbered. (*Note, Acts* ix. 3—6.) He sometimes leads them into the most imminent danger, to endear their deliverance, and to increase the torment of their persecuting foes. And he can employ one enemy, contrary to his intention, to deliver us from another still more formidable: or he can fill the hands of persecutors with other work, so that they are constrained to postpone their malicious purposes. But we must not expect much comfort in this evil world, which uses the best of men in so base a manner, and which once "crucified "the Lord of glory." We should therefore study to pass through it as pilgrims; and to leave it, as those who are departing to a better country, that is, a heavenly.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1—3. When Saul had repelled the invasion of the Philistines, he selected three thousand of his troops, and resumed his pursuit of David, who had taken refuge among some uncultivated rocks, inhabited only by wild goats: and Saul, supposing him at a distance, retired into a cave, while his men were absent. But in this very cave, David and his company lay concealed. Thus God delivered Saul into David's hand: (*Note*, xxiii. 7, 8:) he was absolutely in his power, and could have made no resistance; nay, the manner of his death might have been concealed, till David had taken proper measures to secure himself, and to seize the throne. (*Notes, Ps.* lvii. cxlii. *titles*.)

4 And [i] the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, [j] I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of [*] Saul's robe privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that [k] David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

6 And he said unto his men, [l] The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD.

7 So David [†] stayed his servants with these words, and [m] suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way.

8 ¶ David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, [n] My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, [o] David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

9 And David said to Saul, [p] Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen, how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and *some* [q] bade *me* kill thee: but *mine* *eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he *is* [r] the LORD's anointed.

11 Moreover, [s] my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see, that *there is* [t] neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee: yet [u] thou huntest my soul to take it.

12 The [x] LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee; but [y] mine hand shall not be upon thee.

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, [z] Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked; but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

14 After whom is [a] the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? [b] after a dead dog, [c] after a flea?

15 The LORD therefore [d] be Judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and [‡] deliver me out of thine hand.

V. 4—7. David's men urged very *plausibly*, that God had brought his enemy into his power, in order to fulfil his promises to him: yet they were greatly mistaken; as in reality the Lord intended to give David an opportunity of exercising faith, patience, and generous kindness; of shewing the tendency and efficacy of his religious principles, the tenderness of his conscience, and the stedfastness of his loyalty; for the confutation of his accusers, a rebuke to Saul, and an example to all who read it.—David had *a promise of the kingdom*, but *no command to slay the reigning king*, or promise that God would deliver Saul into his hand. (xxvi. 10. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi. 37. 40.)—Saul had been anointed by God's command, as well as made king over Israel in his providence: he had indeed been rejected; and David had been greatly injured, but he was not his own avenger. David's peculiar circumstances constrained him to defend himself, but not to slay Saul; whom he looked upon as his sovereign, and the LORD's *anointed*, and not as *his* rival and persecutor. (*Note*, xxvi. 8—12.) He was satisfied with performing his present duty; he left his protection and future advancement to God; and he deemed it an atrocious offence to "stretch forth his hand," to hurt even so wicked a prince as Saul, and in defence of his own life. Nay, when he had privily cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, as a demonstration of what he could have done, his heart smote him, lest in this action he had failed of due respect to the LORD's anointed! (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 10.) Neither would he allow his men to injure him; though they seem to have been so impatient for security and preferment, that he had much difficulty in restraining and appeasing them.

V. 8—15. It may be supposed, that David remained at so great a distance from Saul and his army, that he was in no danger of being immediately seized on by them; though Saul could both hear and see him. Yet, if Saul's heart should not be affected by his address, he would be more likely to crush him than before. But this, and all consequences, David trusted with God.—Nothing can be imagined more respectful, pathetick, and forcible, than his conduct and address on this occasion. He shewed all reverence to Saul as his prince, bowing himself before him to the earth: he called him respectfully, "My lord "the king," and in token of affection, "My father," being his son-in-law: he avoided all reproaches, and sharp expostulations: he intimated that Saul's prejudice against him arose from slanderous reports; and reminded him, that he himself had been counselled to take away Saul's life, but would not do it. He adduced the most decisive evidence that he did not mean to injure him; while he repeatedly assured him that his hand should never be upon him. He mildly expostulated with him, on the injustice and unreasonableness of his conduct; and humbly represented himself as beneath the notice of so great a prince, who degraded himself in coming out "after a dead dog, a "*single flea*," an imagined enemy equally insignificant. In illustration of his own conduct he quoted "the proverb

16 And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, [e] *Is* this thy voice, my son David? and [f] Saul lifted up his voice and wept.

17 And he said to David, [g] Thou *art* more righteous than I: for [h] thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

18 And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when [i] the LORD had [t] delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.

19 For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore, [j] the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

20 And now, behold, [k] I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

21 [l] Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that [m] thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

22 And David sware unto Saul, and Saul went home; but [n] David and his men gat them up unto [o] the hold.

[e] xxvi. 17. Job vi. 25. Prov. xv. 1. xxv. 11. Luke xxi. 15. Acts vi. 10.
[f] Gen. xxxiii. 4.
[g] xxvi. 21. Gen. xxxviii 26. Ex. ix. 27. Ps. xxxvii. 6. Matt. xxvii. 4.
[h] Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20, 21.
[i] xxiii. 7. xxvi. 10. 23.
[t] Heb. *shut me up.* xxiii. 12. xxvi. 8. *margins.* Ps. xxxi. 8.
[j] xxiii. 21. xxvi. 25. Judg. xvii. 2.
[k] xx. 30, 31. xxiii. 17. 2 Sam. iii. 17, 18. Job xv. 25. Matt. ii. 3—6. 13. 16.
[l] xx. 14—17. Gen. xxi. 23. xxxi. 48. 53. Heb vi. 16.
[m] 2 Sam. xxi. 6—8.
[n] Prov. xxvi. 24, 25. Matt. x. 16, 17. John ii. 24.
[o] xxiii. 29.

"of the ancients," that "wickedness proceedeth from the "wicked," that men's actions manifest their dispositions; and if he had been a wicked person, his actions that day would have shewn it. At the same time he plainly and repeatedly warned Saul, that the Lord would judge between them, and both deliver him out of his hand, and avenge his cause upon him. (*Notes*, xxvi. 13—20.)

The imperative or optative mood, employed in these verses, might perhaps, with more strict conformity to the Hebrew, be changed for the future tense indicative:—"The "Lord will judge, ... will avenge, ... will be Judge, &c."

V. 16—22. These forcible words, and this generous behaviour, produced a temporary conviction in Saul's mind, of David's excellency, the righteousness of his cause, and the certainty of his advancement; and consequently, that himself was deeply criminal, and in a ruinous path. Probably, he was in some measure convinced of these things at other times, but they now more deeply affected him; nor could he suppress his emotion, or refuse to acknowledge his convictions. Instead therefore of attempting to destroy David as he intended, his malice was arrested, and he both spoke well of him, foretold his establishment on the throne, and begged of the Lord to reward him for sparing his life; and he owned that he should not have behaved thus, if David had been in his power. Under this conviction Saul desired of David the security of an oath, that he would not, when king, extirpate his posterity; and David was willing thus to bind himself to his duty. (*Note*, *2 Sam.* xxi. 4—7.) But he did not ask Saul to swear to him, that he would no more seek his life; probably knowing that he did not duly regard the obligation of an oath: nor would he trust himself with him, being aware how little such transient appearances could be depended on.—Saul's conduct in persecuting David, even when convinced of his excellency, and that he would be advanced to the throne, illustrates the behaviour of the scribes and priests in their determined enmity to Christ, notwithstanding they could not resist the wisdom of his words, deny the reality of his miracles, or at all impeach his character. (*Notes*, *Matt.* ii. 3—6. *John* xi. 47, 48. xii. 9—11. *Acts* v. 33—39.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

Wicked men are often interrupted in their evil courses; yet they return to them when the restraint is removed, as if delivered from trouble that they might commit more sins. (*Note*, *Jer.* vii. 8—11.) But the Lord disappoints their malice; and by bringing them into danger, gives them manifest proof of their folly and wickedness. We should be very careful what interpretation we put upon events in Providence, and what conclusions we deduce from them; lest we mistake the *opportunity* of following our own inclinations, for an approbation of our conduct in so doing; and in doubtful cases we must neither judge by appearance, nor be determined by *plausible* arguments.—An accurate knowledge of the divine law, an established judgment, and a holy state of heart, are requisite to mark out the path of duty, in many important cases. But it is always safe to deny the suggestions of revenge, covetousness, ambition, impatience, or other selfish principles: it savours more of piety to interpret a providential dispensation as a trial of faith and patience, and an exercise of self-denial, than to consider it as a licence for self-indulgence: and a tender conscience will be peculiarly afraid of specious temptations, and induce a man to "abstain from "all appearance of evil."—We should perform all our relative duties *from regard to the authority of* GOD; when others violate his law in their conduct towards us, we must not do the same towards them; and in waiting for the performance of his promises we must use lawful means alone. Under the deepest injuries we are not allowed, and ought not to be inclined, to avenge ourselves; but after the example of David, and of David's Lord, we should "commit our cause to him that judgeth righteously." (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 18—25.)—Magistracy is the ordinance of God, and confers dignity on those advanced to it, who, in all ordinary cases and lawful things, should be honoured and obeyed; and if they abuse their trust, the Lord will execute vengeance upon them: and provided we have the opportunity, we should, along with the most loyal and unreserved submission in all things lawful, plainly warn them of their danger in this respect. If persecuted in one city we may flee to another, and use necessary means of self-preservation: but we must not lift up our hands, or adopt offensive measures, against those whom God has placed over us, though like even Saul or Nero. (*Notes*, *Rom.* xiii. 1—7.)

CHAP. XXV.

Samuel dies, and is lamented and buried by all Israel; and David goes to Paran, 1. The character of Nabal, and of his wife Abigail, 2, 3. David sends to Nabal most respectfully requesting some provisions; but provoked by his answer, sets out to destroy him, 4—13. A servant warns Abigail, 14—17. She meets David with a present, and wisely pacifies him, 18—31. David blesses God for her interposition, and courteously dismisses her, 32—35. Nabal, hearing of the danger to which he had been exposed, is terrified, and dies, 36—38. David marries Abigail and also Ahinoam, 39—43. Michal is given to Phalti, 44.

AND [a]Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and [b]lamented him, and buried him [c]in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to [d]the wilderness of Paran.

2 ¶ And *there was* a man in [e]Maon, whose [*]possessions *were* in Carmel;

a xxviii. 3.
b Gen. l. 11. Num. xx. 29. Deut. xxxiv. 8. Acts viii. 2.
c vii. 17. 1 Kings ii. 34. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 20. Is. xiv. 18.
d Gen. xiv. 6. xxi. 21. Num. xii. 16. Ps. cxx. 5.
e xxiii. 24.
* Or, business was.

V. 8—22.

It is not enough that we avoid evil ourselves: we should use our influence to restrain others also, or we shall be chargeable before God for it.—Mild language and respectful behaviour, even to wicked and injurious superiors, are ornamental to piety. We must not indeed flatter any one with the hope of impunity in sin: yet we may put the most candid construction on men's actions, and satisfy ourselves with manifesting our own innocence, modestly complaining of hard usage, and employing forcible arguments and pathetick expostulations. It is also more prudent to abate envy by seeking to appear inconsiderable, than to excite it by boasting of dignity, or excellence, or of our past services.—While we are thankful for having been hitherto preserved from open crimes, we cannot bind ourselves too strongly, in dependence on the grace of God, to avoid them for the time to come: for our conduct as Christians should form a contrast to that of the enemies of true religion; in order to convince all men on what principles we act, and that our cause is worthy of God. The noblest of all victories consists in "overcoming evil "with good."—If men in eminent stations had a proper sense of the importance attached to their characters and conduct, it would keep them from debasing themselves by such mean pursuits, as they are often engaged in: and a due reflection on our rational powers, and the unspeakable value of our immortal souls, would have a similar effect upon us all.—Those who act conscientiously will find opportunities of confuting their revilers, and of being manifested in the consciences of their most determined enemies: and at length the Lord will plead and avenge their cause. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxvii. 5—8. *Is.* liv. 15—17. *Mic.* vii. 8—10.)—Flattering and slanderous favourites are the bane of princes: by hearing their words, they advance their enemies, and persecute their friends; because the *clamour* of their passions silences the *whisper* of their consciences.—But the most atrocious sinners have seasons of remorse, when they perceive and are affected with their situation: they are almost persuaded to renounce their sins; they are convinced of the excellency of true Christians, as acting from principles superior, and even contrary, to those which influence their own conduct: they cannot withhold from them a good word, and wish or prayer; and at once forbode their felicity, and their own misery. Yet, as they are not truly humbled or changed, sin and the world reign in their hearts: they acknowledge that they are not so good as some men, but will not confess how *very criminal* they are; they are more careful about their credit and interests in the world, than the forgiveness of their sins; and while they confess their own injustice, and their obligations to others, they leave it to the Lord to repay them.—Those, who are *experimentally* acquainted with the grace of God, will place little dependence on these appearances, especially in those, who have long sinned against the light of their own consciences: for there is great reason to fear that these transient affections also will subside, and leave the heart still harder than before.—The grace of God will teach us to forgive and be kind to our enemies, but not to trust those who have repeatedly deceived us: for malice often seems dead, when it is only dormant, and will ere long revive with double force. Yet, whether the Lord employ men, bind their hands, or awe and affect their hearts, so that they lose for a season their inclination to hurt us; the deliverance is from him, an evidence of his love, and an earnest of our final salvation.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1. If Samuel was eighteen years of age at the death of Eli, he must have been at least thirty-eight, when he vanquished the Philistines at Ebenezer. (*Notes,* vii. 1, 2.) But how many years elapsed, from that time, to his anointing Saul; how long he lived after Saul was made king; how long Saul survived him; or how long Saul reigned in all, are matters of conjecture or calculation, without any certain *data* to proceed upon. (*Note, Acts* xiii. 21.) Perhaps Saul survived Samuel three or four years.—Doubtless Samuel, to the end of his days, presided over the seminary of prophets, and, by his prayers, instructions, and example, was very useful in private; though he did not much intermeddle in publick business. When he died, the people in general were deeply sensible of their loss, and of their sin and folly in rejecting him; which conviction the disastrous events of Saul's reign, and his capricious and tyrannical conduct, would enhance: so that collecting themselves together, they made general lamentations for him and honourably buried him.—Upon this event David removed into the wilderness of Paran, in part of which Israel wandered before they entered Canaan; (*Marg. Ref.* d;) perhaps concluding that Saul's malice would be now more unrestrained than ever.

V. 2. (*Note, Job* i. 3.)—*Carmel.*] Not mount Carmel in the north of Canaan in the lot of Asher, (*Josh.* xix. 26. 1 *Kings* xviii. 19. 42,) but another place of the same name belonging to Judah. (*Josh.* xv. 55.)

and the [f] man *was* very great, and he had [g] three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was [h] shearing his sheep in [i] Carmel.

3 Now the name of the man *was* Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail: and *she was* a woman of [j] good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man [k] *was* churlish and evil in his doings: and he *was* of the house of Caleb.

4 And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep.

5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get ye up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and [*] greet him in my name:

6 And thus shall ye say to him that [l] liveth *in prosperity*, [m] Peace *be* both to thee, and peace *be* to thine house, and peace *be* unto all that thou hast.

7 And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, [n] we [†] hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.

8 Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: (for we come in [o] a good day:) give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to [p] thy son David.

9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and [‡] ceased.

10 And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, [q] Who *is* David? and who *is* the son of Jesse? [r] There be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master.

11 [s] Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my [§] flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and [t] give *it* unto men [u] whom I know not whence they *be?*

12 So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and [x] came and told him all those sayings.

13 And David said unto his men, [y] Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword, and [z] David also girded on his sword, and there went up after David about four hundred men; [a] and two hundred abode by the stuff.

14 ¶ But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he [‖] railed on them.

15 But the men *were* [b] very good unto us, and we were not [*] hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields:

V. 3—6. (*Marg. Ref.*) *Of the house of Caleb.* (3) כָּלְבִּי (lege כַּלְבִּי). The LXX render it ανθρωπος κυνικος, *A man like a dog;* as if derived from כֶּלֶב *a dog.*—*That liveth,* &c. (6) The words, *in prosperity,* are not in the original.—In this friendly, and respectful, and highly benevolent salutation, David seems to have spoken unadvisedly, in calling a sottish and luxurious wicked man, "him that liveth;" as if his own indigence scarcely deserved the name of life. (*Note,* 1 *Thes.* iii. 6—10. *v.* 8.)

V. 7, 8. David had not only restrained his men from molesting Nabal's flocks, but had protected them against the depredations of their invaders. (*Notes,* 14—17. xxii. 1, 2.) He might therefore justly have demanded a reward for his services: but he was rather desirous of becoming Nabal's supplicant, for whatever came to hand in a season of festivity; as he was in great distress, and unwilling to subsist by plunder. (*Note, Philem.* 8—11.) Nothing could be more modest, respectful, and friendly, than this message was.

V. 10, 11. Nabal doubtless knew that David had slain Goliath, and often smitten the Philistines; that he was a man of eminent valour and capacity, and of unblemished reputation; that he was the son-in-law of Saul, and unjustly persecuted; and that in his present necessity he behaved in an unexceptionable manner. But to vindicate his selfish refusal, he abused him and his men as run-away-slaves; and thus he foolishly rendered his answer as exasperating as he could! (*Judg.* xii. 4.)—It is observable, that Nabal copied Saul's contemptuous way of calling David the son of Jesse, though he pretended he knew not whence he was! (*Notes,* xx. 30. xxii. 9, 10.)

V. 13. (*Note, Judg.* xii. 1—7.) David had been upon his guard against anger and revenge, when most basely used by Saul; (*Notes,* xxiv. 1—15;) but he did not expect such reproachful language and insolent treatment from Nabal: he was therefore wholly put off his guard; and in great indignation he determined to avenge himself. It was also far more humiliating to be insulted by such a man as Nabal, than to be persecuted by the king. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14—17. This servant not only confirmed what David had said, concerning his conduct and that of his men; but stated that they had been very *useful* to them. (*Notes,* 7, 8. xxii. 1, 2.) It does not appear, whether he had received any intelligence of David's determination, or had only

16 They were [c] a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.

17 Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for [d] evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he *is such* [e] a son of Belial, [f] that *a man* cannot speak to him.

18 Then Abigail [g] made haste, and [h] took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched *corn*, and an hundred * clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid *them* on asses.

19 And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. [i] But she told not her husband Nabal:

20 And it was *so*, *as* she [k] rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her: and she met them.

21 Now David had said, [l] Surely in vain have I kept all that this *fellow* hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *pertained* unto him: and [m] he hath requited me evil for good.

22 [n] So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, [o] if I leave of all that *pertain* to him, by the morning light, [p] any that pisseth against the wall.

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and [q] lighted off the ass, and [r] fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

24 And [s] fell at his feet, and said, [t] Upon me, my lord, *upon* me *let this* iniquity *be*: and [u] let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine † audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.

25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, ‡ regard this [x] man of Belial, *even* Nabal: for as his name *is*, so *is* he; [§] Nabal *is* his name, and folly *is* with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

26 Now therefore, my lord, [y] *as* the LORD liveth, [z] and *as* thy soul liveth, seeing [a] the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to *shed* blood, and [b] from ‖ [c] avenging thyself with thine own hand, now [c] let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

27 And now this * blessing, which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that † follow my lord.

28 I pray thee [d] forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for [e] the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord [f] fighteth the battles of the LORD, and [g] evil hath not been found in thee *all* thy days.

29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be [h] bound in the bundle of life [i] with the LORD thy God; and

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formed a shrewd conjecture from circumstances. But, anxious for his own safety, as well as for that of the family, and not daring to mention his apprehensions to Nabal, who would probably have grossly abused him for his impertinence; he applied to Abigail, complaining of his master, as "such a son of Belial, that a man could not "speak unto him:" words not proper to be used by a servant concerning his master, if the urgency of the case had not required them. (*Notes, Eph.* vi. 5—9. 1 *Tim.* vi. 1—5. *Tit.* ii. 9, 10. 1 *Pet.* ii. 18—25.)

V. 18, 19. Abigail was about to dispose largely of Nabal's property without his consent; but this was necessary for the preservation of him and his family. She was fully satisfied that his obstinacy would ruin them all, if he were made acquainted with her design: the peculiarity of her situation therefore fully justified her conduct. (*Notes, Prov.* xxxi. 10—12.)

V. 21, 22. David, in his sober judgment, knew better than to repent of his good deeds; or to think them done in vain, because requited with ingratitude: his determination to destroy or carry off every male at least of Nabal's family, for his fault, was unjust and cruel in the extreme: and his confirming this with a kind of oath, (though he turned off the imprecation from himself unto his enemies,) was rash, and savoured of profaneness.—If he had been permitted to execute his purpose of revenge, it would have occasioned him much bitter reflection, greatly tarnished his character, and given his enemies an immense advantage against him. (*Note*, 32, 33.)—It is probable, that his officers and men generally approved of his designs against Nabal, as expressive of a proper spirit on the occasion, and necessary to deter others from insulting them.

Any that pisseth, &c. (22) This seems to have been a proverbial expression in common use among the Israelites; and it may, with the utmost propriety, be read, "every "male." (*Marg. Ref.* p.)

V. 23—31. The conduct and address of Abigail, on this emergency, are worthy of high admiration. Nabal had insulted David as a run-away slave: (*Note*, 10, 11:) but in order to pacify him, Abigail shewed him the rever-

c Ex. xiv. 22. Job i. 10. Zech. ii. 5.
d xx. 7. 9. 33. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Esth. vii. 7.
e 25. ii. 12. Deut. xiii. 13. Judg. xix. 22. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13. 2 Chr. xiii. 7.
f xx. 32, 33. 2 Kings v. 13, 14.
g 34. Num. xvi. 46—48. Prov. vi. 4, 5. Matt. v. 25.
h Gen. xxxii. 13—20. xliii. 11—14. 2 Sam. xvii. 28, 29. Prov. xviii. 16. xxi. 14.
* Heb. *lumps.* 2 Sam. xvi. 1.
i Prov. xxxi. 11, 12. 27.
k 2 Kings iv. 24.
l See on 13.—Job xxx. 8. Ps. xxxvii. 8. Eph. iv. 26, 27. 31. 1 Thes. v. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 21—23. iii. 9.
m Gen. xliv. 4. Ps. xxxv. 12. xxxviii. 20. cix. 3—5. Prov. xvii. 13. Jer. xviii. 20. Rom. xii. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 20. iii. 17.
n iii. 17. xiv. 44. xx. 13. 16. Ruth i. 17.
o 34.
p 1 Kings xiv. 10. xvi. 11. xxi. 21. 2 Kings ix. 8.
q Josh. xv. 18. Judg. i. 14.
r xx. 41. xxiv. 8.
s 2 Kings iv. 37. Esth. viii. 3. Matt. xviii. 29.
t 28. Gen. xliv. 33, 34. 2 Sam. xiv. 9. Philem. 18, 19.
u Gen. xliv. 18. 2 Sam. xiv. 12.
† Heb. *ears.*
‡ Heb. *lay it to his heart.* 2 Sam. xiii. 33. Is. xlii. 25. Mal. ii. 2.
x See on 17. 25.
§ That is, *fool.*
y 34. xx. 3. 2 Kings ii. 2. 4. 6.
z See on i. 26.
a 33. Gen. xx. 6. b Rom. xii. 19, 20.
‖ Heb. *saving thyself.* Ps. xvii. 47, 48. xliv. 8.
c 2 Sam. xviii. 32. Jer. xxix. 22. Dan. iv. 19.
* Or, *present.* xxv. 26. Gen. xxxiii. 11. 2 Kings v. 15. 2 Cor. ix. 5.
† Heb. *walk at the feet of.* 42. *marg.* Judg. iv. 10. 2 Sam. xvi. 2.
d 24.
e xv. 28. 2 Sam. vii. 11. 16. 27. 1 Kings ix. 5. 1 Chr. xvii. 10. 25.
f xvii. 47. xviii. 17. 2 Sam. v. 2. 2 Chr. xx. 15. Eph. vi. 10, 11.
g xxiv. 6, 7. 11. 17. Matt. v. 16. Luke xxiii. 41. 47.
h ii. 9. Gen. xv. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 29. Ps. lxvi. 9. cxvi. 15. Matt. x. 29, 30.
i John x. 27—30. xiv. 19. xvii. 21. 23. Col. iii. 3, 4. 1 Pet. i. 5.

the souls of thine enemies, them shall he [j] sling out, [*] *as out* of the middle of a sling.

30 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my lord [k] according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel;

31 That this shall be no [†] grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath [l] avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then [m] remember thine handmaid.

32 And David said to Abigail, [n] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:

33 And [o] blessed *be* thy advice, and blessed *be* thou, [p] which hast kept me this day from coming to *shed* blood, and from [q] avenging myself with mine own hand.

34 For in very deed, *as* the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst [r] hasted and come to meet me, surely [s] there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, any that pisseth against the wall.

35 So David received of her hand *that* which she had brought him, and said unto her, [t] Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have [u] accepted thy person.

36 ¶ And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held [x] a feast in his house like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart *was* [y] merry within him, for he *was* very drunken: wherefore [z] she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning-light.

j Jer. x. 18. * Heb. *in the midst of the bow of a sling.*

k xiii. 14. xv. 28. xxiii. 17. Ps. lxxxix. 20, &c.

† Heb. *staggering, or, stumbling.* Prov. v. 12, 13. Rom. xiv. 21. 2 Cor. i. 12.

l 33. xxiv. 15. xxvi. 23. 2 Sam. xxii. 48. Ps. xciv. 1. Rom. xii. 19.

m 40. Gen. xl. 14. Luke xxiii. 42.

n Gen. xxiv. 27. Ex. xviii. 10. Ezra vii. 27. Ps. xli. 12, 13. Luke i. 68. 2 Cor. viii. 16.

o Ps. cxli. 5. Prov. ix. 9. xvii. 10. xxv. 12. xxvii. 21. xxviii. 23.

p 26.

q *See on* 26. 31.—xxiv. 19. xxvi. 9, 10.

r 18. xi. 11. Josh. x. 6. 9.

s *See on* p. 22.

t xx. 42. 2 Sam. xv. 9. 2 Kings v. 19. Luke vii. 50. viii. 48.

u Gen. xix. 21. Job xxxiv. 19.

x 2 Sam. xiii. 23. Esth. i. 3—7. Luke xiv. 12.

y 2 Sam. xiii. 28. 1 Kings xx. 16. Prov. xx. 1. xxiii. 29—35. Ec. ii. 2, 3. Is. xxviii. 3. 7, 8. Jer. li. 57. Dan. v. 1—5. Nah. i. 10. Hab. ii. 15, 16. Luke xxi. 34. Rom. xiii. 13. Eph. v. 18. 1 Thes. v. 7, 8

z 19. Ps. cxii. 5. Matt. x 16. Eph. v. 15.

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ence due to a superior, and to her sovereign in the purpose of God. Though he was evidently in a very angry spirit, wholly unbecoming his character, she took no notice of it; but only intreated him to allow her, as if she had been the criminal, to plead her cause, and that he would give her a candid hearing. She could not excuse her husband's conduct, and the case did not allow her to veil his infirmities: but she attempted to turn his well known character for rashness and insolence into an argument with David, why he should lay aside his resentment. She intimated, that Nabal, (whose very name signified *folly*,) intended no peculiar affront to him; but only spoke according to his usual way of treating those who applied to him: and it was beneath a person of David's reputation and eminence, to notice the rudeness of such a man: but had she been present, the young men would have met with better treatment. With consummate address, she expressed a full confidence, that the Lord had sent her to keep his servant David "from avenging himself with his "own hand:" and she solemnly desired, that "as sure as "the LORD lived, and as David's soul lived," (*Note*, xx. 3,) all that sought evil to him might be as weak and infatuated in their counsels as Nabal: and then he would have nothing to fear from them, for they would effectually ruin themselves. The liberal present, which she called a *blessing*, being an expression of her good will, (*Marg. Ref.* on *marg. reading*,) she represented as unworthy of *his* notice, but begged that it might be given to his followers. She professed her firm belief that he and his family would be established in the kingdom: she made honourable mention of his great services to Israel, and of his unblameable conduct; and adverted to the injustice of Saul's persecution, whom in honour of his authority she did not mention by name. She declared her assurance of David's preservation by a remarkable expression, "that his soul would be bound "up in the bundle of life with the LORD his God," as men bind up those things which they are afraid of losing. (*Notes, Acts* xxiii. 11. xxvii. 20—26.) He was irreversibly appointed to the kingdom, and in consequence was numbered with those who are upheld in life and protected against all possible dangers, by the almighty power of the everlasting God: while his enemies would be driven into destruction, as a stone is violently thrown from a sling. In pleading for forgiveness, she intimated that it would be far more honourable to his character, and comfortable to his mind, when the promises of God should be performed, to reflect that he had conquered his anger, than that he had avenged himself and shed blood without cause: (*Note, Prov.* xvi. 32:) and she concluded with begging of him to think of her, and what she had said, when these things were come to pass. (*Notes, Luke* xxiii. 39—43.)—Nothing seems to have been omitted in this address which suited the occasion; nothing unsuitable added; all was expressed in the most persuasive manner; and the whole manifests Abigail to have been a woman of strong faith and great piety, as well as of singular prudence and ingenuity.

V. 32, 33. Abigail's speech brought David to view the whole transaction, and his own spirit and purposes, in the true light; and to bless God for sending her, to pray for her, and to thank her for coming so speedily with advice so seasonable and suitable, by which very much mischief and guilt had been prevented. (*Note, Prov.* xxv. 11, 12.) David repented of his rash oath, and did not think himself bound by it to destroy Nabal and his family. (*Notes*, 21, 22. *Matt.* xiv. 8—11.)

V. 34. Though David only intended the death of *the men:* yet if Abigail and the other women had escaped the massacre, they must have been most deeply injured; therefore "the LORD had kept him back from hurting her," as well as Nabal and his men servants, or other assistants.

V. 35. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Gen.* xxxiii. 10.

V. 36—38. (*Marg. Ref.* y.) When Nabal heard of the imminent danger, to which his own folly had exposed him, at the very time when he was stupified with drunkenness

37 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife [a] had told him these things, that [b] his heart died within him, and he became *as* a stone.

38 And it came to pass about ten days *after*, that [c] the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.

39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, [d] Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath [e] pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath [f] kept his servant from evil: for the LORD [g] hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, [h] to take her to him to wife.

40 And when the servants of David were come to Abigail, to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, [i] David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.

41 And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, *let* [k] thine handmaid *be* a servant [l] to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.

42 And [m] Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of her's that went * after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

43 David also took Ahinoam of [n] Jezreel; and they were also [o] both of them [p] his wives.

44 But Saul had given [q] Michal his daughter, David's wife, to [r] Phalti the son of Laish, which *was* of [s] Gallim.

[a] 22. 34.
[b] Deut. xxviii. 28. Job xv. 21, 22.
[c] 25. vi. 9. Ex. xii. 29. 2 Kings xix. 35. 2 Chr. x. 15. Acts xii. 23.
[d] 32. Judg. v. 2. 2 Sam. xxii. 47—49. Ps. lviii. 10, 11. Rev. xix. 1—4.
[e] Prov. xxii. 23. Lam. iii. 58—60. Mic. vii. 9.
[f] 26. 34. Hos. ii. 6, 7. 2 Cor. xiii. 7. 1 Thes. v. 23. 2 Tim. iv. 18.
[g] 2 Sam. iii. 28, 29. 1 Kings ii. 44. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 16.
[h] Prov. xviii. 22. xix. 14. xxxi. 10. 30.
[i] Gen. xxiv. 37, 38. 5.
[k] Ruth ii. 10. 13. Prov. xv. 33. xviii. 12.
[l] Gen. xviii. 4. John xiii. 3—5. 1 Tim. v. 10.
[m] Gen. xxiv. 61—67. Ps. xlv. 10, 11.
* Heb. *at her feet.*
[n] Josh. xv. 56. 2 Sam. iii. 2.
[o] Gen. ii. 24. Matt. xix. 5. 8.
[p] xxvii. 3. xxx. 5. 2 Sam. v. 13—16.
[q] xviii. 20. 27.
[r] 2 Sam. iii. 14, 15. *Phaltiel.*
[s] Is. x. 30.

and surrounded with those whom he had tempted to the same excess, his terror and vexation were so great that they sunk his spirits; and in ten days, by the just judgment of God, he ended his life either by the effect of his intoxication and subsequent horror and anguish of mind, or by some more immediate stroke of the power and indignation of God; and he left his wealth to others. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 22—29. *Dan.* v. 5—9. *Luke* xii. 15—21. xxi. 34—36.)—It seems his provisions were so large, his attendants so numerous, and his mind so dissipated or swallowed up in sensual gratification, that he did not miss either Abigail, or her liberal present to David, or the servants who went with her!

V. 39—42. David blessed God that he had been kept from avenging himself: and he considered the death of Nabal, as a proof of the Lord's special regard to him, in pleading his cause against his enemies; as an earnest of further favours; and as far more suited to awe others from injuring him than any vengeance which he could himself have inflicted. (*Notes*, xxvi. 8—12. *Rom.* xii. 17—21.)—The prudence, ingenuity, and piety of Abigail, as well as her beauty, made a deep impression on David; and therefore, according to the custom of those times, he sent messengers with proposals of marriage to her. On the other hand, Abigail firmly believed that David would be king over Israel, and highly esteemed his pious and excellent character: she therefore deemed his proposals very honourable and advantageous, notwithstanding his present difficulties; and with great humility acceded to them; being willing to share his trials, and to submit to any services for his sake. (*Note, Gen.* xxiv. 58.)

V. 43, 44. It is probable that David had married Ahinoam, as soon as Michal was married to Phalti. and that he afterwards married Abigail also. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* iii. 13—16.) In this he was carried away with the custom of the times, and was connived at in having more than one wife.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

The most honoured servants of God have the measure and period of their usefulness appointed them: but those who persevere unto the end, walking with God, and living consistently with their profession, are happy, though rejected by men, and driven into retired and obscure situations. Their unblemished characters, their good examples, and their testimony to the truth, will produce salutary effects; and their unceasing prayers will be answered in behalf of numbers, after they are removed by death. Indeed whole nations have cause to lament, when faithful instructors, holy men of God, and publick intercessors, are taken away. But Jesus, our Prophet, Priest, Intercessor, and Judge, ever lives to take care of those who trust in him.—Riches make men look great in their own eyes, and in the eyes of other worldly people: but they are often lavished on those, who have neither wisdom nor grace; and who so pervert them, as to ruin themselves, and to render very many wicked or wretched. To be descended from honourable ancestors forms another branch of man's foolish vanity (3); yet it frequently is a most severe reproach to the character and conduct of those who value themselves upon it.—Women of virtue, good sense, and amiable qualifications, are often married, for the sake of wealth, to persons so entirely unsuitable for them, that it renders their whole lives wretched and exposed to manifold temptations. It is therefore incumbent on parents, in respect of their children, and on young persons in their own case, to resist all temptations to a conduct, which is likely to be so fatal in its consequences. But prudent and pious relations are an invaluable treasure, and often retard the ruin of those, who have not sense to know their worth:—and especially, "a prudent wife is "from the Lord." (*Note, Prov.* xix. 14.) Those, whom the Lord most honours, are frequently very destitute for a season; and, as they will not have recourse to fraud or violence, like others in similar circumstances, they are sometimes constrained to become supplicants to ungodly persons. On such occasions it is proper to speak with modesty of themselves, and with decent respect and hearty good will to those whose assistance they request, wishing them the continuance, increase, or accession of every

CHAP. XXVI.

Saul, informed by the Ziphites, pursues David to Hachilah, 1—4. David by night comes to Saul's tent, with Abishai, whom he hinders from slaying Saul; but he takes away his spear and cruse, 5—12. David at a distance reproves Abner's negligence, protests his own innocency, and expostulates with Saul, 13—20. Saul owns his sin, and returns home, 21—25.

blessing: but they should be careful, lest they verge towards flattery, and pass such compliments as do not consist with truth, and as tend to confirm sinners in a favourable opinion of themselves.—Worldly men deem riches *their own;* but God declares they are *another's*, and that they must shortly give an account of their stewardship. (*Luke* xvi. 12.) When they are determined not to relieve the necessitous, they often excuse themselves by railing; by charging the vices of some poor persons upon all; and by representing alms-giving as an encouragement to idleness, impertinence, and extravagance: nor are the most excellent characters any defence against such undistinguishing invectives, which betray the pride, ignorance, malice, and avarice of the heart, from which they proceed.—In imitation of the Lord's example, we are commanded to do good to the evil and ungrateful; and wretched should we all be, if he dealt with us by those rules, which we are often disposed to adopt in our behaviour to our poor brethren.—While we enjoy abundance, we should be liberal to the indigent: but many will lavish as much upon one *unnecessary, proud,* and *luxurious* feast, or upon the excessive indulgence of their own appetites or vanity, as would be deemed an exorbitant sum to expend in acts of charity. (*Note, Luke* xiv. 12—14.)—Silence is generally our wisdom, when assaulted by provoking language; otherwise we shall be betrayed into folly and sin: and when the messengers of the Son of David meet with abuse and railing for his sake, they must hold their peace, and report it to their Lord, who will surely and justly resent it.—How changeable are the best of men! how contrary their conduct in one instance, to what might have been expected from another! A small temptation frequently prevails over them, after a greater has been resisted: for, when off their guard, they are driven away "as a rolling "thing before the whirlwind!"—Passionate resolutions, formed without time for reflection or prayer, are the result of Satan's counsel; and under this influence we are capable of imitating the worst actions of the worst of men, and of disregarding all consequences to our own character and peace, to the church of God, or to those who rejoice in being thus emboldened in impiety!—Many servants have more wisdom and grace than their masters, and could suggest to them useful hints: but those who are such sons of Belial, that a man cannot speak to them, will lose this advantage, and will not permit any one to extricate them from the dangers, to which they are exposed by their own imprudence. (*Note, 2 Kings* v. 13, 14.)—General rules of submission to superior relations must be interpreted according to circumstances. In great emergencies the form may be dispensed with; and the preservation of a man's life or fortune will justify a failure in exterior indications of respect.—It is honourable when others commend us for those services, of which we say nothing: and when it appears, that we had a right to *demand* more than we *petitioned* for.

V. 18—44.

In urgent cases, dispatch is as requisite as prudence: inferior interests should always be sacrificed to preserve the greater; our property to preserve our lives; our very lives for the salvation of our souls.—Respect and liberal kindness are proper means of averting wrath: but, with wise and godly men, right words are most forcible. When, in mild language, matters are fairly stated, and proper topicks adduced, their judgments, affections, and consciences are appealed to; and they cannot but be overcome, if they can be prevailed upon to listen.—It is beneath a wise man to resent the affronts of those, who are notoriously foolish and abusive.—Every servant of God should duly estimate his own situation; what his obligations, professions, and prospects are; what his station in the church; what his former conduct and present character; that he may with great circumspection avoid every inconsistent word and action: for according to these things, will be men's expectations from him and censures of him. (*Notes, Ec.* x. 1. *Matt.* v. 14—16.)—Patience and forgiveness of injuries will never occasion uneasy reflections; but revenge must in every case be recollected with grief of heart: and if we could but listen to our prudent and faithful counsellors at present, with the same candour that we shall reflect upon their advice in future, we might avoid much sorrow and many offences: we should indeed always earnestly endeavour to realize, under temptation, all the consequences of compliance, as they will afterwards appear to us.—Happy is the true believer! "his soul is bound up in the "bundle of life with the LORD his God." In the midst of dangers and enemies, his natural life is perfectly safe till the appointed hour: the life of his soul "is hid with "Christ in God;" (*Note, Col.* iii. 1—4;) and because the Saviour liveth, he shall live also; whilst all his foes shall be driven to destruction.—Our gratitude to God should precede, but not exclude, our gratitude to the instruments of his goodness. We have peculiar cause to be thankful, when we have been restrained from those sins which we were ready to commit: and real penitents will not be backward to take shame to themselves, and to retract their rash expressions; for they will tremble to reflect, what the consequences would have been, had they been left to themselves.—The people of God need not avenge their own cause, for he will surely do it for them; and sometimes more awfully than they could have desired: yet when his purpose is known, they will adore his justice, and bless him for his kindness to them.—Whilst divine vengeance hovers over the head of sinners, they are often given up to foolish mirth and mad intoxication.—If the danger of a violent death be so terrifying as to overwhelm the spirits in dismay and anguish, how should sinners tremble at the thoughts of eternal damnation, and flee without delay from the wrath to come!—Worldly sorrow, mortified pride, and an affrighted conscience, sometimes suffice to end the sensualist's joys, and separate the covetous man from all his wealth: but whatever be the weapon, the Lord smites men with death whenever it pleases him.—Modesty, prudence, and humility, are preparations to advancement: and a wise man will always know the value of

a Josh. xv. 24. 55. AND the [a] Ziphites came unto Saul
b 3. xxiii. 19. Ps. liv. *title.* to Gibeah, saying, [b] Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon?

c xxiii. 23—25. xxiv. 17. Ps. xxxviii. 12. cxl. 4—9. 2 Then [c] Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having
d xxiv. 2. [d] three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

3 And Saul pitched in the hill of
e 1. xxiii. 19. [e] Hachilah, which *is* before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.

Josh. ii. 1. Matt. x. 16. 4 David therefore [f] sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

5 And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay,
g ix. 1. xiv. 50, 51. xvii. 55. 2 Sam. ii. 8, &c. iii. 7. viii. 15. 27. 33—38. 1 Chr. ix. 39. and [g] Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the
* Or, *midst of his carriages.* [*] trench, and the people pitched round about him.

6 Then answered David and said to
h Gen. x. 15. xv. 20. 2 Sam. xi. 6. 21. 24. xii. 9. xxiii. 39. Ahimelech the [h] Hittite, and to [i] Abi-
i 2 Sam. ii. 18. xvi. 9, 10. xviii. 5. xxiii. 18. 1 Chr. ii. 16. shai the son of [k] Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, [l] Who will go down with
k 1 Chr. ii. 15, 16. l xiv. 6, 7. Judg. vii. 10, 11. me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay
m 1 Thes. v. 2, 3. [m] sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

8 Then said Abishai to David, [n] God
n 23. xxiii. 14. xxiv. 4. 18, 19. Josh. xxi. 44. Judg. i. 4.
† Heb. *shut up.* xxiv. 18. Deut. xxxii. 30. Ps. xxxi. 8. Rom. xi. 32. *marg.* Gal. iii. 22, 23. *Gr.* hath [†] delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not *smite* him [o] the second time.
o Nah. i. 9.

9 And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for [p] who can stretch
p xxiv. 6, 7. 2 Sam. i. 14. 16. Ps. cv. 15. forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?

10 David said furthermore, *As* [q] the
q xxiv. 15. xxv. 26. 38. Ps. xciv. 1, 2. 23. Luke xviii. 7. Rom. xii. 19. Rev. xviii. 8. LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or [r] his day shall come to die; or [s] he shall descend into battle, and perish.
r Gen. xlvii. 29. Deut. xxxi. 14. Job vii. 1. xiv. 5. 14. Ps. xxxvii. 10. 13.

11 The LORD forbid [t] that I should
s xxxi. 6. Deut. xxxii. 35.
t xxiv. 6. 12. 2 Sam. i. 14. 16. stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that *is* at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

12 So David took [u] the spear and the
u 7. xxiv. 4. cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw *it*, nor knew *it*, neither awaked: for they *were* all asleep; because [v] a deep
v Gen. ii. 21. xv. 12. Esth. vi. 1. Is. xxix. 10. sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

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a pious and virtuous wife. (*Notes, Prov.* xviii. 22. xix. 14.) But some deviations from the divine law, and some alloy to our comforts, must be expected in every character, and every situation, on this side of heaven.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1, 2. It is probable, that Saul had desisted from the pursuit of David, till excited again by the officious information of the Ziphites, who perhaps despaired of David's pardon for their former malice and perfidy. (*Notes,* xxiii. 19—28.) Upon this, Saul's envy and malice revived; like Pharaoh, he again hardened his heart; and he determined to make another effort to destroy his rival. (*Note, Ex.* xiv. 5—9.)

V. 3, 4. David neither fled, nor went out to meet Saul, when he was fully certified that he was actually come forth to destroy him! Had a much greater army of uncircumcised Philistines marched against him, he would doubtless have faced them with his small company, and trusted in God for the event: but he would not fight against the "LORD's anointed." (*Notes,* xxiv. 8—15. xxviii. 1, 2.)

V. 5—7. It is probable, that David was directed to this measure by the prophetical Spirit, in order that all Israel might be convinced how injuriously he was slandered by his enemies. Having, therefore, in the daytime made every requisite observation, he proposed the matter to two of his attendants: but Ahimelech, who was a proselyted Hittite, seems not to have had that strength of faith in the God of Israel, which so bold an adventure required; and Abishai, the son of David's sister, alone accompanied David. (*Marg. Ref.* i. *Note,* xiv. 6—10.)

V. 8—12. Perhaps Abishai thought, that David, though he scrupled to kill Saul with his own hands, would allow one of his officers to terminate the dangers and difficulties of him and his adherents, by cutting off at one blow their inveterate persecutor, whom Providence had now put in their power, apparently for this very purpose: but David would by no means admit of this evasive distinction.—It has been suggested, that David spared Saul, the LORD's anointed, out of policy, that he might not teach the people a bad lesson against himself; but it is evident, that he acted from higher motives. The Lord forbad him to do it; (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xxi. 3:) and "no man could stretch "forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guilt-"less." (*Note,* xxiv. 4—7.) Satisfied that God would avenge his cause, and fulfil his promises, in his own time and manner; and recollecting how he had just before

13 ¶ Then David went over to the other side, and stood on [x] the top of an hill afar off; a great space *being* between them:

14 And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who *art* thou *that* criest to the king?

15 And David said to Abner, *Art* not thou a *valiant* man? and who *is* like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for [y] there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord.

16 This thing *is* not good that thou hast done. *As* the LORD liveth ye *are* [*] worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the [z] LORD's anointed. And now see where the king's spear *is*, and the cruse of water that *was* at his bolster.

17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, [a] *Is* this thy voice, my son David? And David said, *It is* my voice, my lord, O king.

18 And he said, [b] Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for [c] what have I done? or what evil *is* in mine hand?

19 Now therefore, I pray thee, [d] let my lord the king hear the words of his servant: If the LORD have [e] stirred thee up against me, let him [†] accept an offering: but if *they be* the children of men, [f] cursed *be* they before the LORD; for [g] they have driven me out this day from [‡] abiding in [h] the inheritance of the LORD, saying, Go, serve other gods.

20 Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD: for [k] the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

21 Then said Saul, [l] I have sinned: return, my son David: for [m] I will no more do thee harm, because [n] my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

22 And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear; and let one of the young men come over and fetch it.

23 The LORD [o] render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the LORD delivered thee into *my* hand to-day, but [p] I would not stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed.

24 And, behold, [q] as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and [r] let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

25 Then Saul said to David, [s] Blessed *be* thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great *things*, and also shalt still [t] prevail. [u] So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

x xxiv. 8. Judg. ix. 7.
y 8.
* Heb. *the sons of death.* xx. 31. 2 Sam. xii. 5. xix. 28. Ps. lxxix. 11. cii. 20. *Margins.* Eph. ii. 3.
z 9. 11. xxiv. 6.
a xxiv. 8. 16.
b xxiv. 9. 11—14. Ps. vii. 3—5. xxxv. 7. lxix. 4.
c xvii. 29. John viii. 46. x. 32. xviii. 23.
d xxv. 24. Gen. xliv. 18.
e xvi. 14—23. xviii. 10. 2 Sam. xvi. 11. xxiv. 1. 1 Kings xxii. 22. 1 Chr. xxi. 1.
† Heb. *smell.* Gen. viii. 21. Lev. xxvi. 31.
f Prov. vi. 16—19. xxx. 10. Gal. i. 8, 9. v. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 14.
g Deut. iv. 28. Josh. xxii. 25—27. Ps. xlii. 1, 2 cxx. 5. Rom. xiv. 15.
‡ Heb *cleaving.*
h 2 Sam. xiv. 16. xx. 19.
i ii. 9. xxv. 29.
k xxiv. 14. Matt. xxvi. 47. 55.
l xv. 24. 30. xxiv. 17. Ex. ix. 27. Num. xxii. 34. Matt. xxvii. 4.
m xxvii. 4.
n 24. Ps. xlix. 8. cxvi. 15.
o 1 Kings viii. 32. Neh. xiii. 14. Ps vii. 8, 9. xviii. 20—26.
p 9. 11. xxiv. 6, 7.
q Ps. xviii. 25. Matt. v. 7. vii. 2.
r Gen. xlviii. 16. Ps. xviii. *title.* 48. xxxiv. 17, 19. cxliv. 2. Acts xiv. 22. Rev. vii. 14.
s xxiv. 19. Num. xxiv. 9, 10.
t Gen. xxxii. 28. Hos. xii. 4.
u xxiv. 22. Prov. xxvi. 25.

smitten Nabal; (*Notes*, xxv. 35—42;) he would do nothing against his prince: but he took an effectual way of convincing him, that he could have slain him.—*A deep sleep.* (12) (*Marg. Ref.* v. *Notes, Ps.* lxxvi. 5, 6. *Acts* xii. 5—11.)

V. 13—16. David, by retiring to a place of safety before he called to Abner, seems to have manifested more entire distrust of Saul, than he had done on a former occasion. (*Note*, xxiv. 8—15.) Yet he desired that Saul and all Israel should be informed of his conduct at this time.—Abner and his soldiers, by neglecting to guard Saul when he slept, had exposed his life, and merited to be treated as his enemies, though he confided in them as friends: for though their *sound sleep* was supernatural (12); yet there might be a neglect of placing centinels, arising from contempt of David's small company.—Saul also deemed David his enemy; and yet David had spared and protected his life in the most friendly manner!

V. 17—19. (*Marg. Ref.*) David had not offended Saul; yet he acknowledged that he was a sinner against the Lord: and if convinced that his sufferings were a divine rebuke for any particular offence, he would offer a sacrifice, that his sin being pardoned, his trials might cease: or, if Saul was instigated to this persecution by the evil spirit, whom God judicially permitted to trouble him, he intimated to him that he ought to seek forgiveness and deliverance in the appointed way. (*Notes*, xvi. 14—23.) But if wicked men instigated him to it, they might expect severe vengeance, for thus banishing David from the worship of JEHOVAH, and tempting him to turn idolater. The clause might be rendered, "they are accursed."—David carefully avoided mentioning Saul's envy and malice, which were the real causes of his conduct: for he did not mean to irritate, but to mollify him.

V. 20. Though David was so very inconsiderable a person, according to his modest representation of himself; (*Notes*, xviii. 23—27. xxiv. 8—15:) yet he intimated that, if his blood were shed, the LORD would certainly require it. (*Note, Jer.* xxvi. 12—15.) The word (צְפֹרֶת) rendered *a partridge*, is supposed to mean a kind of bird which was very difficult to be caught, and of very little value. It is used only in this place, and once by Jeremiah. (*Note, Jer.* xvii. 11.)

V. 21—25. This second instance of David's fidelity

CHAP. XXVII.

David escapes to Gath, and is received by Achish, 1—3. Saul seeks him no more, 4. He asks Ziklag of Achish, 5—7. He invades the adjacent countries; and disingenuously leads Achish to suppose that he warred against Judah, 8—12.

[a] xvi. 1. 18. xxiii. 17. xxv. 30. Ps. cxvi. 11. Prov. xiii. 12. Matt. xiv. 31. Mark iv. 40. 2 Cor. vii. 5.

[*] Heb. *be consumed.*

AND David [a] said in his heart, I shall now [*] perish one day by the hand of Saul: [b] *there is* nothing better for me, than that I should speedily escape [c] into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

[b] xxii. 5. Ex. xiv. 12. Num. xiv. 3. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Is. xxx. 15, 16. Lam. iii. 26, 27.

[c] 10, 11. xxi. 10—15. xxviii. 1, 2. xxix. 2—11. xxx. 1—3.

2 And David arose, and he passed over, with [d] the six hundred men that *were* with him, unto [e] Achish, the son of Maoch, king of Gath.

[d] xxv. 13. xxx. 8.

[e] xxi. 10. 1 Kings ii. 40.

seems to have affected Saul more than the former. He confessed his guilt and folly in much stronger terms, and even invited David to return to court, and promised that he would not hurt him: he repeated his good words and wishes, and his persuasion that he would prevail and be very eminent. (*Note*, xxiv. 16—22.) But no evidences appeared of true repentance towards God: and David plainly intimated that he could not trust his promises, and that he expected no recompence from him; but he referred his cause to the Lord, who would protect and deliver him, and do him justice. (*Notes*, *Ps.* vii. 3—7. xvii. 1—3. cxli. 6, 7. 2 *Thes.* i. 5—10.) Thus Saul and David parted to meet no more in this life.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

One crime generally proves an inducement to another, and seems to render it necessary for self-preservation: and this again makes way for further, and still more atrocious vices.—If sin be not dethroned and mortified, it will surely recover its strength when a suitable temptation is presented; and Satan and his agents will suggest such thoughts, as tend to re-kindle the smothered flame: thus after deep convictions and temporary reformations, men return to their sins, and become worse than ever.—The servants of God ought to persevere in a blameless conduct, however injured. Thus it will appear that they act from a settled purpose of doing good for the Lord's sake: and in some cases, they will need the boldness of a lion, as well as the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove, that they may avoid evil and the appearance of evil, and yet use proper means of escaping the malice of their enemies.—Confidence in God fortifies the soul against temptations to seek relief by sin: and it often requires as much resolution to restrain the excesses of misjudging zealous friends, as to stand firm against the rage of incensed enemies.—If we would have outward blessings with comfort and reputation, we must patiently and quietly *wait* for them in the path of duty: and when wicked men obstruct the purposes of God and the performance of his promises, he can easily remove them without our help.—We are exposed to so many dangers, whenever we close our eyes, that we should previously examine our state, whether we be ready for death; and then commit ourselves to the keeping of that almighty Protector, who "neither slumbereth nor sleepeth:" otherwise our necessary repose may confine us, as in a prison, till some awful calamity comes upon us with unexpected destruction. (*Note*, 1 *Thes.* v. 1—3.)—The supposed friends of ungodly men are either incapable of serving them, or they treacherously neglect and expose them: and the pious people, whom they hate and revile, are their most valuable friends, as they persevere in prayers for them and kindness to them.—Good works give energy to persuasive words: and whether we plead our own cause, or the cause of God, evident integrity and consistency of conduct go further in producing conviction, than all the powers of eloquence without them: and for want of *this confirmation*, much sound reasoning and pathetick exhortation pass for unmeaning declamation.—Men's transgressions against God are the cause of their enmities against each other; and no reconciliation has an immoveable basis, which is not founded on peace with God through Jesus Christ.—Those who drive us from our duty, or tempt us to sin, are our worst enemies: and persecutors, besides murdering men's bodies, must give a dreadful account, as chargeable with murdering the souls of all whom they have driven to apostasy, or to do violence to their own consciences, by the terrors of exile, imprisonment, or death.—In sinning against God men "play the fool exceedingly:" this the believer perceives; he therefore repents, receives a pardon, and acts more wisely for the time to come: but many others obtain a transient view of the mortifying truth, and close their eyes against it. (*Note*, *Jam.* i. 22—25.) Yet eternity will fully discover their exceeding foolishness, and they will never cease to reflect upon their own madness, in silencing their convictions as much as possible, and in every way they could devise, and by holding fast their iniquities.—No good words or fair professions, entitle those to our confidence, who have long sinned against the light: yet the confessions of obstinate sinners may be useful, in satisfying us that we are in the right way, and shall prevail; and in encouraging us to persevere, expecting our recompence from God alone.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1, 2. David, while reflecting on the inveterate malice of Saul, and the neglect, cowardice, and treachery of his countrymen, lost sight of his having been anointed to be king of Israel, with the annexed promises of God, and the manifold deliverances which he had experienced: so that, being weak in faith, he despaired of safety in the land of Judah; and he went to Gath, perhaps invited by Achish, but evidently without enquiring of the Lord. (*Note*, xxi. 10—15.) This measure was calculated to alienate the affections of the Israelites, and to give credit to the slanders of his accusers; he thus ran himself and his men into temptations to idolatry; and he laid himself under obligations to those, whom he could never favour, without betraying the cause of God. (xxvi. 19. *Notes*, xxviii. 1, 2. xxix. 2. 8—11. *Ps.* cxli. 1—5.)

3 And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, *even* David [f] with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.

4 And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and [g] he sought no more again for him.

5 And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in [h] some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

6 Then Achish gave him [i] Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

7 And [*] the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was [†] a full year and four months.

8 ¶ And David and his men went up, and invaded [k] the Geshurites, and [l] the [‡] Gezrites, and [m] the Amalekites: for those *nations were* of old the inhabitants of the land, [n] as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.

9 And David smote the land, and [o] left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned and came to Achish.

10 And Achish said, [§] Whither have ye made a road to day? [p] And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of [q] the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the [r] Kenites.

11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring *tidings* to Gath, saying, [s] Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so *will be* his manner, all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.

12 And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel [‖] utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.

f xxv. 3. 18—35. 42, 43. xxx. 5.
g xxvi. 21
h Gen. xlvi. 34. 2 Cor. vi. 17.
i xxx. 1. 14. Josh. xv. 31. xix. 5. 2 Sam. i. 1. 1 Chr. iv. 30. xii. 1. 20. Neh. xi. 28.
* Heb. *the number of days.*
† Heb. a year of *days.* xxix. 3.
k Josh. xiii. 2. 13. 2 Sam. xiii. 37, 38. xiv. 23. 32. xv. 8. 1 Chr. ii. 23.
l Josh. xvi. 10. Judg. i. 29. 1 Kings ix. 15—17.
‡ Or, *Gerzites.*
m xv. 7, 8. xxx. 1. Ex. xvii. 14—16.
n xv. 7. Gen. xvi. 7. xxv. 18. Ex. xv. 22.
o xv. 3. Deut. xxv. 17—19. Josh. vi. 21.
§ Or, *Did ye not make a road &c.?*
p xxi. 2. Gen. xxvii. 19, 20. 24. Josh. ii. 4—. 2 Sam. xvii. 20. Ps. cxix. 29. 163. Prov. xxix. 25. Gal. ii. 11—13. Eph. iv. 25.
q 1 Chr. ii. 9. 25.
r xv. 6. Num. xxiv. 21. Judg. i. 16. iv. 11. v. 24.
s xxii. 22. Prov. xii. 19. xxix. 25.
‖ Heb. to *stink.* xiii. 4. Gen. xxxiv. 30.

V. 3. (*Note*, xxv. 43, 44.) Achish probably hoped that he should be able to fix David in his interests, and employ him against the Israelites; or, that he should thus secure an advantageous alliance with him, if ever he came to be king of Israel.

V. 4. It does not appear that Saul's malice was permanently abated; but the object of it was out of his reach. (*Note*, xxvi. 21—25.)

V. 5, 6. It may be supposed that David desired to avoid ostentation, and to escape the effects of envy; and perhaps to be out of the way of temptation, more at leisure for the exercises of religion, and more unembarrassed in his whole conduct, than he could be near the court and among the nobles of Achish. (*Note*, *Gen.* xlvi. 32—34.) Ziklag was first allotted to Judah. (*Josh.* xv. 31.) Afterwards it was given to Simeon: (*Josh.* xix. 5:) but the Philistines had got possession of it; and it was regarded as one of their cities, till on this occasion it came again into the possession of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.* i.)

V. 8—12. Probably the Geshurites and Gezrites were tribes of the Amalekites, or of Canaanites who were in alliance with them. (*Marg. Ref.* k. l.) We may therefore commend David for attempting to complete the work which Saul had begun, and should not censure the severity with which he conducted the war. (*Notes*, xv. 1—9.)—These nations lived to the south of Judah: and David used such equivocal terms in speaking to Achish, as induced him to conclude, that he had been fighting against his own countrymen. Intelligence was not then readily conveyed, and no one undeceived Achish: he therefore concluded, that David had so widened the breach between himself and his people, that it could not be healed. (*Note*, *2 Sam.* xvi. 20—23.) Had he, however, known the truth of the case, he would have been convinced that David could not be detached from Israel, or united to their enemies. David's situation powerfully tempted him to this deceit; but it can by no means be justified, or even excused. (*Note*, xix. 12—17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The strongest believers cannot wholly exclude the incursions of unbelief, during tedious trials, and when sense and reason bring in no report of deliverance. Many, under sharp temptations, have overlooked former mercies and experiences; have forgotten the power and promise of the Lord; and have feared that sin and Satan would finally prevail against them. When faith thus staggers, obedience wavers, and sinful expedients frequently are employed; which involve men more and more in difficulties and temptations.—If at any time we "lean to our own under-"standing," and do not ask counsel of God, we are sure to do wrong. (*Note*, *Prov.* iii. 5, 6.)—We ought not to quit the path of duty, or to join interests with the enemies of religion, even for self-preservation, or out of care for our families: nor should we willingly contract obligations, where we cannot consistently make requitals of kindness.—It is our wisdom to shun notoriety, and to shelter ourselves from envy; for obscurity is commonly more safe and comfortable, and no less advantageous. Yet we must in no situation be wholly inactive, but attempt something in the cause of God and his people, even though ungratefully requited by those whom we would serve.—The fear of man is so ensnaring, that we should, if possible, keep out of those places, where doing our duty will expose us to danger or reproach.—An equivocation, which serves the

CHAP. XXVIII.

Achish, preparing war against Israel, places confidence in David, 1, 2. Saul, after having destroyed those who had familiar spirits; at length, fearing the Philistines and being forsaken by God, goes to the witch of En-dor and engages to indemnify her, 3—10. She, by his desire, calls up Samuel, who predicts his ruin, 11—19. Saul falls down in despair; but, being prevailed on to take food, he returns to his army, 20—25.

B. C. 1056. AND it came to pass in those days, [a] that the [b] Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that [c] thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

2 And David said to Achish, [d] Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

3 ¶ Now [e] Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had [f] put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in [g] Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in [h] Gilboa.

5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, [i] he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

6 And when Saul [k] enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither [l] by dreams, nor [m] by Urim, nor [n] by prophets.

7 Then said Saul unto his servants, [o] Seek me a woman that hath [p] a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, *there is* a woman that hath a familiar spirit at [q] En-dor.

a vii. 7. xiii. 5. xvii. 1. xxix. 1.
b Judg. iii. 1—4.
c xxvii. 12. xxix. 2, 3.
d xxvii. 10. 2 Sam. xvi. 16—19. Rom. xii. 9.
e xxv. 1. Is. lvii. 1, 2.
f 9. Ex. xxii. 18. Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6. 27. Deut. xviii. 10, 11. Acts xvi. 16—19.
g Josh. xix. 18. 2 Kings iv. 8.
h xxxi. 1. 2 Sam. i. 6. 21. xxi. 12.
i Job xv. 21. xviii. 11. Ps. xlviii. 5, 6. lxxiii. 19. Prov. x. 24. Is. vii. 2. xxi. 3, 4. lvii. 20, 21. Dan. v. 6.
k xiv. 37. 1 Chr. x. 14. Prov. i. 27, 28. Ez. xx. 1—3. John ix. 31. Jam. iv. 3.
l Gen. xxviii. 12—15. xlvi. 2—4. Num. xii. 6. Job xxxiii. 14—16. Jer. xxiii. 28. Matt. i. 20.
m Ex. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21. Deut. xxxiii. 8.
n Ps. lxxiv. 9. Lam. ii. 9. Ez. xx. 3.
o 2 Kings i. 2, 3. vi. 33. Is. viii. 19, 20. Lam. iii. 25, 26. Hab. ii. 3.
p 3. Deut. xviii. 11. Is. xix. 3. Acts xvi. 16.
q Josh. xvii. 11. Ps. lxxxiii. 10.

purpose of a lie, bears the same relation to it, as a hypocrite does to a profane person; it is only *apparently* better, and therefore a *more dangerous cheat*. But though believers often betray their imperfections, they can never be prevailed upon deliberately to renounce the service of God, and to unite interests with his enemies, or to become the servants of sin and Satan.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1, 2. Achish, when determined to make war against Israel, required David's assistance: and David could not have refused it without the greatest danger. Yet if he had directly promised it, and had then either stood neuter, or gone over to the Israelites, he must have behaved with great ingratitude and treachery: and if he had fought against Israel, he would have been guilty of a very great sin, he would have alienated the affections of his people, and perhaps exposed himself to the reproach of having murdered Saul. It seemed therefore impossible that he should extricate himself, with a good conscience and a clear reputation. He, however, returned an insincere and evasive answer, which was intended to gain time, but which Achish understood as a promise of effectual assistance; (*Notes*, xxvii. 8—12. xxix. 8—11;) and on that account promised to make him captain of his guard, or some great officer about his person.

V. 3. (*Note*, xxv. 1.) Perhaps the death of Samuel, and David's apparent desertion of his people, concurred with Saul's disordered state of mind, to encourage the Philistines to this war.—Saul had filled up his measure of iniquity, and "the day was come when he should descend "into battle and perish." (xxvi. 10.)—He "had put away "those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of "the land;" probably before "the Spirit of the LORD "departed from him." (*Note*, xvi. 14.) Or perhaps, when troubled with an evil spirit, he charged some of them as the cause of it: or by his zeal in this respect he aimed to atone for his other sins, that the kingdom might not be taken from him; and to shew the people that he had a regard to religion. Whatever was his motive, the measure itself was right. (*Marg. Ref.* e, f.)

V. 4, 5. As Shunem lay far north in the land, in the lot of Issachar, (*Josh.* xix. 18;) either this invasion was very formidable, or Saul had been very negligent: otherwise the enemy could not have marched thither without being opposed.—Saul's excessive terror arose chiefly from a guilty conscience. It is probable, that his contempt of Samuel, his murder of the priests, and his malicious persecution of David, dismayed his heart upon every recollection; and that he foreboded his own approaching doom. (*Note*, xxiv. 16—22.)

V. 6. "Saul enquired of the LORD," under urgent terror, but without humiliation for sin, or purposes of repentance; and therefore God would not vouchsafe him any answer. He did not *enquire* till his doom was sealed; and then only in a hypocritical manner: therefore it was nearly the same as "not enquiring." (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* x. 13, 14.) After Abiathar had fled to David, probably Saul appointed another high priest: yet neither by him, nor by any prophet, nor in any way, could he obtain an answer. (15. xiv. 37.) This shewed, that God was greatly displeased with him, and warned him to repent, and to cry for mercy with humble faith and perseverance. (*Note*, *Judg.* x. 13—16.) It also proved, that God no longer regarded him, as chief magistrate in Israel. (*Notes*, xxiii. 9—13. *Ex.* xxviii. 30. *Num.* xxvii. 21.)

V. 7, 8. Saul was aware that some persons still secretly practised these diabolical arts: but nothing could exceed the presumption of consulting those whom he had, according to the law of God, endeavoured to extirpate. (*Note*,

8 And Saul [r] disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, [s] I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and [t] bring me *him* up whom I shall name unto thee.

9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, [u] how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: [v] wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

10 And Saul [x] sware to her by the LORD, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? and he said, Bring me up Samuel.

12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for [y] thou *art* Saul.

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw [z] gods ascending out of the earth.

14 And he said unto her, [*] What form *is* he of? And she said, An old man cometh up: and he *is* covered with [a] a mantle. And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself.

15 And Samuel said to Saul, [b] Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, [c] I am sore distressed: for [d] the Philistines make war against me, and [e] God is departed from me, and [f] answereth me no more, neither by [†] prophets, nor by dreams: [g] therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

16 Then said Samuel, [h] Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

17 And the LORD hath done [‡] to him [i] as he spake by [§] me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to [k] thy neighbour, *even* to David:

18 Because thou [l] obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.

19 Moreover, [m] the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and [n] to-morrow *shalt* thou and thy sons *be* with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

r 1 Kings xiv. 2, 3. xxii. 30. 34. Job xxiv. 13—15. Jer. xxiii. 24. John iii. 19, 20.
s 1 Chr. x. 13.
t 15.
u See on 3.
v 2 Sam. xviii. 13. 2 Kings v. 7.
x xiv. 39. xix. 6. Gen. iii. 5. Ex. xx. 7. Deut. xviii. 10—12. 2 Sam. xiv. 11. Matt. xxvi. 72. Mark vi. 23.
y 3. 1 Kings xiv. 5.
z Ex. iv. 16. xxii. 28. Ps. lxxxii. 6. John x. 34, 35.
* Heb. *What is his form?*
a xv. 27. 2 Kings ii. 8. 13, 14.
b 8. 11.
c Prov. v. 11—13. xiv. 14.
d 4.
e xvi. 13, 14. xviii, 12. Judg. xvi. 20. Ps. li. 11. Hos. ix. 12. Matt. xxv. 41.
f 6. xxiii. 2. 4. 9, 10.
† Heb. *the hand of prophets.*
g Luke xvi. 23—26.
h Judg. v. 31. 2 Kings vi. 27. Ps. lxviii. 1—3. Rev. xviii. 20. 24. xix. 1—6.
‡ Or, *for himself.* Prov. xvi. 4.
i xiii. 13, 14. xv. 27—29.
§ Heb. *mine hand.*
k xv. 28. xvi. 13. xxiv. 20.
l xv. 9. 23—26. 1 Kings xx. 42. Jer. xlviii. 10.
m xii. 25. 1 Kings xxii. 20 28.
n Ex. ix. 18. Jer. xxviii. 16, 17. Dan. v. 25—28. Matt. xxvi. 24. Acts v. 5. 9, 10.

3.)—He disguised himself, not only lest the woman should fear to use her incantations if she knew him; but perhaps likewise lest the people should be exasperated against him, if acquainted with his infatuated conduct.

V. 9, 10. Instead of being cut to the heart by the woman's suspicion, which implied the most severe reproof; Saul most profanely sware by the LORD, that the woman should not be punished for violating the divine law! She would understand this merely as an engagement not to inform against her: but Saul expressly sware, that he would not perform *his duty*. Indeed both parties acted almost *atheistically;* when one engaged, and the other was satisfied with the engagement, that no punishment should happen to her!

V. 11. Samuel had anointed Saul, and often counselled him for his good: and though Saul had neglected him during the latter part of his life, yet he now was convinced, that it was better with him when he regarded his advice. Nothing therefore could now satisfy him, but a conference with the departed prophet: and he being forsaken of God was so infatuated, as to suppose, that the woman, by means of her familiar spirit, could bring Samuel up for that purpose, even without the Lord's permission!—It is probable, that she expected to impose on Saul by some satanical apparition.

V. 12—19. It is much disputed, who it was that appeared on this occasion; for the whole narrative manifests that it was no human imposture. Many expositors, ancient and modern, have maintained, that it was Satan personating Samuel; though the text does not give the least intimation of it. It is however, by no means adviseable, to give those men any countenance, who, to support a favourite system, put a forced construction upon the words of holy writ, very different from their obvious meaning: and scarcely any of their interpretations can sound harsher, than the insertion in every place, where Samuel is mentioned, 'that it was Satan personating Samuel.'—It is indeed argued, that the woman's incantations could have 'no power over a glorified saint:' but to this it may fairly be answered, that neither could an *evil* spirit appear at her call, without the Lord's permission. Though the woman was not the *cause* of Samuel's being sent, Saul's enquiry might be the *occasion* of it. The word *disquieted*, seems to be used merely in accommodation to the general notions

20 Then Saul *fell straightway all along on the earth, and was °sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

21 And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath pobeyed thy voice, and pI have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.

22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way.

23 But he refused, and said, qI will not eat: but his servants, together with the woman, rcompelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.

24 And the woman had sa fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded *it*, and did bake unleavened bread thereof:

25 And she brought *it* before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

* Heb. *made haste and fell with the fulness of his stature.*
5. xxv. 37. Job xv. 20—24. xxvi. 2. Ps. l. 21, 22.

p xix. 5. Judg. xii. 3. Job xiii. 14.

q 1 Kings xxi 4. Prov. xxv. 21.

r 2 Kings iv. 8. Luke xiv. 23. xxiv. 29. Acts xvi. 15. 2 Cor. v. 14.

s Gen. xviii. 7, 8 Luke xv. 23.

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of mankind on that subject: and the woman's surprise and terror proved, that it was an unusual and unexpected appearance, and not the ordinary effect of her art.—It is, however, further urged, that the apparition's discourse tended to drive Saul to despair, which is one of Satan's temptations; and that it contained no exhortations to repentance, which were usual with the prophets. But to this it may be replied, that Elijah's message to Ahaziah, Daniel's address to Belshazzar, and even Christ's discourse in the presence of Judas, were equally calculated to drive each of them to despair; and equally void of exhortations to repent, and proposals of mercy. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* i. 15, 16. *Dan.* v. 18—28. *Matt.* xxvi. 21—24.)—Saul had despised Samuel's solemn warnings in his life-time; yet now he hoped, as it were, in defiance of God, to obtain some counsel and encouragement from him: and why might not God permit the soul of his departed prophet to appear and confirm his former sentence, and denounce Saul's irrevocable doom? It was not beyond the power of God, nor, that I can see, at all unworthy of him; but rather a declaration of his immutable and irreversible truth and justice. —Satan could not have predicted the several events, which came to pass accordingly, as far as we know, (*Note*, xxx. 1—3,) without being inspired by God to do so: and it would give far more countenance to consulting witches, to suppose that he inspired Satan to prophesy by them, than to conclude that Samuel was sent with this tremendous message from God, when Saul consulted one of them. Indeed this would most powerfully discourage such attempts; as the request of the rich man in hell to Abraham, being entirely vain, is calculated to discourage praying to departed saints. (*Note*, *Luke* xvi. 24—26.) The local situation of departed spirits is so concealed from us, that the circumstance of the spirit *apparently* "arising out of the "earth," forms no real objection against its being the soul of Samuel: and the expression, "shalt thou and thy sons "be with me," means no more, than that they should be in the eternal world. The transaction was suited to impress the idea of a future state on the mind of all who should ever hear or read of it; and it determined nothing about the different conditions of the righteous and the wicked.—Upon the whole, there appears much solemnity in God's for once permitting the soul of a departed prophet to make his appearance, as a witness from heaven, and in sending him to confirm the word which he spoke on earth, (evincing that the words of the prophets would surely take effect;) and to sit in judgment upon a proud enemy of God, who foolishly sought encouragement in his impenitency, by the most atrocious crimes.—This interpretation is certainly obvious, and suited to the apprehensions of the unlearned reader, and according to the general simplicity of the Scriptures: and nothing short of unanswerable arguments and objections, should constrain us to suppose, that when the Holy Spirit said *Samuel*, he meant *Satan*, not speaking by Samuel, as he did by the serpent and by the demoniacks; but actually counterfeiting his shape, and speaking with his voice, though Samuel himself was in every sense absent from the place.—The venerable appearance of Samuel, or something which he spoke, convinced the woman, that it was Saul who consulted her (12).—'She perceived, by the reverence the spectre paid 'him, who he was: for so Abarbinel interprets it, he 'bowed with his face to the ground, in honour of Saul, 'whereby the woman concluded that it was the king.' *Bp. Patrick.* Thus then if the devil personated Samuel, he worshipped Saul, not Saul him! A likely thing, truly, that either Samuel, or Satan personating him, should thus reverence Saul! It shews to what difficulties the supporters of the latter opinion are reduced. Saul's bowing down before Samuel, was not indeed an act of religious worship, any more than Abigail's bowing down before David. The answer of Samuel was in every respect suitable to his character, and to the occasion. It was entirely in vain for Saul to consult the servant, when the Lord was become his enemy: the Lord was only doing to *him*, or for *himself*, (17, *marg.*) as he declared he would: and as Samuel knew him to be finally given up, he neither gave him counsel nor comfort. (*Notes*, 2 *Tim.* iv. 14, 15. *Heb.* vi. 4—6. 1 *John* v. 16—18.)—The woman first saw the appearance; but afterwards Saul seems to have seen it, as well as to have heard the words spoken.—Some think, that neither Saul's servants, nor the woman, heard what passed.—*God's.* (13) *Elohim.* (*Marg. Ref.* z.)

V. 20—25. Saul, though terrified even to desperation,

CHAP. XXIX.

David attends Achish, which offends the lords of the Philistines, 1—5. Achish dismisses him with commendations, 6—11.

a xxviii. 1. NOW [a]the Philistines gathered together all their armies to [b]Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which *is* in [c]Jezreel.

2 And [d]the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but [e]David and his men passed on in the rear-ward with Achish.

b iv. 1. Josh. xix. 30. 1 Kings xx. 30.
c xxviii. 4. Josh. xix. 18. Judg. vi. 33. 1 Kings xviii. 45, 46. xxi. 1. 23. 2 Kings ix. 36. Hos. i. 4—11.
d 6, 7. v. 8—11. vi. 4. Josh. xiii. 3. Judg. xvi. 5. 30.
e xxviii. 2.

was not humbled. A miserable state he was indeed reduced to, when the witch was his only comforter! But he did not confess his sins; and, as far as we can learn, he offered no sacrifices, and presented no supplications: nor does he seem to have expressed any concern about his sons, or his people, or to have attempted any escape; but in sullen despair to have rushed upon his doom.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

When we in the least deviate from the plain path of duty, every circumstance tends to draw us further aside, and to increase our perplexity and temptation.—Needless intimacies with the avowed enemies of true religion, or obligations to them, will reduce us, ere we are aware, to the necessity of being unfaithful to God, or treacherous and ungrateful to our benefactors: and we shall scarcely ever be able to speak with that candour and simplicity which become Christians. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 4.)—When death has removed the ministers and servants of God, or persecution has banished them, a land is deprived of its best defence, and its enemies have their best opportunity of preparing war against it.—Hypocrites are frequently very zealous against those crimes, to which they are not tempted at the time, or from which they may suffer detriment; and apostates frequently commit those sins, which they once were most earnest in opposing.—Ungodly persons fear the reproach of man, or the punishments denounced by human laws, more than the wrath of God: they do not therefore forsake their sins, but dissemble their real characters, and conceal their conduct; and deem all well if they can escape detection: but frequently they are employed to rebuke or correct each other, either for their present conviction, or their future deeper condemnation.—When habits of perjury, or profane swearing, have been contracted, the sacred name of God, and the most solemn oaths, are often introduced in the midst of the most horrible wickedness, and made the obligations and encouragements to the most enormous crimes! But the atrocious guilt of such impiety cannot be expressed.—Consulting witches, or diviners of any kind, real or pretended, is a malignant or ignorant attempt to gain intelligence or assistance from some creature, when it cannot be had, or is not sought, from the Lord in the path of duty; and is therefore *essentially* idolatry, and *virtually* the worship of the devil. (*Notes, Ex.* xxii. 18. 1 *Chr.* x. 13, 14.)

V. 11—25.

Many, who despise the servants of God while they live, are so far convinced of their wisdom and fidelity, that they vainly wish for their counsel and instruction, in distressing circumstances, after their death. But in that blessed world, to which they are removed, they have done with fear, favour, and affection, and are become far more determined than ever in the service and cause of God: and were they to appear, they would denounce the doom of impenitent sinners, with more awful decision than before.—Wretched indeed are they, from whom God is for ever departed! What can they expect either from good or evil men, from holy or unholy spirits? Neither the servants nor the enemies of the Lord can do them any service, and every thing combines to drive them to desperation. This Satan labours to effect, and he is sometimes permitted to succeed: nay, the very testimony of God's word and ministers concurs in convincing the unhappy wretches "that "there remains nothing, but a certain fearful looking for "of judgment, and fiery indignation!" (*Note, Heb.* x. 26, 27:) while the remembrance of former crimes, convictions, warnings, and relapses into sin, combine to assure them of the certainty and justice of their doom. Yet all these things do not humble or soften them; for it is "impossi-"ble to renew them to repentance;" and not having "believed Moses and the prophets, neither will they be "persuaded though one rose from the dead;" (*Note, Luke* xvi. 27—31;) but either in sullen or in furious despair they await and meet their doom!—In every age God sets up a few such beacons for a tremendous warning to their fellow-sinners, not to listen to temptations, to sin against conviction, or despise the word of God; and to beware of hypocrisy, apostasy, procrastination, and other great wickedness: for none are thus given up of God, who have not provoked him to it by their previous crimes. (*Note, 2 Thes.* ii. 8—12.) But while one relenting thought remains let no sinner ever suppose himself in this awful case. God will not indeed hear the prayer of the unhumbled and impenitent; and many enquire of him in vain, because they are not decidedly in earnest: when therefore they do not meet with encouragement, they detect their own hypocrisy, by giving up their religious duties, plunging again into sin, and seeking help from the world, and "the god of "this world." Let the discouraged, but sincere and earnest enquirer persevere in knocking at mercy's gate, until it be opened: let him humble himself more and more before God, and determine to live and die supplicating his favour; and he will be sure at length to succeed. Let us all learn "to seek the LORD while he may be found, and "to call upon him while he is near," (*Note, Is.* lv. 6, 7,) and without reserve to obey his voice and do his will.—Finally, though subjects suffer *with* their wicked governors, and children with their parents, either it is *for* their own sins, or else their sufferings "will work for them a far "more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref.*) It may be reasonably supposed, that David was undetermined how to act

3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews *here?* And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is* not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me [f] these days, or these years, and I have [g] found no fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this day?

4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, [h] Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? *should it* not *be* with the heads of these men?

5 *Is* [i] not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

6 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, *as* [k] the LORD liveth, [l] thou hast been upright, and [m] thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host, *is* good in my sight; for I have not found evil in thee, since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless [*] the lords favour thee not.

7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou [†] displease not the lords of the Philistines.

8 And David said unto Achish, [m] But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been [‡] with thee unto this day, [n] that I may not go to fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight, [o] as an angel of God: notwithstanding, the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

10 Wherefore [p] now rise up early in the morning, with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

11 So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. [q] And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

f xxvii. 7.
g Dan. vi. 5. John xix. 6. Rom. xii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 16.
h xiv. 21. 1 Chr. xii. 19. Luke xvi. 8.
i xviii. 6, 7. xxi. 11. Prov. xxvii. 14.
k xx. 3. xxviii. 10. Deut. x. 20. Is. lxv. 16. Jer. xii. 16.
l Matt. v. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 12. iii. 16.
m Num. xxvii. 17. 2 Sam. iii. 25. Ps. cxxi. 8.
* Heb. *thou art not good in the eyes of the lords.*
† Heb. *do not evil in the eyes of, &c.*
m xii. 8. xvii. 29. xx. 8. xxvi. 18.
‡ Heb. *before.*
n xxviii. 2. 2 Sam. xvi. 18, 19. Ps. xxxiv. 13, 14. Matt. vi. 13.
o 2 Sam. xiv. 17. 20. xix. 27. Gal. iv. 14.
p xxv. 1, 2. Gen. xxii. 14. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
q *See on* 1. Josh. xix. 18. 2 Sam. iv. 4.

on this occasion, and waited with a secret hope that the Lord would help him out of this very great difficulty; as indeed he did in a wonderful manner. (*Note*, xxviii. 1, 2.) He was far to much influenced by fear of man, in so readily consenting to attend Achish, when he might have framed very plausible excuses for declining that service. (*Note, Prov.* xxix. 25, 26.)

V. 4—6. These lords, or princes, possessed so much authority in their own cities, and in the camp at the head of their troops, and were so decided against employing David, that Achish would not venture their displeasure in retaining him. The high opinion which he had of David, the confidence which he reposed in him, and his commendations of him both before his face (9), and to the lords, would have been very honourable to David, if they had not been *in part* the effect of deception. (*Note*, xxvii. 8—12.) When Achish sware by JEHOVAH (6), that he did not send David away for any suspicion which he entertained of him, he shewed that he had collected some *notions* at least concerning the true God and his worship (9).

Saul slew, &c. (5) *Note*, xviii. 6—9. 'They reasoned 'wisely, according to the common practice of mankind; 'and it was well for David, that they were such politicians: 'for hereby God delivered him out of a very great strait, 'either of being an enemy to his country, or false to his 'friends, and to his trust. And by the same good Provi'dence he was sent back to rescue his wives, and the 'wives and children of his men, who were taken captive.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xxx. 1—19.)

V. 8—11. (*Marg. Ref.*) David could not but inwardly rejoice at this occurrence: yet he was unwilling that Achish should think he did; and therefore he professed a desire "to fight with the *enemies of his lord the king.*" (*Note, 2 Sam.* xvi. 15—19.) Achish would understand these words to mean the Israelites; but they were ambiguous, as several of his speeches were on this occasion: so hard is it in such circumstances to avoid all insincerity and disingenuity, either from fear or courtesy!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

While presumptuous sinners are given up to the effects of their own counsels, and driven headlong to destruction, the sins of the upright are repented of and pardoned; and the Lord takes care both of their peace and reputation. He has various methods of extricating us out of difficulties, when we can perceive no way of escaping: and while ungodly men pursue their own purposes, and follow their own judgments, he secretly influences them to such determinations, as subserve the good of his people.—Reputation, esteem, and affection, frequently become snares to us; whilst reproaches, contempt, and injurious suspicions prove beneficial: and the ill usage of the wicked, by which we are driven from them, is much better for us, than that friendship which draws us among them.—When worldly people have no evil thing to say of us, but will bear testi-

CHAP. XXX.

David on his return finds that the Amalekites had burnt Ziklag, and carried captive the women and children, 1—3. David and his men are greatly distressed, 4, 5; but enquiring of God, he is encouraged to pursue them, 6—10. He obtains intelligence of them from an Egyptian slave, 11—15. He smites them, recovers all, and takes much spoil, 16—20. His law for dividing it, 21—25. He sends presents to his friends, 26—31.

AND it came to pass, when David and his men [a] were come to Ziklag on the third day, that [b] the Amalekites had invaded the south and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

2 And had taken the women captives, that *were* therein: they [c] slew not any, either great or small, but carried *them* away, and went on their way.

3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, *it was* [d] burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

4 Then David and the people that *were* with him, [e] lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

5 And David's [f] two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

6 And David [g] was greatly distressed; for [h] the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was [*] grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but [i] David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

7 And David said to [k] Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee bring me hither the ephod. And Abia-

a xxix. 11. 2 Sam. i. 2.
b xv. 7. xxvii. 8—10. Gen. xxiv. 62. Josh. xi. 16.
c 19. xxvii. 11. Job xxxviii. 11. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Is. xxvii. 8, 9.
d Ps. xxxiv. 19. Heb. xii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. Rev. iii. 9.
e iv. 13. xi. 4. Gen. xxxvii. 33—35. Num. xiv. 1. 39. Judg. ii. 4. xxi. 2. Ezra x. 1.
f i. 2. xxv. 42, 43. xxvii. 3. 2 Sam. ii. 2. iii. 2, 3.
g Gen. xxxii. 7. Ps. xxv. 17. xlii. 7. cxvi. 3, 4. 10. 2 Cor. i. 8, 9. iv. 8. vii. 5.
h Ex. xvii. 4. Num. xiv. 10. Ps. lxii. 9. Matt. xxi. 9. xxvii. 22.
* Heb. *bitter*. i. 10.—Judg. xviii. 25. 2 Sam. xvii. 8. 2 Kings iv. 27. *Margins*.
i Job xiii. 15. Ps. xxvii. 1—3. xlii. 5. 11. lvi. 3, 4. 11. lxii. 1. 5. 8. cxviii. 8—13. Prov. xviii. 10. Is. xxxvii. 14—20. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Rom. iv. 18. viii. 31. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. Heb. xiii. 6.
k xxii. 20, 21. xxiii. 6. 9. 1 Kings ii. 26. Mark ii. 26.

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mony to our uprightness, we need desire no more from them: and this we should aim to acquire by prudence, meekness, and a blameless life. But their *flattering* commendations are almost always purchased by improper compliances, or some measure of deception, and commonly may cover us with confusion.—It is seldom prudent to place great confidence in one who has changed sides; except as the fear of God influences a true convert to conscientious fidelity.—Obscurity, or the company of those who are of one heart with us, is generally more safe, comfortable, and honourable, than high stations in the palaces of the ungodly. Thus David in the *cave* was far more worthy of our admiration and imitation, than when a favourite in the camp of king Achish: and he never had a greater deliverance, than when he was dismissed from that ensnaring service.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1—3. Ziklag was distant from the camp of the Philistines, about three days' march; and David did not receive an authentick account of the battle at Gilboa, till two days after his return thither. (*2 Sam.* i. 1.) But it does not thence follow, that the battle was not fought on the *morrow* after Saul consulted the witch of En-dor, as some have thought; (xxviii. 19;) for the narrative of Saul's conduct is perfectly distinct, from that which relates to David and to the Philistines: and it is not said, at what time Saul went to En-dor.—The Lord had extricated David reputably from his ensnaring connexion with Achish; but he severely rebuked him for his misconduct, by the calamity that came upon Ziklag in his absence. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xviii. 30—34. xix. 1, 2.)—He might reasonably have expected that the Amalekites would watch their opportunity of retaliating; and his fear of offending Achish made him very improvident, in leaving the city and the women and children in it, without any proper guard.—But the Amalekites were wonderfully and mercifully restrained from slaying any of them, after the example which David had set them; (*Note*, xxvii. 8—12;) preferring the profit of enslaving them, to the pleasure of revenge: for God intended to rebuke his servant, but not to permit his family and friends to be destroyed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4, 5. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 6. The loss of his wives, the desolations of the city, and the *bitterness* of his followers, (*marg.*) who, not entirely without reason, were enraged against him for thus exposing their families, all combined to enhance David's distress: at the same time he could not but consider his calamities as resulting from unbelief, in leaving the land of Judah, in being so much afraid of Achish, and in neglecting to consult the Lord. Yet in the midst of all these complicated troubles, his spirit was soon calmed and encouraged: he neither murmured against God, nor resented the rage of his soldiers, nor despaired of redress, nor confided in his own valour or conduct; "but he encouraged "himself in the LORD his God." (*Notes, Gen.* xxxii. 6—12.) He meditated upon his perfections, upon his promises in general to believers, and the particular promises made to him; on his own experience of the faithfulness of God, as well as his wonderful works of old in behalf of his worshippers; and on the relations in which the Lord stood to those, who had been enabled to choose him as their Salvation and Portion. Thus he was encouraged to expect forgiveness, protection, help, and a favourable event, notwithstanding external appearances. (*Note*, xvii. 34—37.)

V. 7—10. Circumstanced as David was, no time was to be lost; and as his troubles originated from neglecting to enquire of the Lord, he immediately consulted him by the high priest. (*Notes*, xiv. 16—23. xxiii. 9—13.) The answer vouchsafed him quieted the minds of his followers; so that after their long march they were willing to go in pursuit of the ravagers, without taking rest, or regular refreshment. But the fatigue of the former march, increased by this new expedition, together with the anguish of their

thar brought thither the ephod to David.

xxiii. 2. 4. 10—12. Judg. xx. 18. 23. 28. 2 Sam. v. 19. 23 Prov. iii. 5, 6.
8 And David [l] enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And [m] he answered him, Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*.

m xiv. 37. xxviii. 6. 15, 16. Num. xxvii. 21. Ps. l. 15. xci. 15.

9 So David went, he and the six hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.

10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were [n] so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.

n xiv. 30, 31. Judg. viii. 4, 5.

11 And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and [o] gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;

o Deut. xv. 7—11. xxiii. 7. Prov. xxv. 21. Matt. xxv. 35. Luke x. 36, 37. Rom. xii. 20, 21.

12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, [p] his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk *any* water, [q] three days and three nights.

p xiv. 27. Judg. xv. 19. Is. xl. 29—31.

q 13. Esth. iv. 16. Jon. i. 17. Matt. xxvii. 63.

13 And David said unto him, To whom *belongest* thou? and whence *art* thou? and he said, I *am* a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and [r] my master left me, because three days agone I fell sick.

r Job xxxi. 13—15. Prov. xii. 10. Jam. ii. 13.

14 We made an invasion *upon* the south of [s] the Cherethites, and upon *the coast* which *belongeth* to Judah, and upon the south of [t] Caleb; and [u] we burned Ziklag with fire.

s 16. 2 Sam. viii. 18. 1 Kings i. 38. 44. 1 Chr. xviii. 17. Ez. xxv. 16. Zeph. ii. 5.

t Josh. xiv. 13. xv. 13.

u 1—8.

15 And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, [x] Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, [y] nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.

x xxix. 6. Josh. ii. 12. ix. 15. 19, 20. Ez. xvii. 13. 16. 19.

y Deut. xxiii. 15, 16.

16 And [z] when he had brought him down, behold, *they were* spread abroad upon all the earth, [a] eating and drinking, and dancing, [b] because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.

z Judg. i. 24, 25.

a xxv. 36—38. Isa. xxxii. 6. 17—19. 27, 28. Judg. xvi. 23—30. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Is. xxii. 13. Dan. v. 1—4. 30. Luke xii. 19, 20. xvii. 27—29. xxi. 34, 35. 1 Thes. v. 3. Rev. xi. 10—13.

17 And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of [*] the next day: [c] and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men which rode upon camels, and fled.

b Job xx. 5.

* Heb. *their morrow.*

c xi. 11. Judg. iv. 16. 1 Kings xx. 29, 30. Ps. xviii. 42.

18 And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

19 And [d] there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any *thing* that they had taken to them: David recovered all.

d 8. Gen. xiv. 14—16. Num. xxxi. 49. Job i. 10. Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. xci. 9, 10. Matt. vi. 33.

20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drave before those *other* cattle, and said, [e] This *is* David's spoil.

e 26. Num. xxxi. 9—12. 2 Chr. xx. 25. Is. liii. 12. Rom. viii. 37.

21 And David came to the [f] two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom

f 10.

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spirits, rendered a part of the company so faint, that they could proceed no further. David however, though his small troop was thus reduced, and he might fear that the others would be unable to proceed, still "encouraged him-"self in the LORD his God." (*Note, Judg.* viii. 4.)

V. 11—15. This sick slave was considered as of small value to his master, and was likely to be an encumbrance; the life of a fellow-creature was rated at nothing; and so he was inhumanly left to perish, though he might have been carried on one of the camels: but in the righteous providence of God this cruelty of his master occasioned the destruction of the invading army; whilst David's kindness to a perishing stranger and slave was the means of his signal success, and proved true policy! (*Marg. Ref.*)—This slave "fell sick *on the third day*" before; (13. Heb.) yet it is said that he had been without meat and drink, *three days and three nights.* (12. *Note, Matt.* xii. 38—40.)

V. 16—19. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Amalekites probably knew, that the Israelites and the Philistines were engaged in war at a great distance, and that David and his men were in the army of the Philistines, and therefore, deeming themselves secure, they very imprudently began to riot on the abundance which they had taken, without even placing guards to give notice of an enemy's approach. So that David and his little troop came on them unawares, and made a dreadful and long continued slaughter of them, and recovered all their spoil (8). Perhaps, coming near to the Amalekites in the evening, and witnessing their riotous conduct, they took some refreshment and rest, till the morning; and then at the twilight assaulted the Amalekites, when oppressed with drunkenness and sleep: or else David's company was supernaturally strengthened for these great exertions after all their preceding fatigue.

V. 20. Besides the cattle, which had been taken from the several countries which the Amalekites had ravaged, it is probable that David entered their lands, and fetched away some of their cattle also.

they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David [h] came near to the people, he [*] saluted them.

22 Then answered all the [i] wicked men and *men* of Belial, of [†] those that went with David, and said, [k] Because they went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart.

23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, [l] my brethren, with that [m] which the LORD hath given us, [n] who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.

24 For who will hearken unto you in this matter? [o] but as his part *is* that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* that [p] tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.

25 And it was *so* from that day [‡] forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

26 ¶ And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* [q] to his friends, saying, Behold a [‡] present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD;

27 To *them* which *were* in [r] Beth-el, and to *them* which *were* in [s] south Ramoth, and to *them* which *were* in [t] Jattir,

28 And to *them* which *were* in [u] Aroer, and to *them* which *were* in Siphmoth, and to *them* which *were* in [x] Eshtemoa,

29 And to *them* which *were* in Rachal, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the [y] Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the [z] Kenites,

30 And to *them* which *were* in [a] Hormah, and to *them* which *were* in Chorashan, and to *them* which *were* in Athach,

31 And to *them* which *were* in [b] Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.

h Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 8.
* Heb. *asked them how they did.* Judg. xviii. 15.
i xxii. 2. xxv. 17. 25. Deut. xiii. 13. Judg. xix. 22. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13.
† Heb. *the men.*
k Matt. vii. 12.
l Gen. xix. 7. Judg. xix. 23. Acts vii. 2. xxii. 1.
m 8. ii. 7. Num. xxxi. 49—54. Deut. viii. 10. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 12—14. Hab. i. 16.
n Ps. xliv. 2—7. cxxi. 7, 8.
o Num. xxxi. 27. Josh. xxii. 8. Ps. lxviii. 12.
p xxv. 13.
‡ Heb. *and forward.*
q 1 Chr. xii. 1. &c. Ps. xxxv 27. lxviii. 18. Prov. xviii. 16. 24. Is. xxxii. 8.
‡ Heb. *blessing.* xxv. 27. Gen. xxxiii. 11. 2 Kings v. 15. 2 Cor. ix. 5.
r Gen. xxviii. 19. Josh. xvi. 2. Judg. i. 22, 23. 1 Kings xii. 29.
s Josh. xix. 8. *Ramath.*
t Josh. xv. 48.
u Josh. xiii. 16.
x Josh. xv. 50. *Esthtemoh.*
y xxvii. 10.
z Judg. i. 16.
a Josh. xix. 4. Judg. i. 17.
b Josh. xiv. 13, 14. 2 Sam. iv. 1. xv. 10.

V. 22—25. (*Marg. Ref.*) No doubt many of David's men had profited by his example and instructions: yet there were also wicked men, even "men of Belial," among them; who proposed not only to take all the other spoil, and share it among those who aided in destroying the Amalekites; but likewise to seize the property of their fellow-soldiers, because they had not been able to go with them. David's answer however was full of piety, equity, and meekness, and well worthy of careful notice; and it prevailed against their unjust demands. Had he hearkened to these "men of Belial," the others would have gone away disgusted, and the consequences might have been permanently evil: but by thus mildly taking up the affair, he conciliated the minds of the well-disposed, and silenced the injurious party.—This edict was different from that, by which the spoil of the Midianites had been divided: (*Notes, Num.* xxxi. 25—47:) but *that* related to the whole people; *this* only to the soldiers, some of whom went to battle, and others guarded the baggage; and *in this peculiar case* it became a permanent law in Israel.

V. 26—31. It is evident from this, that some law or custom was established, which, in dividing the spoil, allotted a certain portion of it to the commander in the war, and that David sent these presents out of his own share of the booty (20). No doubt he considered those, who secretly favoured and assisted him during Saul's persecutions, as his steady friends: but, sending a blessing to them at this crisis, from the spoil of the enemies of God and his people, was the result of genuine policy, and served to remove obstructions to his advancement to the throne. (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xii. 1—8.)—He sent no presents to the Ziphites, or to the men of Keilah: (*Notes,* xxiii. 1—13. 19—25. xxvi. 1, 2:) for, though enemies should be helped, *when in distress;* friends alone are entitled to our confidence, gratitude, and liberality.—It is evident, that some of the places, here mentioned, were not situated in the lot of Judah: and David had passed over Jordan, to place his parents under the protection of the king of Moab, whose kingdom was near to Aroer. (*Marg. Ref.*—28.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—15.

When we leave our families, we cannot foresee what may befall them, or ourselves, ere we return: we ought therefore to commit each other to the protection of God; and to render him unfeigned thanks when we meet, from time to time, in peace and safety.—It is wisdom on all occasions to moderate our expectation of earthly comfort; lest we should, by being too sanguine, meet with the more distressing disappointments.—Many of our troubles may be traced back to our imprudence; all of them in one way or other originate from our sins.—Inordinate passions blind men's minds: excessive fear of one danger often causes them to overlook those which are still more formidable: and they, who give offence to others, may expect to be used by them in like manner. But the Lord restrains the rage of the most barbarous and revengeful; while one selfish principle counteracts another, wicked men proceed as far as his purposes require, and no further; and by various instruments he rebukes and chastens his offending

CHAP. XXXI.

Saul's army being defeated, and his sons slain, he and his armour-bearer kill themselves, 1—6. The Philistines seize the towns which the Israelites forsake; and insult over the dead bodies of Saul and his sons, 7—10. The men of Jabesh-gilead rescue and burn them, and bury the bones, 11—13

a xxviii. 1. 15. xxix. 1.
b xii. 25. 1 Chr. x. 1—3.
* Heb. *wounded.*
c xxviii. 4. 2 Sam. i. 21.
d xiv. 22. 2 Sam. i. 6.
e xiii. 2. 16. xiv. 1—14. 49. xviii. 1—4 xxiii. 17. 1 Chr. viii. 33. ix. 39.
f Ex. xx. 5. 2 Kings xxv. 7.
g 2 Sam. i. 4—10. Am. ii. 14.

NOW [a] the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and [b] fell down * slain in mount [c] Gilboa.

2 And the Philistines [d] followed hard upon Saul, and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew [e] Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, [f] Saul's sons.

3 And the battle [g] went sore against Saul, and the [†] archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

† Heb. *shooters, men with bows, found him.* Gen. xlix. 23. 1 Kings xxii. 34.

4 Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, [h] Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these [i] uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and [‡] abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for [j] he was sore afraid: therefore [k] Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

h Judg. ix. 54. 1 Chr. x. 4.
i xiv. 6. xvii. 26. 36. 2 Sam. i. 20. Jer. ix. 25, 26. Ez. xliv. 7—9.
‡ Or, *mock.*
j 2 Sam. i. 14.
k 2 Sam. i. 9, 10. xvii. 23. 1 Kings xvi. 18. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. Acts i. 18. xvi. 27.

5 And when [l] his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

l 1 Chr. x. 5.

6 So [m] Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

m iv. 10, 11. xv. 15. xii. 17. 25. 1 Chr. x. 6. Ez. ix. 1, 2. Hos. xiii. 10, 11.

people, but restrains even the most successful from doing them essential detriment. (*Note, Ps.* lxxvi. 10.)—Generous minds are most susceptible of rational affections; and the bravest are not disgraced by mourning the loss or the sufferings of beloved relations: but all our passions are prone to excess; and unless the fear of God possess the heart, men fret against him under afflictions, and vent their impatience against the guilty or innocent occasions of them: and thus our helpers may become our terror, or our destroyers.—Conscious guilt and a sense of the divine displeasure form the keenest aggravations of a believer's distress: yet the very reflection, which pains and humbles his heart, silences the tempest of his passions, and induces hope in God, who chastens that he may not condemn.—"The LORD is rich in mercy, and ready to forgive;" so that the greatest sinner, when first he approaches the mercy-seat in the Redeemer's name, with penitent confessions and fervent prayers, may be encouraged to expect salvation for his soul, and assistance in all his troubles. But the believer, who has long trusted in his mercy, chosen him for his Portion, walked with him in his ordinances, sought his glory, and experienced his faithfulness, power, and love; notwithstanding failures and conscious unworthiness, may with confidence "encourage himself in the "LORD his God," amidst the most extreme danger and distress.—Bitter complaints and mutual recriminations are of no use in the hour of trouble: we are then called to perform the present duty; and to enquire the will of God by searching the Scriptures, and prayer. When our sins are forgiven, and we act by the Lord's direction, we shall soon recover all, and be enriched by our very losses and trials: and even if our companions cannot or will not help us, "the LORD of hosts will be for us, the God of Jacob will "be our Refuge."—Some of those, who are cordially attached to the cause of God, are less capable of hard services than others: but he mercifully accepts them, and so should their brethren.—It is good policy, as well as charity, to relieve the meanest in their distresses; for in some great emergency God may enable them to render us the most important services: but he will certainly punish inhumanity to the poor and the sick; especially that of masters to their sick and afflicted servants, and oppressed slaves. (*Jam.* ii. 13.)

V. 16—31.

The success and abundance of ungodly men, increasing their presumption, and being spent on their lusts, frequently accelerate their destruction: and sensual indulgence is a common introduction to "weeping, wailing, "and gnashing of teeth." (*P. O. 2 Sam.* xiii. 15—39. *Notes, Luke* xvi. 19—23.)—In the most favoured companies selfish men will be found, who, being ungrateful to God for his kindness, will enrich or pamper themselves, while they leave their more deserving though less prosperous brethren to starve. But those, who consider the Lord as the Giver of their abundance, will dispose of it with equity and in liberality: they will employ their influence to restrain the injustice of others; and take occasions from evil suggestions to establish useful precedents: and instead of spending their wealth on their lusts, will share it with their friends, and with the poor; thus subserving their most important future interests, with the very "mam-"mon of unrighteousness!" (*Note, Luke* xvi. 9—13.)—Yet how far do they all come short of the Saviour, who divides the spoil of his victories with the meanest of his followers! (*Notes, Ps.* lxviii. 18. *Eph.* iv. 11—13.) But, though the rebellious are now invited to accept of mercy and participate his favour; if they will not have him to reign over them, they shall receive no benefit from his redemption, the blessings of which will be confined to his friends, who trust and love him, and keep his commandments.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 2. Probably Saul never informed his sons, of what he had been told concerning his own and their approaching death: (xxviii. 19:) so that they were in the army, and slain before his eyes. Thus David's way to the throne was cleared: for if a large proportion of Israel stood up for the rights of Ish-bosheth, who was a very insignificant person; (2 *Sam.* ii—iv;) doubtless far more would have been strenuous for Jonathan. And, though *he* would readily have given place; yet his brethren and the people in general would no doubt have made much opposition to David's succession to the kingdom. (*Note,* xxiii. 17, 18.)

V. 3—6. Saul, when grievously wounded, and unable

7 ¶ And when the men of Israel that *were* on the other side of the valley, and *they* that *were* on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were
[a] xiii. 6. Lev. xxvi. 32. 36. Deut. xxviii. 33. Judg. vi. 2. dead, [a] they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 And it came to pass on the mor-
[b] 1 Chr. x. 8. 2 Chr. xx. 25. row, when the Philistines came [b] to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

[p] 2 Sam. xvii. 51. 54. 1 Chr. x. 9, 10. 9 And they [p] cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about,

[q] to publish *it in* the house of their idols, and among the people.
[q] Judg. xvi. 23, 24.

10 And [r] they put his armour in the
[r] xxi. 9.
house of [s] Ashtaroth; and they fastened
[s] Judg. ii. 13.
his body to the wall of [t] Beth-shan.
[t] Judg. i. 27. 2 Sam. xxi. 12—14.

11 And when the inhabitants of [u] Ja-
[u] xi 1—11. 2 Sam. ii. 4—7.
besh-gilead heard [*] of that which the Philistines had done to Saul,
[*] Or, *concerning him, that which, &c.*

12 All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and [x] burnt them there.
[x] 2 Chr. xvi. 14. Jer. xxxiv. 5. Am. vi. 10.

13 And they took [y] their bones, and buried *them* under a tree at Jabesh, and [z] fasted seven days.
[y] Gen. xxxv. 8. 2 Sam. ii. 4, 5. xxi. 12—14.
[z] Gen. l. 10.

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to resist or to flee, expressed no concern about his immortal soul; but only desired to be speedily dispatched, that the Philistines might not insult over him, and put him to pain! (*Note, Judg.* ix. 50—57.) His armour-bearer seems neither to have feared death, nor the guilt of murder, nor the wrath of God: but he had such reverence for the person of his prince, that he was incapable of lifting up his hand against him. Thus Saul became his own murderer; and his armour-bearer, in a mad expression of respect, imitated his example. Ahithophel and Judas the traitor likewise murdered themselves: (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xvii. 23. *Matt.* xxvii. 3—5:) and I do not recollect any other instances in Scripture of this practice; unless Abimelech be added, who, when mortally wounded, ordered his armour-bearer to dispatch him; and Zimri, who burnt his palace and himself in it. (*Marg. Ref.*) For suicide, whether from real or supposed insanity, or otherwise, seems to have very rarely occurred in Israel; while suicide among the Greeks and Romans, and other Gentiles, was considered as *virtue*, and never ascribed to insanity. So that the very numerous instances of self-murder, in this and other Christian countries, and generally considered as lunacy, have, in fact, no *parallel*, either in Israel, or among idolaters; and seem to be occasioned in this *peculiar form*, by an association of the Christian sentiment, that suicide is *crime* and *murder*, with a vain attempt in all parties to extenuate it, by ascribing it to madness. But when the character of the suicides mentioned in scripture is considered, it confirms the opinion, which has been advanced, of the enormous guilt and direful consequences of this crime. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 13.) Men, either madly presuming on the mercy of God, or despairing of it, in order to escape temporal sufferings or disgrace, despise his gift of life, and thus rush uncalled unto his tribunal, by an act of direct rebellion against his authority, and in proud defiance of his justice, with the guilt of all their unrepented crimes upon their heads! Yet so exceedingly has Satan blinded men's minds, that this worst of murders has been held honourable in very many ages, places, and situations, and has often been committed out of vain glory, in imitation of, or from affection to, those who have obtained renown among their fellow-sinners.—The Jews say, that Doeg was Saul's armour-bearer, having been preferred for slaying the priests of the LORD: and if so, his death was worthy of his life. (*Notes,* xxii. 9—19.)—Saul's sons and servants died in the performance of their duty to him and to their country: but he and his armour-bearer died in direct violation of God's commandment.

V. 7. The inhabitants of the cities, near the valley of Jezreel, and of the cities near "the passage of Jordan," or the place where men passed over that river, (בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן) were so affrighted at these events, that they fled, and left their habitations to the conquerors.—These were the effects of rejecting the Lord and his prophet, and demanding a king! (*Notes,* viii. 1—9. xii. 16—19. *Hos.* xiii. 10, 11.)

V. 8—10. The Philistines sent the head of Saul to be placed in the temple of Dagon, and his armour in that of Ashtaroth, as memorials of their victory, and in honour of their idols. (*Notes,* v. 1—5. *Judg.* xvi. 23, 24. *Dan.* v. 1—9.) But his body, and the bodies of his sons, they fastened to the wall of Beth-shan, a city near to the field of battle. Thus Saul indeed escaped being tortured by them, but no dead body could be more inhumanly abused.—As the death of Saul made way for David to ascend the throne, the Philistines had no great cause to triumph on that account. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* v. 17—25. xxi. 15—22. *Is.* xiv. 28—32.)

V. 11—13. This conduct of the men of Jabesh-gilead was a becoming expression of gratitude to Saul, as their deliverer in the beginning of his reign, and a proper rebuke to the barbarity of the Philistines. (*Notes,* xi. 2 *Sam.* ii. 5—7. xxi. 9—14.) It is probable that they burned the bodies, lest the Philistines should recover and further abuse them: for though burning the dead was not customary in Israel, it was not prohibited. They fasted seven days, each day until the evening, as a token of their sorrow and humiliation under the divine rebuke. But there was no general lamentation in Israel made for Saul, as there had been for the prophet Samuel. (*Notes,* xxv. 1. 2 *Chr.* xxi. 18—20. *Ec.* vi. 3—5. viii. 9, 10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The objects of the divine displeasure are not only wretched themselves, but likewise the cause of calamities to all around them: yet, while the righteous are often involved with them in temporal troubles and death; they

will be separated in the other world, and possess eternal happiness, when the wicked sink into everlasting misery: and frequently men's behaviour, in the closing scene of life, strongly indicates their state beyond the grave.—How should we watch and pray, that we may not be given up to presumption or despair; but enabled patiently to bear the evils of life, and quietly to hope for the salvation of the Lord, that Satan may not tempt us to the horrible sin of self-murder!—It is *comparatively* of little consequence in what manner, or with what circumstances, we die, or what is done with our dead bodies: if our souls be but saved, our bodies likewise will be raised at last, incorruptible and glorious. But to be anxious to avoid pain or disgrace from men, and not to "fear him who is able to de-"stroy both body and soul in hell," is the extreme of infatuation and impiety: yet even here also, ungodly men are often disappointed. Indeed, every worldly object which is inordinately craved, will become our trouble; and the desire, the possession, and the loss of it will all be sources of uneasiness to us.—When inhumanity and impiety attend prosperity, it will be transient: and the successes of ungodly men are commonly introductions to their misfortunes.—It behoves us to shew gratitude to our benefactors, even though they be wicked men; and to venture danger and trouble in doing so: yet how ineffectual is the kindness and respect of fellow-creatures to those, who are enduring the wrath of God!—While pompous funerals, magnificent monuments, and flattering encomiums combine to honour the memory of some illustrious deceased impenitent sinner, his poor soul is suffering the extremest misery and disgrace, in the regions of darkness and despair! "This "also is a sore vanity." (*Note, Luke* xvi. 22, 23.) May we seek and find that honour which cometh from God only.

THE SECOND BOOK OF

SAMUEL,

OTHERWISE CALLED

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THIS book derives the name, by which it is generally called, from the prophet Samuel, though he had been dead some time, when the history contained in it commences. Perhaps it was so named, because he anointed that king whose actions it records; or because the prophets by whom it was written were raised up in those seminaries, which he instituted. The *names*, however, of the books are no part of divine revelation; and its authority, as a part of the sacred oracles is not at all lessened, by conceding, that the title given it in the Septuagint, and the Vulgate, namely, 'The Second Book of the Kings,' is more appropriate.—The book itself most evidently continues the preceding narrative, and introduces that which follows: and its authenticity is considered as undoubted in every subsequent part of Scripture. The Psalms abound with references to the events recorded in it. (*Ps.* iii. *title.* lxxii. lxxviii. 70—72. lxxxix. 19—36. cxxxii.) The narrative of David's fall in the matter of Uriah, related only in this book, is mentioned in other parts of Scripture. (1 *Kings* xv. 5. *Ps.* li. *title.* *Matt.* i. 6.) In short, wherever the covenant made with David, concerning the regal authority, as perpetuated in his family, and at length inherited by the Messiah to descend from him; or the promises made respecting Solomon, the especial type of Christ; or the Lord's choice of Jerusalem, and of mount Zion, as the place of his sanctuary, to which the Israelites should resort; or the building and continuance of the temple there, are mentioned; the events recorded in this book are divinely attested.—As containing the history of almost the whole of David's reign, and *exclusively* that of many important transactions, during this interesting period, there are perhaps more references directly or indirectly made to it in other parts of the Scripture, than to any other portion of the sacred narrative. The promises made to David, were, both in the literal and typical sense of them, evident prophecies, the fulfilment of which, as recorded in the subsequent books of Scripture, and in the history of the church and kingdom of Christ even to this day, are a divine attestation, that it was written by inspiration of that God, "to whom were known all his works from the beginning of the world." (*Notes*, vii. xxii. xxiii. 1—7.)—It opens with David's accession to the throne, his gradual prevalence against the house of Saul, and his establishment in the kingdom; it proceeds to relate his victories over his enemies, together with his zealous endeavours to reform the state of religion among his people, as well as to enlarge their territory and advance their prosperity. But with these more pleasing events are recorded the grievous sins which he committed, and the many domestick and publick calamities with which he was chastised. These, as a dark cloud, cover the latter part of the history of this book; (which brings us almost to the close of his reign of forty years;) yet, through all, his character shines very bright in many instances, and we learn from another place, that he closed his life in a most honourable manner. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxviii. xxix.)

CHAP. I.

An Amalekite brings Saul's crown and bracelet to David, informs him of the event of the battle, and asserts that he slew Saul, 1—10. David rends his clothes, weeps, and orders the messenger to be put to death as a murderer, 11—16. His poetical lamentation for Saul and Jonathan, 17—27.

NOW it came to pass after the death
a 1 Sam. xxx. 17—26. of Saul, [a] when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in
b 1 Sam. xxvii. 6. [b] Ziklag;

2 It came even to pass on
c Gen. xxii. 4. Esth. iv. 16. v. 1. Hos. vi. 2. Matt. xii. 40. xvi. 21. [c] the third day, that, behold, [d] a man came out of the camp from Saul, with [e] his clothes
d iv. 10.
e Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34. Josh. vii. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 12. Joel ii. 13. rent, and [f] earth upon his head: and *so* it was, when he came to David, that
f xv. 32. *See on* 1 Sam. iv. 12.
g xiv. 4. Gen. xxxvii. 7—10. xliii. 28. 1 Sam. xx. 41. xxv. 23. Ps lxvi. 3. Rev. iii. 9. [g] he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

3 And David said unto him, [h] From whence comest thou? And he said unto
h 2 Kings v. 25.
i Job i. 15—19. him, Out of the camp of Israel [i] am I escaped.

4 And David said unto him, [*] How went the matter? I pray thee tell me. And he answered, That [k] the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead, and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.
* Heb. *What was, &c.* 1 Sam. iv. 16. *marg.*
k 1 Sam. xxxi. 1—6. 1 Chr. x. 1—6.

5 And David said unto the young man that told him, [l] How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?
l Prov. xiv. 15.

6 And the young man that told him said, As [m] I happened by chance upon
m 1 Sam. vi. 9. Luke x. 31. [n] mount Gilboa, behold, [o] Saul leaned upon his spear; and lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.
n 21. 1Sam. xxviii. 4. xxxi. 1.
o 1 Sam. xxxi. 2—7.

7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me: and I answered, [†] Here *am* I.
† Heb. *Behold me.* ix. 6. 1 Sam. xxii. 12. Is. vi. 8. *marg.* lxv. 1.

8 And he said unto me, Who *art* thou? And I answered him, I *am* [p] an Amalekite.
p Gen. xiv. 7. Ex. xvii. 8—16. Num. xxiv. 20. Deut xxv. 17—19. 1 Sam. xv. 3. xxvii. 8. xxx. 1. 13.

9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for [‡] anguish is come upon me, because my life *is* yet whole in me.
‡ Or, *my coat of mail, or, my embroidered coat hindereth me, that my, &c.*

10 So I stood upon him, and [q] slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took [r] the crown that *was* upon his head, and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.
q Judg. ix. 54. 1 Sam. xxxi. 4, 5.
r xii. 30. Lam. v. 16.

11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and [s] rent them, and [t] likewise all the men that *were* with him.
s iii. 31. xiii. 31. Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34. Acts xiv. 14.
t Rom. xii. 15.

12 And they [u] mourned and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel, because they were fallen by the sword.
u Ps. xxxv. 13, 14. Prov. xxiv. 17, 18. Jer. ix. 1. Amos vi. 6. Matt. v. 44. 2 Cor. xi. 29. 1 Pet. iii. 8.

13 And David said unto the young man that told him, [x] Whence *art* thou? And he answered, I *am* the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.
x 8.

14 And David said unto him, [y] How, wast thou not afraid [z] to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?
y Num. xii. 8. 1 Sam. xxvi. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 10.
z 1 Sam. xxiv 6. xxvi. 9. Ps. cv. 15.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. David and his men had returned to Ziklag, and probably were employed in repairing its desolations, when tidings were brought him of the death of Saul. It does not appear that he made much enquiry concerning the event of the war, though he had every reason to be anxious about it. The decisive blow must have been given about the time when he was so exceedingly distressed. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxx. 1—6.)

V. 2—10. As it is expressly said, that the armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, before he slew himself, (1 *Sam.* xxxi. 5,) we must conclude that this man feigned many circumstances of his story. But happening to pass by the field of battle, and finding Saul's dead body, with the insignia of royalty on it, or near to it, he knew who it was; and by bringing these away he sufficiently proved Saul's death. He therefore framed his story, and ordered his behaviour, in that manner which he supposed would most ingratiate him with David.—It is remarkable, that an Amalekite should boast of having slain Saul, who had been rejected for not punctually executing the command of God, concerning that nation. (1 *Sam.* xv. 18—23. xxviii. 18.) But this rendered the story the more improbable; for it might well be supposed, that Saul would be as unwilling to be slain by an Amalekite, as by a Philistine.—*Anguish.* (9) The marginal reading seems the true meaning of the original.

V. 11, 12. David mourned for Jonathan, as having lost a most excellent and beloved friend; for Saul, as having good will and compassion for him without resentment, and because every circumstance preceding and attending his death, was peculiarly melancholy and affecting; and for Israel, as having lost a multitude of valiant men, as disgracefully triumphed over by the Philistines, and as exposed to further injuries and oppressions. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13—16. This man was an Amalekite, and so devoted by God himself to destruction; and David, as the king of Israel after Saul's death, was appointed to put this sentence in execution. He had boasted of having killed the king of Israel; David could not disprove his testimony: and having received no other intelligence, probably he be-

15 And David called one of the young men, and said, [a] Go near, *and* fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.

16 And David said unto him, [b] Thy blood *be* upon thy head: for [c] thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed.

17 ¶ And David [d] lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son:

18 (Also he bade them [e] teach the children of Judah *the use of* the bow; behold, *it is* written in [f] the book of [*] Jasher.)

19 The [g] beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places; [h] how are the mighty fallen!

20 [i] Tell *it* not in Gath, publish *it* not in the streets of Askelon; [k] lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the [l] daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

21 Ye [m] mountains of Gilboa, [n] *let there be* no dew, neither *let there be* rain upon you, nor fields [o] of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, *as though he had* not *been* [p] anointed with oil.

22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, [q] the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

23 Saul and Jonathan *were* lovely and [*] pleasant in their lives, and in their death [r] they were not divided: they were [s] swifter than eagles, they [t] were stronger than lions.

24 Ye [u] daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet with *other* delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.

25 [x] How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, [y] *thou wast* slain in thine high places.

26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me: [z] thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

27 How are the mighty fallen, and the [a] weapons of war perished!

[a] iv. 10—12. Judg. viii. 20. 1 Sam. xxii. 17, 18. 1 Kings ii. 25, 34. 46.
[b] Gen. ix. 5, 6. Lev. xx. 9. 11—13. 16. 27. Deut. xix. 10. Josh. ii. 19. 1 Kings ii. 32. Ez. xviii. 13. xxxiii. 5. Matt. xxvii. 25. Acts xx. 26.
[c] Job xv. 6. Prov. vi. 2. Luke xix. 22. Rom. iii. 19.
[d] Gen. l. 11. 2 Chr. xxxv. 25. Jer. ix. 17—21.
[e] 1 Sam. xxxi. 3.
[f] Josh. x. 13.
[*] Or, *the upright.*
[g] 23. Deut. iv. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xxxi. 8. Is. iv. 2. liii. 2. Lam. ii. 1. Zech. xi. 7. 10.
[h] 25. 27. Lam. v. 16.
[i] Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. Judg. xvi. 23, 24. Mic. i. 10.
[k] Ex. xv. 20, 21. Judg. xi. 34. 1 Sam. xviii. 6. Ez. xvi. 27. 57.
[l] 1 Sam. xvii. 26. 36. xxxi. 4.
[m] 1 Sam. xxxi. 1. 1 Chr. x. 1. 8.
[n] Judg. v. 23. Job iii. 3—8. Is. v. 6. Jer. xx. 14.
[o] Joel i. 9. ii. 14.
[p] 1 Sam. x. 1. Is. xxi. 5.
[q] 1 Sam. xiv. 7—14. xviii. 4. Is. xxxiv. 6, 7.
[*] Or, *sweet.* 1 Sam. xviii. 1. xx. 2.
[r] 1 Sam. xxxi. 2—5.
[s] ii. 18. Deut. xxviii. 49. 1 Chr. xii. 8. Job ix. 26. Jer. iv. 13. Lam. iv. 19.
[t] xxiii. 20. Judg. xiv. 18. Prov. xxx. 30.
[u] Judg. v. 30. Ps. lxviii. 12. Prov. xxxi. 21. Is. iii. 16—26. Jer. ii. 32. 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. iii. 3—5.
[x] 19. 27. Lam. v. 16.
[y] Judg. v. 18. 1 Sam. xiv. 13—15.
[z] 1 Sam. xviii. 1—4. xx. 17. 41. xxiii. 16.
[a] 2 Kings ii. 12. xiii. 14. Ps. xlvi. 9. lxxvi. 6. Ez. xxxix. 9, 10.

lieved it. By his own confession he deserved death; (for a man's desire to die cannot authorize another to kill him:) and by his punishment, David solemnly protested that he had no hand in the death of Saul; he warned all others not to expect favour from him, by doing violence to any of Saul's family; and he aimed to conciliate their good will, and that of Israel in general. (*Notes*, iv. 8—12.)

V. 18. Perhaps the bow had fallen into disuse among the Israelites, and this had given the Philistines an advantage: at the time therefore that this poem was inserted in the book of Jasher, (*Note, Josh.* x. 12—14,) it was also recorded, that David had given orders to the people, to habituate themselves to the expert use of the bow.—Some, however, understand this expression of a tune, or musical instrument, to which this poem was adapted.

V. 19—27. This elegy contains little directly relating to religion; but it is highly poetical. It was intended as a tribute of respect to the memory of Saul, and of affection to that of Jonathan; who perhaps was principally meant by "The beauty of Israel," being in every respect an ornament to his religion and people. Saul's valour and military renown are celebrated, and his faults are veiled; but nothing is spoken of his piety or justice. The charge given to every one, not to mention the catastrophe in the cities of the Philistines, lest the enemies of God should rejoice, is very beautiful. The wish that neither rain nor dew might fructify the fields, on which the fatal battle was fought; and that no sacrifices might thence be brought to the altar of God, because there the anointed of the LORD had cast away his shield, as if he had been a common soldier, is a strong expression of regret for such an event. The harmony, which generally subsisted between Saul and Jonathan, in warring against the enemies of Israel; the impetuosity and fury with which they had together charged and pursued them; and their falling in the same battle, are touched upon in a very poetical manner. It is probable, that Saul had encouraged the manufactures of Israel, and perhaps had increased their wealth: the daughters of Israel therefore, as most delighted with external embellishment, are called upon to lament over their prince. Every thing is mentioned in his commendation, which truth permitted: but Jonathan is named with most passionate affection; as having fallen upon the high places, where he had often successfully displayed his valour; and as having shewn a strong and faithful affection, in such trying circumstances, and in so disinterested a manner, as could not be equalled by any instances of conjugal fidelity, or the most constant love which had ever subsisted between the sexes. Considering therefore how pleasant his friendship had been to David, he could not but be greatly distressed at his premature death.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The deepest distress sometimes immediately precedes the dawning of deliverance: but those, who have committed their concerns to the Lord, should quietly abide his will; and repress that eagerness and anxiety, with which others disquiet themselves, when they expect important changes.—Many secretly wish for the death of those who keep them from honours or estates, without excepting even their nearest relations; and inwardly rejoice at those

CHAP. II.

David, by divine direction, goes with his company to Hebron, and is anointed king over Judah, 1—4. He commends the men of Jabesh-gilead for their kindness to Saul, 5—7. Abner sets up Ish-bosheth as king over Israel, 8—11. Twelve of Abner's men, and twelve of Joab's, engage in a fatal contest, which brings on a battle, in which Israel is vanquished, 12—17. Asahel, Joab's brother, is slain by Abner, 18—24. At Abner's desire Joab sounds a retreat, 25—29. The number of the slain, 30, 31. Asahel's burial, 32.

[a] v. 19. 23. Num. xxvii. 21. Judg. i. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2. 4. 9—12. xxx. 7, 8. Ps. xxv. 4, 5 xxvii. 4. cxliii. 8. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Ez. xxxvi. 37.

AND it came to pass after this, that David [a] enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto [b] Hebron.

[b] v. 1—3 xv. 7. Gen. xxiii. 2. Num. xiii. 22. Josh. xiv. 14, 15. 1 Kings ii. 11. 1 Chr. xxix. 27.

2 So David went up thither, and [c] his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, Nabal's wife the Carmelite.

[c] 1 Sam. xxv. 42, 43. xxx. 5. Luke xxii. 28, 29.

3 And [d] his men that *were* with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in [e] the cities of Hebron.

[d] 1 Sam. xxii. 2. xxvii. 2, 3. xxx. 9, 10. 1 Chr. xii. 1, &c.

[e] Josh. xxi. 11, 12.

4 And [f] the men of Judah came, and there they [g] anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, *That* [h] the men of Jabesh-gilead *were they* that buried Saul.

[f] xix. 11. 42. Gen. xlix. 8—10.

[g] 7. v. 3. 17. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 1 Chr. xi. 3.

[h] 1 Sam. xxxi. 11—13.

5 And David sent messengers unto

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events for which they *decently appear* to mourn. This is well known to mercenary men, who form their plans accordingly; and are apt to conclude that all are actuated by the same selfish principles. But the grace of God subdues this base disposition, and forms the mind to a more liberal temper: the true believer does not allow himself to desire, or to rejoice in, the calamity or death of a rival or an enemy; (*Note, Prov.* xxiv. 17, 18;) much less for that of a kind and superior relation, to whom gratitude and honour are justly due: and his mourning will on such occasions be unfeigned, though moderated by submission to the will of God. He cannot exult in the prospect of worldly advancement: for he considers himself as by it entrusted with more talents, surrounded by greater temptations, and called to increasing cares, duties, and burdens. Those therefore will be deceived, who court his favour, as sycophants do that of ungodly superiors: they will meet with a frown, a rebuke, and perhaps punishment, where they expected a large reward: and this treatment of such mercenary men promises a useful and honourable possession of worldly pre-eminence.

V. 17—27.

The faults even of our enemies should not be needlessly exposed, and all remembrance of injuries should be buried with the deceased, except the glory of God and the benefit of men require the contrary; and the offices and rank of distinguished persons are entitled to respect, though their characters do not deserve our esteem.—Useful endowments are conferred on numbers who are destitute of true piety; and it is in some cases allowable and decent to give them due commendation: yet we must on no account praise them for virtues which they do not possess. But *holiness* demands our peculiar love, and renders the society of those who possess it very pleasant to the true believer. Next to the love which subsists between the Lord and his people, that endeared affection which springs from it, produces the most vigorous, durable, faithful, and disinterested friendship: (*Notes*, 1 *Pet.* i. 22—25:) yet even this heavenly love occasions deep distress in this world, in which it is an *exotick;* but in its own climate above, it will flourish into unalloyed and eternal pleasure.—The calamities of the Lord's people, and the triumphs of his enemies, always grieve the hearts of true believers, whatever advantages they may incidentally derive from them; and it would be well, if many things which continually occur among professed Christians could be concealed from infidels and profligates, who are exceedingly hardened and emboldened by them. But it is not enough to *conceal* offences. Indeed the wish to do it is vain, and the thing itself generally impracticable: and the very endeavour often increases the mischief; being considered as an effort to connive at or palliate evil conduct, in those of our own creed or party. And at the same time the hope of escaping disgrace decreases resistance in the hour of temptation; and so multiplies the scandals themselves. We must therefore watch and pray against them, and use all our influence to prevent them. Let us then learn to repress ambition, resentment, and self-love; and to exercise patience, meekness, gratitude to our benefactors, love to our country, and good will to men; with zeal for the glory of God, and the interests of true religion.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. After the death of Saul many of the Israelites resorted to David at Ziklag, till his forces became very considerable: (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xii. 1—22:) yet he took no step to obtain possession of the vacant throne, without consulting the Lord as in former instances, by Abiathar the priest. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Ex.* xxviii. 30. *Num.* xxvii. 21.) He trusted in him who had promised him the kingdom, to give it him in his own time and manner; that he might possess it with a clear conscience, and avoid all appearance of those evils, with which he knew Saul's adherents would be ready to charge him. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xi. 37.) Judah was his own tribe, and he was decided in his opinion, that he must first go up to some city of that tribe. Accordingly he was directed to go up to Hebron, a chief city of Judah: and his men with their families were placed in the adjacent towns, dependent on Hebron. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. David had been *privately* anointed by Samuel, as Saul's successor; (1 *Sam.* xvi. 12, 13:) and now the principal persons in the tribe of Judah *publickly* anointed him to be their king; but they did not attempt to place him over the other tribes. (*Note*, v. 3.)

V. 5—7. David took every opportunity of expressing

the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said
i Ruth i. 8. ii. 20. iii. 10. 1 Sam. xxiii. 21. xxiv. 19. xxv. 32, 33. Ps. cxv. 15. unto them, [i]Blessed *be* ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, *even* unto Saul, and have buried him.

k xv. 20. Ps. lvii. 3. Prov. xiv. 22. Matt. v. 7. 2 Tim. i. 16—18. l ix. 3. 7. x. 2. Matt. v. 44. x. 16. Philem. 18, 19. 6 And now [k] the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and [l] I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

m x. 12. Gen. xv. 1. 1 Sam. iv. 9. xxxi. 7. 12. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Eph. vi. 10. * Heb. *the sons of valour.* 7 Therefore now [m] let your hands be strengthened, and be ye [*] valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

n 1 Sam. xiv. 50. xvii. 55. xxvi. 14. † Heb. *the host which was Saul's.* o iii. 7, 8. iv. 5, 6. 1 Chr. viii. 33. ix. 39. *Esh-baal.* p xvii. 26, 27. Gen. xxxii. 2. q Num. xxxii. 1, &c. Josh. xiii. 8—11. Ps. cviii. 8. r Gen. xxx. 13. Num. i. 40. 8 ¶ But [n] Abner the son of Ner, captain of [†] Saul's host, took [o] Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to [p] Mahanaim;

9 And made him king over [q] Gilead, and over the [r] Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel.

s v. 5. 1 Kings ii. 11. 1 Chr. iii. 4. xxix. 27. ‡ Heb. *number of days.* 10 Ish-bosheth Saul's son *was* forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years: but the house of Judah followed David.

11 And [s] the [‡] time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah, was seven years and six months.

t Josh. ix. 3. x. 12. xviii. 25. u 18. viii. 16. xx. 23. 1 Kings i. 7. ii. 28—35. § Heb. *them together.* x Jer. xli. 12. 12 ¶ And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to [t] Gibeon.

13 And [u] Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met [§] together by the [x] pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

y 26. Prov. x. 23 xvii. 14. xx. 18 xxv. 8. xxvi. 18, 19. 14 And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and [y] play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise.

15 Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which *pertained* to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.

16 And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and *thrust* his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called [‖] Helkath-hazzurim, which *is* in Gibeon.

‖ That is, *The field of strong men.*

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the same regard to Saul, as he had done in his lifetime.—But he and three of his sons were now dead; and all Israel knew that Saul's family had been rejected by the Lord, who had appointed David his successor. The tribe of Judah had recognized his title: it was proper that he should act as king: and he could not begin his reign by a more conciliating measure, than by sending a deputation to thank those, who had rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons, and performed the funeral ceremonies over them. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 11—13.) He not only besought the Lord to reward the men of Jabesh, but promised that he also would requite them; being determined to shew all kindness to the friends of his predecessor: and he also encouraged them to expect his firm support against the Philistines and other enemies.

V. 8. Abner was a near relation of Saul, and commander of his armies; and Ish-bosheth was an insignificant person: Abner therefore doubtless intended to give him only the title of king, and to possess the authority himself. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, iii. 6—12. 17—21. 1 *Sam.* xiv. 47—52.) Either Abner had not been present at the battle in Gilboa, or he had escaped by flight.

V. 9. Abner deemed it prudent to fix Ish-bosheth's residence at Mahanaim, east of Jordan, (*Note, Gen.* xxxii. 1, 2,) as most secure both from David and the Philistines; yet all the tribes west of Jordan adhered to him, except the tribe of Judah.—The Ashurites were the tribe of Asher. —The nation in general had rejected the judges, whom God had raised up for them, and had demanded a king: and, in the same rebellious spirit they refused the prince whom the Lord had selected for them, who was a man of approved abilities and character; and preferred the surviving son of their rejected king, though in every respect an improper person. In this, David was a type of Christ, whom Israel would not submit to, though anointed by the Father to be their Prince and Saviour. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* viii. 1—9. *Ps.* ii. *Luke* xix. 11—27. *Acts* vii. 51—53.)

V. 10, 11. For two years Ish-bosheth reigned in peace, and David made no attempts against him: but for the remainder of the seven years and six months, there was war. Abner possessed the authority, and Ish-bosheth was only a nominal king. *Ish-bosheth* signifies *a man of shame.* He is also called Esh-baal. (1 *Chr.* viii. 33. *Note, Judg.* vi. 31, 32.) He was evidently a very inconsiderable and despised person.

V. 12, 13. David was made king by God himself, and had never been subject to Ish-bosheth: yet he did not begin hostilities, but waited to see how God would order things in his favour. When however Abner made war on him, he was not bound to the same measures of mere self-defence, as when persecuted by the LORD's anointed.—Abner marched his army over Jordan, unto Gibeon of Benjamin, doubtless expecting to be effectually supported, in subjecting the tribe of Judah to Ish-bosheth: but David opposed an army to him under the command of Joab, his sister's son; and to the instructions given him we may ascribe the moderation with which he conducted the war. 'For he had sworn to Saul, that he would not cut off his 'seed, and therefore would not willingly engage against 'Ish-bosheth.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 16—22.)

V. 14—16. It is probable that Joab kept upon the de-

17 And there was a very sore battle that day: and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

z 1 Chr. ii. 15, 16. 18 And there were [z] three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel [a] *was as* light of * foot as a † wild roe.

a i. 23. 1 Chr. xii. 8. Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11. Ec. ix. 11.
* Heb. *his feet.*
† Heb. *one of the roes that is in the field.* Ps. xviii. 33. Cant. ii. 17. viii. 14. Hab. iii. 19.

19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he [b] ‡ turned not to the right hand nor to the left, from following Abner.

b 21. Josh. i. 7. xxiii. 6. 2 Kings xxii. 2. Prov. iv. 27.
‡ Heb. *after Abner.*

20 Then Abner looked behind him, and said, *Art* thou Asahel? And he answered, I *am.*

21 And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his [§] armour. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him.

§ Or, *spoil.* Judg. xiv. 19.

22 And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: [c] wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? [d] how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?

c 2 Kings xiv. 10—12. Prov. xxix. 1. Ec. vi. 10.
d iii. 27.

23 Howbeit, he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner, with the hinder end of the spear smote him under [e] the fifth *rib,* that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, *that* as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died, [f] stood still.

e 6. xx. 10.
f xx. 12, 13.

24 Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that *lieth* before Giah, by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.

25 And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill.

26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, [g] Shall the [h] sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? [i] how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?

g 14. Acts vii. 26.
h xi. 25. Is. i. 20. Jer. ii. 30. xii. 12. xlvi. 10. 14. Hos. xi. 6.
i Job xviii. 2. xix. 2. Ps. iv. 2. Jer. iv. 21.

27 And Joab said, *As* [k] God liveth, [l] unless thou hadst spoken, surely then [‖] in the morning the people had * gone up every one from following his brother.

k 1 Sam. xxv. 26. Job xxvii. 2.
l Prov. xv. 1. xvii. 14. xx. 18. xxv. 8. Luke xiv. 31, 32.
‖ Heb. *from the morning.*
* Or, *gone away.*

28 So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

29 And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all [m] Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.

m Cant. ii. 17. *Bether.*

30 And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel.

31 But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, *so that* [n] three hundred and threescore men died.

n iii. 1. 1 Kings xx. 11.

32 And they took up Asahel, and [o] buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which *was in* Beth-lehem. And Joab and his men [p] went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

o 1 Sam. xvii. 58. 1 Chr. ii. 13—16. 2 Chr. xvi. 14. xxi. 1.
p Prov. xxii. 29.

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fensive, and gave Abner no opportunity of attacking him; and that Abner's impatience to engage induced him to give this rash challenge. He expressed himself, as if he only intended to make diversion for the two armies, according to the horrible custom of gladiators in after ages, who gratified the diabolical spectators by murdering each other. Joab, though backward to engage, had not resolution to refuse the challenge. Some think that only the twelve Benjamites were slain: but the words more obviously mean, that all the company were butchered.

V. 18—23. The circumstances, stated in these verses, shew that Abner was not at all to blame in the death of Asahel: for he was constrained to slay him in his own defence; as nothing could satisfy Asahel, but either killing or taking captive the commander of Ish-bosheth's army, for which he was wholly incompetent. (*Notes,* iii. 26, 27. 31.)

Sons of Zeruiah. (18) Zeruiah was David's sister: (1 *Chr.* ii. 16:) and Joab, Abishai, and Asahel were his nephews. (*Notes,* xxiii. 18—24. 1 *Chr.* xi. 6.)

V. 26—29. Abner used very different language when vanquished, than when eager to engage. (*Note,* 14—16.) Now he spoke "of the sword devouring for ever," and of the bitterness which the slaughter would occasion in the event; and recollected that the combatants were brethren. He forgot himself, however, when he threw the blame upon Joab; and he would not have made so moderate a use of victory had he obtained it. Though Joab was deeply exasperated by the death of his brother; yet, in regard to David's inclinations and Israel's advantage, he stopped the pursuit, and gave Abner and his troops an opportunity of retiring to a place of safety.

V. 30—32. (*Marg. Ref.*) The slain of Israel, though

CHAP. III.

David grows stronger, and Ish-bosheth weaker, during the war, 1. Six sons are born to David in Hebron, 2—5. Abner quarrels with Ish-bosheth, and offers his services to David, 6—12. David demands and receives back Michal, 13—16. Abner communes with the Israelites, goes to David, and is feasted by him, and sent away in peace, 17—21. Joab is angry with David, and murders Abner, 22—27. David protests against his wickedness, and denounces a curse upon him, 28—30. David mourns for Abner, 31—39.

NOW there was [a]long war [b] between the house of Saul and the house of

[a] 1 Kings xiv. 3. xv. 16. 32.
[b] Gen. iii. 15. Ps. xiv. 3—5. Matt. x. 35, 36. Gal. v. 17. Eph. vi. 12.

much exceeding that of David's men, were not numerous. This might be owing to the directions given by David, to be as lenient as possible: but the death of Asahel seems to have stopped the pursuers, and greatly to have favoured the escape of the vanquished. (23. *Note*, 26—29.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

If we would possess temporal things with a blessing, we must not eagerly seize upon them, nor be determined by favourable events or carnal counsellors: but we must observe the rules of God's word, and pray for his direction; using those means, and those only, which he has appointed or allowed, and avoiding all evil and "appearance of evil," in our pursuit of them: and then whatever else we fail in, we shall certainly be directed in the way to the kingdom of heaven.—Those who have shared our afflictions should be associated in our prosperity; as they, "who suffer with "Christ, shall also reign with him."—When we are influenced by faith, and the fear and love of God, and act with integrity, kindness, forgiveness, and a desire of peace, we conduct our affairs with the best wisdom.—We are bound to pray for and do good to those who have acted properly, even to our enemies; and to use conciliatory measures towards all men, but especially those who have behaved with gratitude and fidelity, in dangerous circumstances and without prospect of advantage: for such friends are worthy of attention; and they, who have been grateful to one benefactor, will find another to protect them when he is removed. But the believer's progress must be gradual: his faith and graces must be exercised and proved, and his pride subdued, before he can properly endure any kind of prosperity: and for these purposes, the Lord often employs the perverseness of his brethren, without their knowledge or contrary to their intention.—In the professing church few honour those whom the Lord will honour: before Jesus came, and in every succeeding generation, the very builders have rejected such as He intended for eminent situations; and his servants must be conformed to him.—Ambition, jealousy, envy, and other evil passions, cause men to rebel against the word of God: but they generally attempt to conceal their real motives under plausible pretences. The believer's wisdom, however, consists in waiting quietly and silently under injuries, and in leaving God to plead his cause, except it is evidently his duty to be active. But there is a respect due to superior relations, to which equals or inferiors, in similar circumstances, are not entitled.

V. 12—32.

Ambitious and bloody men often consider the dire trade of war, and the slaughter of their fellow-creatures, as a mere diversion; and the lives of millions have been trifled away, out of an irrational point of honour, to the great gratification of Satan, that first great murderer of the bodies and souls of men. From age to age numbers are ambitious of venturing their lives and souls, for the empty hope of being celebrated as valiant men, after they are dead! and from the same motive they mingle the blood of their brethren with their own; though they bear them no resentment, and have received no provocation from them! But what can be more senseless and infatuated than such a conduct?—The sword of civil war, when once unsheathed, is not easily returned into the scabbard; and those who, in their eagerness to engage, make light of such unnatural contests, will perceive in the event that they are bitterness to all concerned.—Men are exceedingly disposed to throw the blame of manifest evil upon others, that they may exculpate themselves: and those arguments which were disregarded as futile when employed against them, will often be deemed very conclusive when urged on their own behalf.—Success, as well as self-love, has a great effect in determining men's judgments: of the evil of *prosperous* attempts they cannot be convinced; yet they can easily perceive those measures to be wrong, which occasion loss or peril to themselves! Such partial decisions should be exposed and rebuked: yet it is always right to exercise clemency to the vanquished, and generosity to the wretched; to spare the shedding of human blood; to alleviate, in every way we possibly can, the sum of human misery; and to strive for peace, especially in the intestine contentions of nations or churches, where the common cause must suffer, which party soever may acquire the ascendancy.—Different endowments qualify us for varied kinds of service, and should be improved for that purpose. But when talents are over-rated, and when men confide and glory in them, they will go beyond the dictates of prudence, as well as out of the line of duty, in order to distinguish themselves; they will despise warning and counsel, as the effect of envy and cowardice; and they will always be shamed, and frequently ruined, by those qualifications in which they prided themselves. Often do men fancy themselves about to seize upon happiness, when death stops their career, and lays them in the dust: and if they will rush forwards in the road to destruction, though plainly warned of their danger, they can blame none but themselves.—Finally, there are many distinctions among us, both during life, and in the disposal of our bodies after death; but in the eternal world no distinction subsists, except between those, "who have served the LORD, and "those who have not served him."

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. The civil war, between David and Ish-bosheth, continued about five years and a half: but it seems to have been conducted with great moderation on the part of David. He, however, gained continually upon the esteem and affections of the people, and in the extent

David: but [c] David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

2 And unto David were [d] sons born in Hebron: and his first born was [e] Amnon, of [f] Ahinoam the Jezreelitess;

3 And his second, [g] Chileab, [h] of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, [i] Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of [j] Talmai king of [k] Geshur;

4 And the fourth [l] Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;

5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that [m] Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.

7 And Saul had a concubine, whose name *was* [n] Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and *Ish-bosheth* said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou [o] gone in unto my father's concubine?

8 Then was Abner [p] very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, *Am* [q] I a dog's head, which against Judah [r] do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to-day with a fault concerning this woman?

9 [s] So do God to Abner, and more also, except [t] as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so I do to him;

10 To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel, and over Judah, [u] from Dan even to Beer-sheba.

11 And he could not answer Abner a word again, [x] because he feared him.

12 ¶ And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, [y] Whose *is* the land? saying *also*, [z] Make thy league with me, and behold, [a] my hand *shall be* with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee.

13 And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, [*] that is, [b] Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring [c] Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.

14 And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver *me* my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

c Esth. vi. 13. Job viii. 7. xvii. 9. Ps. lxxxiv. 7. Prov. iv. 18, 19. Dan. ii. 34, 35. 44, 45. Rev. vi. 2.
d 1 Chr. iii. 1—4.
e xiii. 1—29. Gen. xlix. 3, 4.
f 1 Sam. xxv. 43.
g 1 Chr. iii. 1. *Daniel.*
h 1 Sam. xxv. 3. 42.
i xiii. 20—28. xiv. 24—33. xv. 1—14. xvii. 1—14. xviii. 9—18. 33.
j xiii. 37, 38.
k Deut. iii. 14. Josh. xiii. 13. 1 Sam. xxvii. 8.
l 1 Kings i. 5, &c. ii. 13—25.
m ii. 8, 9. 2 Kings x. 2, 3. 2 Chr. xxv. 8. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. viii. 9, 10. Joel iii. 9—13. Matt. xii. 30.
n xxi. 8—10.
o xii. 8. xvi. 21, 22. 1 Kings ii. 17. 21, 22.
p Ps. lxxvi. 10. Mark vi 18, 19.
q ix. 8 xvi. 9. Deut. xxiii. 18. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. 2 Kings viii. 13.
r 9. 18. v. 2. 18am. xv. 28. Ps. ii. 1—4. Is. xxxvii. 23. Acts ix. 4, 5.
s 35. xix. 13. Ruth i. 17. 1 Sam. iii. 17. xiv. 44. xxv. 22. 1 Kings xix. 2.
t 1 Sam. xv. 28. xvi. 1. 12, 13. xxviii. 17. 1 Chr. xii. 23. Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4. 19, 20.
u xvii. 11. xxiv. 2. Judg. xx. 1. 1 Kings iv. 25.
x 39.
y xix. 6, 7. xx. 1—13.
z Ps. lxii. 9. Luke xvi. 5—8.
a 21. 27. v. 1—3. xix. 14. 41—43. xx. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xi. 1—3. xii. 38—40. Matt. xxi. 8—10.
* Heb. *saying.*
b Gen. xliii. 3. xliv. 23. 26.
c 20—23. 1 Sam. xviii. 20—28. xix. 11—17. 1 Chr. xv. 29.

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of his dominions and the number of his subjects; while Ish-bosheth gradually sunk into insignificance and contempt. (*Notes*, ii. 10, 11. *Prov.* iv. 18, 19.)

V. 2—5. (*Marg. Ref.*) David's motives for multiplying wives must have been *carnal*, in one way or other; and his conduct in this respect proved the occasion of much sin and trouble, in the subsequent part of his life. He had by all his wives no more than six sons, during the seven years that he reigned at Hebron; though probably he had some daughters, who are not mentioned.—Perhaps Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, had been taken prisoner, and proselyted before David married her: though some think David had contracted affinity with the king of Geshur, to strengthen himself against Ish-bosheth.—It is not known, why Eglah only is called "David's wife."

V. 6—10. (*Marg. Ref.*) Perhaps Abner was weary of Ish-bosheth's unsuccessful cause, and was glad of an occasion of seeking preferment in David's service. No doubt he was guilty of the crime charged upon him, which was considered as a claim to the kingdom of a deceased prince. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* ii. 15—25.) Ish-bosheth however was very imprudent to mention it, as he was entirely dependent upon Abner. He proudly disdained to be called to an account by Ish-bosheth, after all his boasted services to the house of Saul; which he had supported, not only against the house of Judah, but against the known appointment of God confirmed by an oath, (17, 18,) and against the convictions of his own conscience. Ambition, and not regard to Ish-bosheth, had hitherto induced him to support his interest: and revenge and policy, not regard to the will of God, at length prevailed with him at this time to join David's party. 'Such is the genius of 'many great courtiers, who are irritated on slight occa-'sions; and rather rule over kings, than are ruled by 'them.' *Pellicanus.*

Dog's head. (8) (*Marg. Ref.*) A proverbial expression for what was deemed worthless and contemptible.—Some explain it to mean, 'As if I were only fit to be set over a company of dogs.'

V. 12. *Whose is the land?*] Abner by this expression seems to have insinuated, that he, not Ish-bosheth, retained the authority: if therefore David would grant him advantageous terms, he would put him in possession of the whole land.—Some however interpret the words, as an acknowledgment of David's title by the appointment of God to the kingdom over all Israel.

V. 13—16. David knew that the kingdom was his, in the purpose of God; it was desirable to sheath the sword of civil war, and to unite all Israel voluntarily under one king; he was not accountable for Abner's secret motives;

15 And Ish-bosheth sent, and took
d 1 Sam. xxv. 44. *Phalti.* her from *her* husband, *even* from [d] Phaltiel the son of Laish.

16 And her husband went with her
* Heb. *going and weeping.* Prov. ix. 17, 18. [*] along weeping behind her to [e] Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go,
e xvi. 5. xvii. 18. xix. 16. 1 Kings ii. 8. return. And he returned.

17 And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye
† Heb. *both yesterday and the third day.* sought for David [†] in times past *to be* king over you:

f 9. 1 Sam. xiii. 14. xv. 28. xvi. 1. 12, 13. John xii. 42, 43. 18 Now then do *it:* [f] for the LORD hath spoken of David, saying, [g] By the
g Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4. 19—23. cxxxii. 17, 18. hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.

19 And Abner also spake in the
h 1 Sam. x. 20, 21. 1 Chr. xii. 29. Ps. lxviii. 27. ears of [h] Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron, all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.

20 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And
i Gen. xxvi. 30. xxxi. 54. Esth. i. 3. [i] David made Abner, and the men that *were* with him, a feast.

21 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and [j] will gather all
j 10. 12. ii. 9. Phil. ii. 21. Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest [k] reign over all that thine
k 1 Kings xi. 37. Ps. xx. 4. heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

22 ¶ And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from *pursuing* a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner *was* not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.

23 When Joab and all the host that *was* with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.

24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, [l] What hast thou done? behold,
l 8. 39. xix. 5—7. Num. xxiii. 11. John xviii. 35. Abner came unto thee: why *is* it *that* thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?

25 Thou knowest Abner the son of
m 27. 2 Kings xviii. 32. *marg.* John vii. 12. 47. Rom. ii. 1. Ner, [m] that he came to deceive thee,
n x. 3. Gen. xlii. 9. 12. 16. Num. xxvii. 17. Deut. xxviii. 6. 1 Sam. xxix. 4—6. Ps. cxxi. 8. Is. xxxvii. 28. [n] and to know thy going out, and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

26 And when Joab was come out

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and doubtless he meant to grant Ish-bosheth very favourable terms, had not his purposes been prevented.—If David had divorced Michal, and she had in consequence been married to another, he must not have received her again: but the separation was violent on both sides. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xviii. 23—27. xxv. 43, 44.) It is probable that her marriage to Phaltiel was a force upon her inclinations: and Phaltiel was very criminal in taking another man's wife, whatever affection he had for her.—David required Michal to be restored, perhaps out of affection for her; or to strengthen his interest by asserting his affinity with the house of Saul, and shewing the value he put upon it; or to shew his regard for the law of God, and to rebuke a man who openly violated it.—As Abner did not deem it politick, at that juncture, directly to take Michal from Phaltiel, David addressed himself to Ish-bosheth, whose sister she was, who complied with his demand; perhaps being willing to be upon amicable terms with him, as he could not overcome him by arms.

V. 17—21. Abner, being satisfied that David would recompense his services, was very active in bringing the elders of the other tribes, and of Benjamin in particular, to receive David as their king.—It seems, that the people in general had desired this, especially when Saul and his sons were slain; but that Abner's great authority had induced them to set up Ish-bosheth: so that now, when Abner entered into the interests of David, he had little difficulty in bringing them over to him. The words which Abner mentions, as spoken by the LORD concerning David, are not found in the preceding history; but the meaning of them is implied in the promises given him. (*Marg. Ref.* f, g.)—Having made all requisite preparations, Abner went to David, and being cordially entertained, and peaceably dismissed, he expected, no doubt, to obtain high preferment under him.

V. 22. *A troop.*] Probably, this was a troop of Philistines, or other enemies, not of Ish-bosheth's forces.

V. 24, 25. Joab and his brother Abishai, David's nephews, had been very faithful and useful to him in his afflictions; and from gratitude and natural affection, he had inadvertently given them almost as great an ascendancy over him, as Abner had over Ish-bosheth: so that he had trusted and feared them too much, and allowed them all the importance which they claimed; and that had emboldened them, especially Joab, to a high degree of presumption. Indeed nothing could well be more affronting than this address of Joab to his prince, whom he grossly charged with the most egregious folly, and then left his presence without waiting for an answer! (*Marg. Ref.*) But it was the language of envy and ambition, as well as of resentment: he supposed that he had missed an opportunity of avenging the death of Asahel, and he feared a formidable rival, if Abner made a league with David; for it is evident he only *pretended* to doubt his sincerity.

V. 26, 27. Joab seems to have recalled Abner, in David's name, without his knowledge; which was very base treatment of him, as if he meant to bring him under suspicion of conniving at the murder: and when Abner,

from David, [o] he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew *it* not.

27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab [p] took him aside in the gate to speak with him [*] quietly, and smote him there [q] under the fifth *rib*, that he died, [r] for the blood of Asahel his brother.

28 ¶ And afterward when David heard *it*, he said, I and my kingdom *are* [s] guiltless before the LORD for ever, from the [t] blood of Abner the son of Ner.

29 Let it [t] rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house: and [u] let there not [t] fail from the house of Joab one that hath [v] an issue, or that is a [x] leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.

30 So Joab and Abishai his brother [y] slew Abner, [z] because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that *were* with him, [a] Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David *himself* followed the [§] bier.

32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king [b] lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner [c] as a fool dieth?

34 Thy [d] hands *were* not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before [‖] wicked men, *so* fellest thou. And all the people [e] wept again over him.

35 And when all the people came to [f] cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, [g] So do God to me and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else, [h] till the sun be down.

36 And all the people took notice *of it*, and it [*] pleased them: [i] as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.

37 For all the people, and all Israel, understood that day, that it was not of

o Prov. xxvi. 23—26. xxvii. 4. 6.
p xx. 9, 10. Deut. xxvii. 24. 1 Kings ii. 5. 32.
* Or, *peaceably*. Jer. xli. 2. 6, 7.
q iv. 6.
r 19—23.
s Gen. ix. 6. Ex. xxi. 12. Num. xxxv. 33. Deut. xxi. 1—9. Matt. xxvii. 24.
t Heb. *bloods*. Gen. iv. 10. *marg*. i. 16. Judg. ix. 24. 56, 57. 1 Kings ii. 31—34. Acts xxviii. 4.
u 1 Sam. ii. 32—36. 2 Kings v. 27. Ps. cix. 8—19.
v Heb. *be cut off*.
x Lev. xv. 2.
x Lev. xiii. 44—46. 2 Kings v. 1.
y Prov. xxviii. 17. Acts xxviii. 4.
z ii. 19—23.
a i. 2. 11. Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34. Josh. vii. 6. Judg. xi. 35. 2 Kings xix. 1.
§ Heb. *bed*. Luke vii. 14.
b i. 12. xviii. 33. 1 Sam. xxx. 4. Job xxxi. 23. Prov. xxiv. 17. Luke xix. 41, 42.
c xiii. 28, 29. Ps. ii. 15, 16. Luke xii. 19, 20.
d Judg. xvi. 21. Ps. cvii. 10, 11.
‖ Heb. *children of iniquity*. Job xxiv. 14. Hos. vi. 9.
e i. 12.
f xii. 17. Jer. xvi. 7. Ez. xxiv. 17. 22.
g See on 9.
h Judg. xx. 26.
* Heb. *was good in their eyes*.
i xv. 6. 13. Ps. lxii. 9. Mark vii. 37. xv. 11—13.

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imprudently indeed, but in confidence, stepped aside to confer with him as the officer of David, he treacherously assassinated him, in violation of every law of hospitality and publick faith. Abishai also was privy to, or concerned in, the base transaction (30). But, while Joab's conduct cannot be too severely reprobated, the wisdom and justice of God are manifest in Abner's punishment. From ambition he had pertinaciously, against his conscience, opposed the declared and known will of God; and was induced by base resentment to desert Ish-bosheth, and offer his services to David. (*Note*, 6—10.) He was therefore thrown aside, as unworthy to raise David to the throne, or to give peace to Israel. Indeed it is probable, that if he had lived, his ambition, talents, influence, and ungodliness would have occasioned further mischief to all parties.

V. 28, 29. (*Marg. Ref.*) David no doubt intended by these protestations, and imprecations upon Joab and his family, to wipe off all suspicion of his own guilt, and to remove it from the land; being perhaps afraid of a revolt of the soldiers, if he proceeded to execute vengeance on the murderer. But he should have remembered, that He, "who stilleth the raging of the sea," is able also "to still "the madness of the people." In so just a cause he ought to have risked all consequences. He was anointed king to administer justice without respect of persons; and he might have been assured of the Lord's support in doing so important a duty: the example would have been very salutary; all impartial persons would have applauded his firmness; perhaps Ish-bosheth's murder would have been prevented, as well as many other crimes and calamities, in the latter part of his reign. But his fear of man in this instance overcame his faith in God, and Joab continued and increased in authority, and in crimes, to the end of David's life: he was at length, however, called to account for them all. (*Notes*, 38, 39. iv. xx. 8—10. *Num.* xxxv. 31—34. 1 *Kings* ii. 5, 6. 28—34.)

V. 30. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, ii. 18—23.

V. 31. Joab was constrained to do penance, so to speak, by appearing as a mourner for Abner: but, as his revenge was gratified, his rival removed, and no heavier punishment inflicted, it is likely he would have but little objection to such a ceremonial. David, however, no doubt intended to lessen Joab's authority with the people, by requiring his attendance: but his military rank and achievements counteracted and rendered ineffectual this design; as might have been foreseen.

V. 33, 34. Abner did not die as criminals do, who are bound, fettered, put to shame, and executed for their offences; nor as a coward fleeing from enemies, or taken prisoner by them; nor as a rash man, who had needlessly run himself into danger: but as an honest man, who is unexpectedly set upon by ruffians, and murdered.—It must have been very mortifying to Joab, to be thus publickly reproached as an assassin.

V. 35. The Israelites had a custom of *inviting*, and *pressing*, the friends of the dead to take food, after the funeral was over; it being supposed that their sorrow would indispose them to it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.

38 And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is [k] a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?

39 And [l] I *am* this day [*] weak though anointed king, and these men, [m] the sons of Zeruiah, *be* [n] too hard for me: [o] the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

k 12. ii. 8. 1 Sam. xiv. 50, 51. Job xxxii. 9.

l Ex. xxi. 12. 2 Chr. xix. 6, 7. Ps. lxxv. 10. ci. 8. Prov. xx. 8. xxv. 5.

* Heb. *tender.* 1 Chr. xxii. 5. Is. vii. 4. *Marg.* Rom. xiii. 4.

m 1 Chr. ii. 15, 16.

n xix. 7.

o 1 Kings ii. 5, 6. 33, 34. Ps. xxviii. 4. lxii. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 14.

V. 38, 39. David, in thus addressing his officers, seems first to have given a reason, why he made such lamentation over Abner; and then to have excused himself for not punishing Joab and Abishai. The near relation, in which Joab and Abishai stood to David; (*Note*, ii. 18;) their steady adherence to him, during Saul's persecutions; the important services which they had rendered him; and the influence, which they had thus acquired among his soldiers and friends, and even with him; combined to render it extremely difficult, and even perilous to oppose and punish them. But the satisfaction, which the people expressed in the former part of his conduct, shewed, that he might notwithstanding very safely have proceeded to execute the divine law on the offenders, in its utmost strictness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The power and policy of Satan, and of wicked men, may struggle against the purposes of God, and the cause of his anointed King, and occasion apparent delays: but his interest is gaining ground, though by unnoticed degrees, and his glory will ere long be displayed throughout the earth.—When he sets up his kingdom in any heart, inbred lusts and outward temptations will powerfully oppose it: but grace will gather strength, and every corruption be weakened continually in the conflict, till the believer is at length sanctified wholly in spirit, soul, and body.—Inconstancy must be incident to selfish men: if their avarice or ambition meets with disappointment in one course, they will turn into another: and sometimes making pretensions to religion seems the readiest way to the gratification of worldly ambition, rapacity, or revenge.—Many are not *above* committing very base crimes, who are too proud to bear reproof, or even the suspicion of being guilty: and while men go on in their sins *apparently without concern*, they are often conscious that they are fighting against God!—Little confidence can be placed in those who affront their Maker, betray their country, or deceive those who confide in them, under the pretence of serving their friends: most certainly they mean to serve their own purposes; and will betray those also who now trust them, when they can obtain advantageous terms for doing it. Yet even by such as act from revenge, ambition, lust, or avarice, the Lord secretly carries on his own designs: but as they intend not to honour him, whatever they profess; so when his ends are answered, he will throw them aside with contempt.—In some cases, and for some purposes, we too may use their help, without enquiring about their motives: but it will require great caution and wisdom, else we shall not escape guilt or reproach.—The re-union of near relatives, who have been involuntarily separated, is right in itself: and it is always our duty to express our regard for the divine law, and to bear testimony against sin.—Though guilt commonly renders men the objects of our deepest compassion; yet no affection can be either truly amiable or allowable, which is not regulated according to the word of God.

V. 17—39.

The bulk of mankind, in all ages, are guided by those who rule or teach them, and address their passions by eloquence or flattery: but let us seek for a sound judgment, a good conscience, and an upright heart; that we may know and adhere to the truth and will of God, amidst all changes.—Those who have deceived others, should endeavour to undeceive them: but good words will do little, while a man continues the slave of his lusts.—In cultivating Christian tempers and performing relative duties, extremes and counterfeits must be guarded against: as zeal and boldness may become furious and contentious; so meekness, and the love of peace may degenerate into imbecility and irresolution; and through undue ascendancy of those inferiors, who ought "to be kept in subjection "with all gravity," shameful things will often be done or connived at, to the disgrace of individuals, and the reproach of the common cause. Every one therefore should know his own place and duties, and exercise the Christian temper *in doing them;* and not make the fear of being ruffled or discomposed an excuse for neglecting them.—Proud men rate their services so high, and are so regardless of relative duties and decorum, that it is not desirable to be under obligations to them: we should however receive every thing as from God; and consider every man as a channel through which the gift is communicated, of whom there is indeed no real necessity, on whom we should rest no dependence, and to whom that gratitude is due, and that alone, which consists with every other duty.—Ungodly men, who cannot brook an affront or a rival, and who deem themselves too powerful for human justice, have little to restrain them from the commission of the most horrid crimes: and the human heart is capable of making the highest professions of friendship subservient to the most cruel murders, and of violating every sacred tie. It is not enough for those, who are invested with authority, to express their abhorrence of such crimes and criminals, or their compassion for those who suffer by them: but all partialities, relative affections, and interested considerations should be laid aside, and condign punishment inflicted; that "others may hear, and fear, and do "no more such wickedness:" and in every state, the executive authority should possess power sufficient to punish the proudest subject, lest blood be imputed to the land. As our lives are so exposed on every side; and as he most emphatically "dieth as a fool," who dies in his sins; we should be careful to be always ready: for all the honour or commendations, that men can bestow on us after our decease, will not affect or amend the state of the departed soul.—Alas, what are the imagined advantages of royalty? The king "after God's own heart" finds as much cause for lamentation and complaint, as when a poor fugitive!

CHAP. IV.

Ish-bosheth and Israel are troubled at Abner's death, 1. After Saul's death, changes took place, and Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, was lamed, 2—4. Rechab and Baanah slay Ish-bosheth, and bring his head to David, 5—8. David causes them to be put to death, and Ish-bosheth's head to be buried, 9—12.

AND when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, [a] his hands were feeble, [b] and all the Israelites were troubled.

2 And Saul's son had two men *that were* [c] captains of bands; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the [*] other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for [d] Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin:

3 And the Beerothites [e] fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.)

4 And [f] Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son *that was* lame of *his* feet. He was five years old when [g] the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name *was* [h] Mephibosheth.

5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, [i] went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, who [j] lay on a bed at noon.

6 And they came thither into the midst of the house, *as though* they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him [k] under the fifth *rib:* and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

7 For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and [l] took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night.

8 And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, thine enemy, which [m] sought thy life; and [n] the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

9 And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother the sons of Rim-

a xvii. 2. Ezra iv. 4. Neh. vi. 9. Is. xiii. 7. xxxv. 3. Jer. vi. 24. l. 43. Zeph. iii. 16.
b Matt. ii. 2, 3.
c iii. 22. 2 Kings v. 2, vi. 23.
* Heb. second.
d Josh. ix. 17. xviii. 25.
e 1 Sam. xxxi. 7. Neh. xi. 33.
f ix. 3.
g 1 Sam. xxix. 1. 11. xxxi. 1—10.
h 1 Chr. viii. 34. ix. 40. *Meribbaal.*
i 2 Chr. xxiv. 25. xxv. 27. xxxiii. 24.
j xi. 2. 1 Kings xvi. 9. Prov. xxiv. 33, 34. 1 Thes. v. 3—7.
k ii. 23. iii. 27. xx. 10.
l 1 Sam. xvii. 54. xxxi. 9. 2 Kings x. 6, 7. Matt. xiv. 11. Mark vi. 28, 29.
m 1 Sam. xviii. 11 xix. 2—1 . 15. xx. 1. xxiii. 15. xxv. 29. Matt. ii. 20.
n xviii. 19. 31. xxii. 48. Luke xviii. 7, 8. Rev. vi. 10. xviii. 20.

But he who now reigns upon the throne of David, has a kingdom of a nobler kind: whatever he does is noticed by and pleases all his willing people: and he will bring them all to share his glory and joy. Many however are outwardly serviceable to his cause, who only seek *themselves* in all they do, and from time to time disgrace it with their crimes: these may escape for a season, but at length they shall be numbered with his enemies, and shall perish for ever.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. Perhaps Ish-bosheth had not before been certainly informed, that Abner had deserted to David: or, both he and the people hoped by Abner's means to have obtained better terms. But by his death their affairs were left in a most unsettled and dangerous situation; and they had no person in whom they could place confidence, either as leading them to battle, or as negotiating a treaty.

V. 2—4. Beeroth was one of the cities of Gibeon, (*Josh.* ix. 17,) and it was allotted to Benjamin; (*Josh.* xviii. 25;) but when Saul's army was routed, and he and his sons slain, the inhabitants of Beeroth deserted their city, and went to sojourn at Gittaim; where they remained, when this history was written. (*Neh.* xi. 33. *Note,* 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 7.) At the same time Mephibosheth fell and was lamed.—These facts seem to have been recorded, to illustrate the consternation which followed the death of Saul and his sons: and perhaps Mephibosheth's youth and lameness emboldened Rechab and Baanah to murder Ish-bosheth; as Mephibosheth was the next heir of Saul, and the avenger of blood. (*Note, Num.* xxxv. 11—15.)

V. 5. Ish-bosheth had enough to employ him in this emergency, without sleeping on his bed at noon. But he appears to have been an inactive, self-indulgent man. It was indeed, and is still, a custom in the east countries, to retire for sleep about noon; that is, for such as live in ease and luxury, not for others, except in very sultry regions. The Scripture gives no intimation that this was a common practice in Israel. (*Marg. Ref.* j.)

V. 6, 7. Rechab and Baanah, as captains of bands, had access to some granary attached to Ish-bosheth's house, whence their soldiers had provisions; and under this pretence, without being suspected, they entered into his apartments and stabbed him, in that part of the body where a wound was known to be most certainly fatal. (*Marg. Ref.* k.)—And when he was thus slain, they cut off his head also, and escaped.

V. 8. These men entirely mistook David's character, as if he had such a thirst for revenge, that he would reward any villainy by which it could be accomplished: and they presumed that they had performed the will of God, in this complicated treason and parricide! The LORD had indeed avenged his servant of his enemies: but neither David, nor David's LORD, had commissioned them to murder their prince, whom they professed to serve. (*Note,* iii. 6—10.)

V. 9, 10. *Redeemed,* &c. (9) (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Gen.* xlviii. 16.) By using this language, David reminded all

mon the Beerothite, and said unto them, *As* the LORD liveth, [o] who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity,

10 When [p] one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, ([*] thinking to have brought good tidings,) I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, [†] who *thought* that I would have given him a reward for his tidings:

11 How much more, [q] when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed! shall I not therefore now [r] require his blood of your hand, and take you away [s] from the earth?

12 And David commanded his young men, and they [t] slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and [u] hanged *them* up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried *it* [x] in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

o Gen. xlviii. 16. 1 Kings i. 29. Ps. xxxi. 5—7. xxxiv. 22. lxxi. 23. ciii. 4. cvi. 10. cvii. 2. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.
p i. 2—16.
* Heb. *he was in his own eyes, as a bringer, &c.*
† Or, *which was the reward I gave him for his tidings.*
q 1 Kings ii. 32. Prov. xxv. 26. Hab. i. 4. 12. 1 John iii. 12.
r iii. 27. 39. Gen. ix. 5, 6. Ex. xxi. 12. Num. xxxv. 31—34. Ps. ix. 12.
s Gen. iv. 11. vi. 13. vii. 23. Ex. ix. 15. Ps. cix. 15. Prov. ii. 22. Jer. x. 11.
t i. 15. Ps. lv. 23. Matt. vii. 2.
u xxi. 9. Deut. xxi. 22, 23.
x iii. 32.

CHAP. V.

The elders of the tribes, at Hebron, anoint David king over all Israel, 1—3. His age at the beginning of his reign, and the length of his reign, 4, 5. He takes Zion from the Jebusites, and calls it the city of David, 6—10. Hiram sends him timber and workmen to build him a house, 11. He prospers, and takes more wives; and eleven sons are born to him, 12—16. By divine direction, he gains two victories over the Philistines, 17—25.

THEN [a] came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, [b] we *are* thy bone and thy flesh.

2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that [c] leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, [d] Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be [e] a captain over Israel.

a 1 Chr. xi. 1—3. xii. 23—40.
b xix. 13. Gen. xxix. 14. Deut. xvii. 15. Judg. ix. 2. Eph. v. 30. Heb. ii. 14.
c Num. xxvii. 17. 1 Sam. xviii. 13. 16. xxv. 28. Is. lv. 4.
d vii. 7. 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 13. xxv. 30. Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72. Is. xl. 11. Ez xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24, 25. Mic. v. 4. Matt. ii. 6. *marg.* John x. 3, 4. 11.
e 1 Sam. ix. 16. xiii. 14. 2 Kings xx. 5. Heb. ii. 10.

who heard him, that in his most extreme dangers, he had neither used treachery or cruelty himself, nor allowed his men to use them. It must therefore be evident, that now the Lord had rescued and prospered him, he had no temptation to countenance such traitors as Rechab and Baanah.

V. 11, 12. (*Note*, i. 13—16.) Whatever Ish-bosheth's character was before God, he was righteous *as to his murderers*, having done them no injury, and given them no provocation: so that in slaying him, they "shed innocent "blood," from the basest motives, and with the greatest aggravations: and David, as God's vicegerent, most justly executed vengeance upon them for it. (*Note*, *Ex.* xxiii. 6—9.)—It would have been well, if he had been equally decisive in the case of Joab: that there might have been no appearance of partiality, and no hope of impunity to any criminal. (*Note*, iii. 28, 29.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Innumerable are the perils, to which our tender years are exposed: and we owe much gratitude both to God and to our parents, if preserved during that period, from losing our limbs or senses, or contracting harms, which would have rendered our whole lives uncomfortable to ourselves and others. Parents too should take occasion from this reflection, not only to be very attentive to their offspring, but by prayer to commit them continually to the Lord's keeping.—Every thing will concur in forwarding the accomplishment of God's word, whether of promise or of wrath, when the appointed time approaches: on one hand there can be no *failure*; on the other, no *escape*.—Wretched indeed are they, who are engaged in undertakings, in which none can serve them without opposing the known will of God! The more exalted their station, the greater is their danger: for the very men, in whom they repose their chief confidence, are destitute of principle, serve them only for gain, and will betray or murder them when their mercenary schemes require it.—Alas! what numbers sink from self-indulgence and carnal security, into unsuspected and inevitable destruction!—Many are conscious, that *they* should be pleased with villainy, provided it conduced greatly to their profit: thus they are led confidently to conclude, that others will be so too; and as numbers are rewarded for villainous actions, they expect the same. Persons in authority should therefore decidedly manifest, that they will not be served by such base characters, but will, instead of rewarding, severely punish their crimes.—The servants of God are encouraged by the Scriptures, and by their own experience, to trust him in the path of duty; and confidently to expect that he will redeem them from all adversity, without countenancing sin, any more than committing it, for that purpose: they will also pity and pray for, and behave kindly to, their opposers, and speak as favourably of them as they can; and on no account become their own avengers.—Finally, the son of David will requite those, who pretend to serve his cause by frauds, treasons, massacres, and persecutions, with far more dreadful vengeance, than was inflicted by David on Ish-bosheth's murderers.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xii. 23—40.) When Abner and Ish-bosheth were dead, the tribes of Israel were left "as sheep without a shepherd:" they had no inclination to set up another of Saul's family in opposition to David: and having observed the prosperous state of Judah under his government, they began to entertain higher and more honourable thoughts of him. Of their own accord therefore they applied to him, by their elders, to take the government upon him; and as a reason why he should forgive their ill-usage, they pleaded their near relation to him, being his brethren, the descendants of Abraham,

3 So [f] all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David [g] made a league with them in Hebron [h] before the LORD: and they [i] anointed David king over Israel.

4 David *was* [k] thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned [l] forty years.

5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah [m] seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

6 ¶ And the king and his men [n] went to [o] Jerusalem unto [p] the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, [q] Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: [*] thinking, David cannot come in hither.

7 Nevertheless David took the strong hold of [r] Zion: [s] the same *is* the city of David.

8 And David said on that day, [t] Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of David's soul, *he shall be chief and captain.* [†] Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

9 So David dwelt in [‡] the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about [u] Millo and inward.

10 And David [‡] went on and grew great; and [v] the LORD God of hosts *was* with him.

11 ¶ And [x] Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and [§] masons: and [y] they built David an house.

12 And [z] David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for [a] his people Israel's sake.

f 1 Chr. xi. 3.
g 1 Sam. xi. 15. 2 Kings xi. 17. 2 Chr. xxiii. 16.
h Judg. xi. 11. 1 Sam. xxiii. 18.
i ii. 4. 1 Sam. xvi. 13.
k Luke iii. 23.
l 1 Chr. xxvi. 31. xxix. 27.
m ii. 11. 1 Kings ii. 11. 1 Chr. iii 4.
n 1 Chr. xi. 4—9.
o Gen. xiv. 18. Josh. x. 3. Judg. i. 8.
p Josh. xv. 63. xviii. 28. Judg. i. 21. xix. 10—12.
q Jer. xxxvii. 10.
* Or, *saying, David shall not.*
r Ps. ii. 6. ix. 11. xlviii. 12. li. 18. lxxvii. 2. cxxxii. 13. Is. xii. 6. lix. 20. Mic. iv. 2. Rom. ix. 33. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1.
s vi. 10. 1 Kings ii. 10. iii. 1. viii. 1. 1 Chr. xi. 7. 2 Chr. v. 2. xxiv. 16.
t Josh. xv. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xvii. 25.
† Or, *Because they had said, even the lame and the blind, he shall not come into the house.*
u Judg. ix. 6. 20. 1 Kings ix. 15. 24. xi. 27. 2 Chr. xxxii. 5.
‡ Heb. *went going and growing.* iii. 1. Job xvii. 9. Prov. iv. 18. Is. ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44. Luke ii. 52.
v Gen. xxi. 22. Ps. xlvi. 7. 11. Is. viii. 9, 10. Rom. viii. 31.
B. C. 1043.
x 1 Kings v. 8, 9. 1 Chr. xiv. 1.
§ Heb. *hewers of the stone of the wall.*
y vii. 2. 1 Kings vii. 1—12. Ec. ii. 4—11. Jer. xxii. 14—16.
z vii. 16. 1 Chr. xiv. 2.
a 1 Kings x. 9. 2 Chr. ii. 11. Esth. iv. 14. Is. i. 25—27. Dan. ii. 30.

Isaac, and Jacob. (*Marg. Ref.* b.) They now praised his former services, which before they had overlooked; and they acknowledged the Lord's appointment of him, which before they had resisted. They therefore desired to put themselves under his protection: and hoped that he would rule over them in tenderness and equity, for their safety and comfort, as a shepherd feeds his flock; as well as that he would lead them forth to victory over their enemies. This is introduced, as a part of the Lord's commission to him, when he appointed him to the kingdom; by which they conveyed the intimation in the most unexceptionable and efficacious manner.—This is the first time good rulers are spoken of, under the emblem of shepherds, which is afterwards very common, and is especially applied to Christ our King. (*Marg. Ref.* d.) But wicked rulers are characterized as lions, bears, wolves, and leopards. (*Notes, Prov.* xxviii. 15, 16. *Ez.* xix. 2—9. xxii. 27, 28. *Dan.* vii. 2—8.)

V. 3. It is probable, that David agreed to an act of indemnity for past offences, and engaged to rule over his people according to the law of God; and they submitted to his authority according to the same rule.—On this occasion he was anointed a third time, probably by the high priest. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4, 5. (*Marg. Ref.* m.) If David was twenty years of age, when Samuel anointed him, Saul reigned ten years after that transaction, but it is not certainly known how long he had reigned before. (*Note, Acts* xiii. 21.)

V. 6—8. The greater part of Jerusalem lay in the lot of Benjamin, and had hitherto been possessed by the Jebusites. (*Notes, Josh.* xv. 63. *Judg.* i. 8. 21.) But as soon as Israel had submitted to David, he marched to dispossess them. The citadel, called "the Strong hold of "Zion," was fortified by nature and art, and the Jebusites set him at defiance. Confiding in its strength, they told him that blind and lame men could defend it against his army; and perhaps in derision, placed a company of invalids upon it, who insulted David and his soldiers: for the last clause (8) may be translated "They had said, even "the blind and the lame, that he shall not come into the "house." But David commanded his men, "when they "smote the Jebusites, to throw down the blind and the "lame into the gutter," or *ditch*, as it might be rendered; which, under the conduct of Joab, they effected accordingly. These were said to be "hated of David's soul;" for they were devoted Canaanites and idolaters, if not blasphemers of God.—But, by "the blind and the lame," some understand the *idols* of the Jebusites, which David's soldiers had thus called in contempt: yet their worshippers so confided in them, that they defied David to take the citadel while they kept their station, or by any means to remove them; and declared, that if he did, they would no longer admit them into their temples or houses.—David, however, got possession: and near to this mount the ark was placed, and the temple was built; and the residence of the family of David was fixed. (*Notes,* 11. vi. 1. 17. *Ps.* cxxii. cxxxii. 13—18.)

V. 9. *Millo* seems to have been a place of publick convention, all around which David erected such buildings, as were proper for rendering the city the seat of government. (*Note, Judg.* ix. 16—20. *v.* 20. 2 *Kings* xii. 20, 21.)

V. 11. Hiram sent to congratulate David on his accession to the throne, and to enter into a league with him; and as Hiram's subjects were better architects than the Israelites, they were employed in building David a palace, suited to his exalted station. Though Saul affected the splendour of royalty, yet he did not build a royal palace; but David built one, perhaps as a token of his assured belief that the kingdom would be continued in his family.

V. 12. David was sensible, that God had advanced him

13 And [b] David took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David.

14 And these *be* [c] the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem: [*] Shamuah, and Shobab, and [d] Nathan, and [e] Solomon,

15 Ibhar also, and [f] Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

16 And Elishamah, and [g] Eliada, and [h] Eliphalet.

17 ¶ But [i] when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard *of it*, and went down to [k] the hold.

18 The Philistines also came, and spread themselves in [l] the valley of Rephaim.

19 And David [m] enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And [n] the LORD said unto David, Go up; for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

20 And David came to [o] Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place [†] Baal-perazim.

21 And there they left their images, and [p] David and his men [‡] burned them.

22 And the Philistines [q] came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

23 And when David [r] enquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; *but* [s] fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.

24 And let it be, when thou hearest [t] the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then [u] thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

25 And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from [x] Geba until thou come to [y] Gazer.

b Gen. xxv. 5, 6. Deut. xvii. 17. 1 Chr. xiv. 3—7. 2 Chr. xi. 18—21. xiii. 21.
c 1 Chr. iii. 5—9. xiv. 4.
* Or, *Shimea.* 1 Chr. iii. 5.
d xii. 1—7. Luke iii. 31.
e xii. 24, 25. Matt. i. 6.
f Or, *Elishama.* 1 Chr. iii. 6. xiv. 5.
g Or, *Beeliada.* 1 Chr. xiv. 7.
h *Eliphelet.* 1 Chr. iii. 8.
B. C. 1046.
i 1 Chr. xiv. 8, 9. Ps. ii. 1—5. Rev. xi. 15—18.
k xxiii. 14. 1 Chr. xi. 16.
l xxiii. 13. Gen. xiv. 5. 1 Chr. xi. 15. Is. xvii. 5.
m ii. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2. 4. xxx. 7, 8.
n 23. Judg. xx. 28. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. xxx. 8. 1 Kings xxii. 6. 15—23. Prov. iii. 6.
o Is. xxviii. 21.
† That is, *The plain of breaches.*
p Deut. vii. 5, 25. 1 Sam. v. 2—6. 1 Chr. xiv. 11, 12. Is. xxxvii. 19.
‡ Or, *took them away.* Is. xlvi. 1, 2. Jer. xliii. 12.
q 1 Kings xx. 22. 1 Chr. xiv. 13.
r 19.
s Josh. viii. 2. 7. 1 Chr. xiv. 14. Matt. ix. 29, 30. Mark viii. 23—25. John ix. 6, 7.
t 2 Kings vii. 6.
u Judg. iv. 14 vii. 15. 1 Sam xiv. 9—12. 1 Chr. xiv. 15. Phil. ii. 11, 12.
x 1 Chr. xiv. 16. *Gibeon.*
y Josh. xvi. 10.

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to the kingdom, not so much that he might be honourable and prosperous, as that he might promote the temporal and eternal interests of his people. 'This is the greatest 'grace of a king, that he certainly believes himself to be 'made a king by God, for the sake of the people: and let 'him often call to mind, the people were not created or or-'dained by God for the king.' *Conradus Pellicanus in Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13—16. (*Marg. Ref.*) It was customary for kings to multiply wives, and to strengthen their interest by many alliances; and to this David very improperly conformed. (*Notes*, iii. 2—5. xi. 1—5. xv. 16. xvi. 20—23. 1 *Kings* xi. 1—8.) Some names are mentioned in Chronicles, not found here; perhaps the sons there mentioned died in infancy. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* iii. 1—9.)

V. 17, 18. The Philistines, satisfied with the advantages which they had enjoyed since the death of Saul, had been restrained from molesting the Israelites during their civil dissensions: but they invaded them as soon as they were united again under one king. Thus, by beginning war, they delivered David from any embarrassment, about warring against those who had previously protected him. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxvii. 1—3. xxviii. 1, 2.) He immediately therefore marched to some fortified place, where he might check their incursions, and consult what measures to take. —The valley of Rephaim was not far from Jerusalem. (*Marg. Ref.* l.)

V. 19. *Notes*, ii. 1—3. *Ex.* xxviii. 30. *Num.* xxvii. 21.

V. 20. Baal-perazim properly signifies the *lord of breaches.* By some evident interposition the Lord himself fought against the Philistines, like the breaking forth of impetuous torrents, which bear all down before them. David therefore gave the place the name of Baal-perazim, by way of ascribing to God all the honour of the victory.

V. 21. The Philistines expected protection from their images, but they became a prey to the conquerors. When the Philistines had taken the ark of the Lord, he by grievous judgments constrained them to restore it: (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* v, vi:) but the Israelites burnt the idols of the Philistines without either fear or hurt. (1 *Chr.* xiv. 12. *Note*, *Deut.* vii. 25, 26.)

V. 24. When David heard a sound among the mulberry-trees, like the marching of an army, denoting the assistance of angels, or of God himself; he was directed to bestir himself. Sometimes the Lord commands and employs man's concurrence, and sometimes he rejects it; that we may neither be self-important nor negligent.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Mercies, long waited for in faith and patience, will be conferred in the most reputable and comfortable manner: nor shall any go unrewarded, who persist in refusing to employ sinful means for their own deliverance, or advancement.—Civil government is fixed on its firmest basis, and is likely to produce the most permanent blessings, when it is regulated by wholesome laws; marking out duties, prerogatives, and privileges to the prince and people, and reciprocally ratified, as in the presence of the Lord, by the most solemn assurances, with a view to his authority, appointments, and commandments.—We are all brethren;

CHAP. VI.

David fetches the ark from Kirjath-jearim on a new cart, 1—5. Uzzah is smitten, David is disconcerted, and the ark is left with Obed-edom, whose house is blessed on account of it, 6—11. David brings the ark to Zion with sacrifices; and dances before it, for which Michal despises him, 12—16. He places it in a tabernacle with joy and feasting, 17—19. Michal, deriding David for his religious joy, continues childless, 20—23.

[a] v. 1. 1 Kings viii. 1. 1 Chr. xiii. 1—4. Ps. cxxxii. 1—6.

[a] AGAIN, David gathered together all *the* chosen *men* of Israel, thirty thousand.

2 And David arose, and went with all the people, that *were* with him, [b] from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, [*] whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts, that [c] dwelleth *between* the cherubims.

3 And they [†] set the ark of God upon [d] a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that *was* in [‡] Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.

[b] Josh. xv. 9, 10. 60. *Baalah, Kirjath jearim.* 1 Sam. vii. 1. 1 Chr. xiii. 6.

[*] Or, *at which the name, even the name of the LORD of hosts was called upon.* Lev. xxiv. 11—16. Is. xlvii. 4. liv. 5.

[c] Ex. xxv. 18—22. 1 Sam. iv. 4. 1 Kings viii. 6, 7. Ps. lxxx. 1. 1 Pet. i. 12.

[†] Heb. *made the ark of God to ride.*

[d] Num. iv. 5—12. vii. 9. 1 Sam. vi. 7.

[‡] Or, *the hill.*

" of one bone, and of one flesh;" and none ought to oppress or to be cruel to another: princes should use clemency, and tenderly watch over their people, like shepherds over their flocks; and the people should gratefully acknowledge the blessings which they enjoy under their government, honour the authority of God in them, and yield them willing submission in all things lawful.—Thus Jesus became our Brother, assumed and inhabits our nature, that he might be our Prince and Saviour: and thus the humbled sinner takes encouragement from this endearing relation; applies for his salvation, voluntarily submits to his kind authority, and craves his powerful protection.—The false confidences of ungodly men will assuredly deceive them, and their proud boastings will hasten their ruin: while those, with whom is the LORD God of hosts, go forward and grow great. In the day of his power Satan's strong-hold, the human heart, is converted into " an habitation of God through the Spirit;" and into a throne, on which the Son of David rules, and brings every thought into obedience to himself. May he thus come and claim and cleanse each of our hearts; and having destroyed every idol, may he dwell and reign there for ever. (*Notes, Gal.* ii. 17—21. *Eph.* ii. 19—22. iii. 14—19.)—It is in mercy to a nation, when wise and righteous persons are exalted to authority: and every advancement or endowment which we receive, should remind us, that the Lord alone has conferred the distinction; and that he did it, that we might be useful to his people by the talents entrusted to us. We have therefore cause to be thankful and watchful; and to pray earnestly for grace sufficient to enable us duly to improve them: (*Note,* 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14. *P. O.* 1—15:) nay, we have double cause for humility, when we reflect how little we do so.—Alas! even good men are apt to grow secure and self-indulgent in prosperity, and to sanction by their example those abuses, which they should oppose or repress: and all our returns for the Lord's mercies are deeply tinged with ingratitude.—When the church of God begins to prosper, its enemies will generally exert themselves: and the great exemption from all kinds of persecution, and the *seeming* friendliness of the world to religion, with which many are pleased, arise from the *policy* of the enemy, who determines to let men alone with their empty notions, forms, and profession.—In our spiritual warfare, we must decidedly declare for the Lord, though against relatives or benefactors; and if we consult him, he will teach us to do it without even the appearance of evil.—All those objects, which men idolize, will prove a useless encumbrance to them, when the Lord shall arise to execute judgment on his enemies: and when the wicked shall be swept into destruction, as with an impetuous flood, the earth and all its contents shall be burnt up. But those who depend upon the Lord, and act according to his directions, and are ready to give him all the praise, will doubtless prevail against all enemies, add one victory to another, and at length be admitted into his presence, to see and adore their before invisible Helper.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. In a short time after David had obtained two victories over the Philistines, he formed the plan of bringing the ark to Jerusalem; and he collected thirty thousand of the chief, or most valiant men, in order to put honour upon the ark, which had been so long left in obscurity.

V. 2. Baale, or Baalim, or Baalah, (the two former masculine, the latter feminine,) was another name for Kirjath-jearim. (*Josh.* xv. 9. 60. 1 *Chr.* xiii. 6. *Notes,* 1 *Sam.* vii. 1, 2. 17. 1 *Chr.* xiii. 1—4.)—The terms used in speaking of the ark are very expressive of reverence: " The ark " of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD " of hosts, that dwelleth between the cherubims." The name of JEHOVAH Sabbaoth, the LORD of hosts, was, as it were, affixed to the ark, because it was the most honoured external representation of his invisible glory: and when the ark was in its proper place, in the holy of holies, the Lord manifested his presence, by the visible glory above it, as the Protector and Glory of Israel. It especially typified Christ, and his merits and mediation, in which the name of JEHOVAH, and all his glorious excellences are harmoniously displayed; while all his hosts of angels, (represented by " the cherubim,") desire to look down into those mysteries, or to be employed by him who is the Saviour and Glory of his redeemed people, and whom sinners now approach upon a mercy-seat. (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 10—22. *Ps.* lxxx. 1. 1 *Pet.* i. 10—12.)

V. 3. David and the Israelites seem to have taken the Philistines for their precedent on this occasion, (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* vi. 2—16,) instead of consulting the law of God! (*Note, Num.* vii. 4—9.) It is probable, that Abinadab and Eleazar his son were dead before this time, as the ark had continued at Kirjath-jearim at least seventy years; (*Note,* 1 *Sam.* vii. 1, 2;) but Uzzah and Ahio, two other sons or

4 And they brought it out of [e] the house of Abinadab, which *was* at Gibeah, [*] accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And [f] David, and all the house of Israel, played before the LORD on all manner of *instruments made of* fir-wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

6 And when they came to [g] Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah [h] put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen [†] shook *it*.

7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah: and [i] God smote him there for *his* [‡] error; and there he died by the ark of God.

8 And David was [k] displeased, because the LORD had [§] made a breach upon Uzzah; and he called the name of the place [‖] Perez-uzzah to this day.

9 And David was [l] afraid of the LORD that day, and said, [m] How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

10 So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David; but David carried it aside into the house of [n] Obed-edom the [o] Gittite.

11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and [p] the LORD blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

[e] 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xiii. 7.
[*] Heb. *with*.
[f] 1 Sam. x. 5. xvi. 16. 2 Kings iii. 15. 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xv. 10—24. Ps. xlvii. 5. lxviii. 25—27. cl. 3—5. Dan. iii. 5. 7. 10. 15. Am v. 23. vi. 5.
[g] 1 Chr. xiii. 9. *Chidon's.*
[h] Num. iv. 15. 19, 20.
[†] Or, *stumbled*.
[i] Lev. x. 1—3. 1 Sam. vi. 19. 1 Chr. xiii. 10. xv. 2. 13. 1 Cor. xi. 30—32.
[‡] Or, *rashness*.
[k] 1 Chr. xiii. 11, 12. Jon. iv. 1. 9.
[§] Heb. *broken*.
[‖] That *is*, *The breach of Uzzah*.
[l] Num. xvii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. v. 10, 11. vi. 20. Ps. cxix. 120. Is. vi. 5. Luke v. 8, 9. 1 Pet. iii. 6.
[m] 1 Kings viii. 27. 1 Chr. xiii. 11, 12. Job xxv. 6, 6.
[n] 1 Chr. xiii. 13, 14. xv. 18. xvi. 5. xxvi. 4—8.
[o] iv. 3. xv. 19. xviii. 2.
[p] Gen. xxx. 27. xxxix. 5. 23. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10.

descendants of Abinadab, had succeeded in attendance upon the ark; and they now undertook to drive the cart upon which it was conveyed. There is no proof that they were Levites; though some expositors think they were: and if any of the priests attended, they seem not to have taken an active part in the service. It does not even appear, that the ark was covered previously to its removal, according to the law! (*Notes, Num.* iv. 5, 6.)—*Gibeah* signifies *the hill*, and means that division of the city, in which the house of Abinadab stood.

V. 5. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xv. 16—24.

V. 6, 7. When the oxen shook the ark, or stumbled, (*marg.*) Uzzah, fearing lest the ark should fall, apparently with a good intention, laid hold of it: yet "God smote "him for his error." But in what did his error consist? On this question, it should be remembered, that even the Kohathites, who were appointed to carry the ark, were forbidden to *touch it* on pain of death: that is, it must first be covered by the priests, and then the Kohathites must carry it by the staves only, and not touch the ark itself: (*Num.* iv. 15:) but Uzzah, who certainly was not a priest, laid hold on the ark, which probably was not covered. It may be supposed, that neither Eleazar, nor Uzzah, nor Ahio, had thus touched it during all the years it had remained with them; and that it was placed on the cart by the staves only: and though it seemed necessary for Uzzah to lay hold of it; yet the necessity arose from the method of conveyance, which some think Uzzah had proposed, and he was therefore answerable for all the consequences. It is probable, that he had become too familiar with this sacred symbol of the Lord's especial presence: and that he presumed on the services which he and his family had rendered in taking care of it, when generally neglected; as if that had given him a sanctity equal or even superior to that of the priests; so that he and his brother seem to have taken the principal management of the business on themselves. Whereas, when all orders of men concurred in shewing honour to the ark, they ought to have declined any further interference; and referred the care of it to the priests, on whom it properly devolved. No doubt the Lord saw, in Uzzah's conduct, what indicated irreverence and presumption; not wholly unlike the sin of Nadab and Abihu, when they offered strange fire before him: and therefore he smote him, perhaps in a similar manner, and for the same reasons. (*Notes, Lev.* x. 1—5. 1 *Sam.* vi. 19—21.) But though he was singled out to be made an example of, his death was a pointed rebuke and warning to David, to the priests, and to all Israel.

V. 8, 9. David's heart was upright, and his zeal and love very fervent: but there were many things very faulty in his frame of mind, as well as irregular in his proceedings, on this occasion. He seems to have been possessed with some measure of self-complacency, on account of the important service which he was performing, in honouring the ark after it had been so long neglected; and to have thought that the goodness of the work would counterbalance a degree of informality in the manner of doing it, and ensure to him comfort and commendation: and he had not taken time to examine the law of God, or to consult the priests, how this good work ought to be performed. When therefore the event turned out contrary to his expectations, he was greatly disconcerted, and his lively religious affections were extinguished. He was *angry*, (so the word signifies,) that occasion had been given for this unexpected stroke; though it does not appear with whom he was displeased, and certainly his anger implied a degree of rebellion against the dispensation of God in smiting Uzzah! A measure of servile fear succeeded to zeal, hope, and joy: so that he would not venture to bring the ark any nearer to him, lest he should be destroyed in like manner. (*Notes, Num.* xvii. 12, 13. *Josh.* vii. 6—9. 1 *Sam.* vi. 19—21. 1 *Chr.* xv. 12—14. *Ps.* cxix. 120. *Is.* vi. 5.)

V. 10, 11. Until David had further considered the matter, and come to some determination what to do with the ark, it was carried to the house of Obed-edom; who with humble confidence was ready to receive it, notwithstanding the example of Uzzah. There it abode three months, and the whole multitude returned home, and left the business unfinished. Obed-edom was a Levite; (*Marg. Ref.* n;) and he is called a Gittite, perhaps from Gath-rimmon, the place of his birth, or of his abode. (*Josh.* xxi. 24, 25.) All things relating to his health, family, and cir-

12 And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

13 And it was *so*, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

14 And David danced before the LORD with all *his* might; and David *was* girded with a linen ephod.

15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

17 And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD.

18 And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.

19 And he dealt among all the people, *even* among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece *of flesh*, and a flagon *of wine*. So all the people departed every one to his house.

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was

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cumstances, prospered in so extraordinary a manner, while the ark was with him, that every one noticed it.—Doubtless Obed-edom behaved to the ark with due reverence. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12, 13. When David heard of the extraordinary blessing, bestowed on Obed-edom because of the ark of God, he was encouraged to resume his design of bringing it to Jerusalem. He had now learned his mistake, and the reason of the breach made on Uzzah. His mind was also become calm; and his zeal, love, and joy, had revived. Having likewise learned that none but the Levites of the family of Kohath ought to carry the ark, (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xv;) his "love now abounded *in knowledge, and in all judgment.*" (*Note, Phil.* i. 9—11.) Conscious therefore that he was unworthy of being employed in such a service, and sensible of his cause for gratitude, if preserved from grievous miscarriages, he set out with offering sacrifices: and, as he thus united humble faith and holy fear with his fervent affections, he was accepted and prospered accordingly. (*Note, Judg.* xx. 26—28.)

V. 14, 15. On this solemn occasion David laid aside the distinctions of royalty: and, as taking the lead in the worship of God, he wore a linen ephod, the ordinary garment of the priests when officiating, yet sometimes worn by others. (*Marg. Ref.* v.) But it does not appear that he in the least attempted to encroach upon the priestly office.—The methods adopted by the Israelites on this occasion, in expressing their joy and gratitude, were such as were customary among them; and the musick, blowing of trumpets, and sacred dances, were accompanied with psalms of praise, sung to the glory of God, by very great multitudes in concert. (*Notes, Ex.* xv. 20, 21. 2 *Chr.* xv, xvi.)

V. 16. Saul had neglected the ark and religion; and Michal seems to have had no deep sense of the importance and excellency of heavenly things: but she was possessed with high thoughts of temporal dignity and royalty. Perhaps, she considered David's zeal for the ark as a reproach of her father's negligence: at least she considered his transports of religious joy, in the midst of the people, as a degradation of his character, and as exposing him to contempt. David *the brave captain*, leading forth the people to battle, and returning with them in triumph, she had admired: but David *the saint*, leading the people in the ordinances of God, and setting them an example of fervency of spirit in his service, she despised in her heart; yet this was by far the most illustrious part of his character.

V. 17. The tabernacle, which had been situated at Shiloh, was from thence carried to Nob, and perhaps when Samuel died it was placed at Gibeon, with the altar of burnt-offering, and all other things belonging to its sacred services. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* vii. 1, 2. xxi. 1, 2.) David, however, had prepared another tent for the reception of the ark, where an altar was erected and sacrifices offered; as also there were on the former altar. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xvi. 37—43.) It may be supposed that the building of a temple was already in contemplation, and that this tabernacle was intended for a temporary accommodation, until that should be accomplished.

V. 18, 19. David prayed for the people; and as a prophet he solemnly blessed them in the name of the Lord, not using the ministry of the priests. (*Notes, Num.* vi. 23—26.) Afterwards he distributed of the flesh of the peace-offerings, which he sacrificed at his own expense, a sufficiency to every one present for a sacred feast, with bread and wine in proportion.

V. 20. After all these publick solemnities, "David "returned to bless his household;" to worship God with them, as no doubt he was wont to do, and to join with them in a religious feast.—Michal spoke the language of

l 1 Sam. xix. 23, 24. the king of Israel to-day, who [l] uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of
m Judg. ix. 4. Job xxx. 8. the [m] vain fellows [*] shamelessly uncovereth himself!
* Or, openly.

21 And David said unto Michal, *It*
n 14. 16. 1 Cor. x. 31. *was* [n] before the LORD, which [o] chose
o 1 Sam. xiii. 14. xv. 28. xvi. 1. 12. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. lxxxix. 19, 20. Acts xiii. 22. me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel:
p 5. 1 Chr. xv. 29. therefore will I [p] play before the LORD.

22 And I will yet be [q] more vile
q Is. l. 6. li. 7. Matt. v. 11, 12 Acts v. 41, 42. Heb. xii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 14.
than thus, and will be base [r] in mine own sight; and, of the [†] maid-servants,
r Gen. xxxii. 10. Job xl. 4. xlii. 6. 1 Tim. i. 15. 1 Pet. v. 6.
† Or, handmaids of my servants.
which thou hast spoken of, of them shall [s] I be had in honour.
s 1 Sam. ii. 30.

23 Therefore [t] Michal the daughter
t 1 Sam. i. 6—8. Is. iv. 1. Hos. ix. 11. Luke i. 25.
of Saul had no child [u] unto the day of her death.
u 1 Sam. xv. 35. Is. xxii. 14.

passion and contempt. Because David had expressed great zeal and earnestness, she suggested that he had behaved in an indecent manner: and as he had laid aside his royal robes, she would represent it as if he had improperly stripped himself. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xix. 23, 24.) But it cannot be supposed that David did any thing indecorous on the occasion; except as Michal considered his piety and activity in religion as unbecoming the dignity of a king.

V. 21—23. David very properly gloried in his zeal for the service and glory of God: *before him*, he was willing to be abased both in his own eyes, and in those of others. And if his earnestness in religion was considered as *playing the fool*, and rendering himself vile, he desired to be still more vile; for he resolved to be still more zealous in that good cause. But he intimated to Michal, that for want of similar zeal, her father had been rejected; and that he was chosen in his stead to be "ruler of the people of the "LORD." He was therefore bound by every tie to be very earnest in promoting his worship: and that which she despised as disgraceful to him, would in the event prove his greatest honour. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

Our judgment in religion must be regulated by the word of God, and not by the customs of the world, or even of the church: for human inventions have often long prevailed, when divine appointments have grown into disuse and contempt. But true believers are accepted, notwithstanding such errors and abuses as they either do not discern, or are unable to rectify: yet those, who have it in their power, should embrace the first opportunity of replacing matters upon the scriptural foundation, and of bringing to light and reputation those parts of true religion, which have been most neglected and obscured. This is best done by shewing their nature, use, and importance, that others may willingly concur, and gradually call the attention of more and more towards them: for thus the change will appear to be effected by the authority of God, and not by that of man.—That the LORD dwells upon the mercy-seat "between the cherubim," that the name and perfections of JEHOVAH are in Jesus, the true Ark of the covenant, forms the foundation of every genuine human hope of felicity, and is the source of every believer's privileges and comforts: while with all his hosts and all his authority, God is his reconciled Friend, Father, and Protector. Whatever else may be overlooked, these essential truths should be always placed in the most convincing and conspicuous light, in every sermon and religious ordinance; that sinners may be called on to believe, and believers to rejoice, and glorify God our Saviour.—But ignorance and error, in the great doctrines of religion, are not the only dangers to which men are exposed: the irreverent abuse of the gospel may be equally destructive.—Men frequently, by *office*, or by *habit*, are conversant about the most important truths or observances of religion with a carnal mind, till they contract a contemptuous familiarity with them, grow proud of their formal exercises, presumptuously intrude into services which do not belong to them, and, in rash zeal for the supposed cause of godliness, use such means as the Lord has not commanded, nay, such as he has prohibited. But whatever necessity may be imagined, or whatever good intentions may be pleaded, he will resent, and perhaps in this world punish, such forbidden touches of his ark: we should therefore be careful to keep our proper place, to do our own work, and to proceed in the manner prescribed in his word.—Even eminently wise and good men cannot perform very important services, without feeling, at times and in some degree, the emotions of pride and self-preference. And, though religion consists very much in high affections, and great love and delight in spiritual things; yet even when the affections are genuine and gracious, except they are accompanied with proportionable knowledge, judgment, and humility, they will betray us into many unwarrantable actions, and expose us to severe rebukes. In the fervency of zeal we are all very prone to forget the *precepts* of God; and are too eager about the substance of our services, to consult the Scriptures concerning the right method of conducting them. Thus, we are unawares drawn into transgression, and meet with severe checks, when we expected great success and comfort. This is indeed needful and salutary, but it often exceedingly disconcerts the mind: and then the transition is very sudden from elevated joy and confidence, to great dejection and fretfulness; from a hope bordering on irreverence, to slavish fear which verges to despondency, and disheartens from present duty. Such sudden changes the experienced and vigilant believer recollects with shame. He too has often, especially in the time of his injudicious and inexperienced zeal, been "greatly displeased" or discouraged by those things, which were only intended to humble and instruct him: and while he cannot excuse David, he sees more cause to condemn himself, and to pray, "Enter not into judgment "with thy servant, O LORD, for in thy sight shall no man "living be justified."—But while one is disheartened from active service through servile fear, others will be animated with humble faith and hope; and not dread the ark, or the ordinance, but only the sin which occasioned the rebuke, or against which the threatening is denounced. And

CHAP. VII.

David purposes to build a temple, and Nathan encourages him, 1—3. God, by Nathan, forbids it, but with promises of special blessings to Israel, to David, and to his seed, 4—17. David's prayer and thanksgiving, 18—29.

[a] 1 Chr. xvii. 1, &c. Dan. iv. 29, 30.
[b] Josh. xxi. 44. xxiii. 1. 1 Kings v. 4. 2 Chr. xiv. 6. Prov. xvi. 7. Luke i. 74, 75.

AND it came to pass, [a] when the king sat in his house, and [b] the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies,

2 That the king said unto [c] Nathan the prophet, See now, [d] I dwell in an house of cedar, but [e] the ark of God dwelleth within [f] curtains.

3 And Nathan said to the king, [g] Go, do [h] all that *is* in thine heart: [i] for the LORD *is* with thee.

4 And it came to pass [j] that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying,

5 Go and tell * my servant David,

[c] xii. 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 29
[d] v. 11. 1 Chr. xiv. 1. Jer. xxii. 13—15. Hag. i. 4.
[e] Ps. cxxxii. 5. John ii. 17. Acts vii. 46.
[f] vi. 17. Ex. xxvi. 1—14. xl. 21. 1 Chr. xvi. 1. 2 Chr. i. 4.
[g] 2 Kings iv. 27.
[h] 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Kings viii. 17, 18. 1 Chr. xxii. 7. xxviii. 2. Ps. xx. 4. xxxvii. 4.
[i] 1 Sam. x. 7. 1 John ii. 27.
[j] Num. xii. 6. 1 Chr. xvii. 3. Am. iii 7.

* Heb. *to my servant, to David.*

the Lord will abundantly recompense those, who are humbly bold for him, while others are either presumptuous or desponding. (*P. O.* 1 *Sam.* vi.)

V. 12—23.

When pious men, who have been betrayed into unwarrantable conduct, have had time for self-examination, searching the Scriptures, and prayer, they will discover and confess their mistakes, and be reduced to a better temper; they will justify God in his corrections; they will be convinced, that safety and comfort consist, not in absenting themselves from his ordinances, or in declining dangerous services, but in attending to their duty in a proper spirit and manner; (*Notes, Matt.* v. 23, 24.—1 *Cor.* xi. 29—34. *P. O.* 23—31;) they will profit by their own errors, stand the stronger for their falls, and not abate in their zeal and affections, but learn to connect them with humility, and to regulate them according to the precepts of the sacred Scripture. Then they may expect to prosper in their attempts to glorify God, and promote the cause of true religion.—We are so unworthy, and our services so defiled, that all our joy in divine ordinances must be connected with the exercise of repentance, and faith in the Redeemer's atoning blood; so that the more we are preserved from sin, and the more we are enabled to do in the work of God, with acceptance and comfort, the greater obligations we are brought under, and the more thankful we ought to be. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19.)—We ought to serve the Lord with our whole body and soul, and with every endowment or capacity we possess; our religious affections cannot be too intense, if properly directed; nor our expressions of them too strong, provided "all be done "decently and in order," according to the spirit of that dispensation under which we live.—The greatest of men are as nothing before the infinite God; their dependence is as entire as that of their inferiors, and their obligations and accountableness are greater: the meanest employment in his service is in truth the greatest honour of the mightiest princes: they ought to be as base in their own eyes, when worshipping the Lord, and confessing their sins, as their meanest subjects; while they should take the lead, and set the example in every thing good: (*Note, Jam.* i. 9—11:) and though some will despise their piety as madness or meanness, they will be had in honour for it by numbers, yea, by many who are not themselves religious.—Indeed proud and carnal persons have always ridiculed fervent devotion, as folly or enthusiasm. Satan has long deluded men into a persuasion, that such holy earnestness is *unprincely*, nay, *unmanly*, unbecoming persons of genius, learning, wealth, or influence, and only fit for ignorant poor people, women, or children. However wise or eminent a man may be in other respects, if he be *scripturally* zealous and devoted to God, he must expect contempt and insult, even from his inferiors and relatives: nay, he needs not wonder, if he be falsely accused of the most shameless practices. But if the Lord has chosen and accepted us, we should deem such reproaches honourable, and determine to become still more vile in the eyes of ungodly revilers, by abounding in those services which they despise.—While we meekly rebuke such opposers, the Lord will certainly plead our cause against them: for "them that honour him, he will honour; but they who "despise him shall be lightly esteemed."—Piety should always be attended with liberality; and publick exercises of religion must not exclude private prayer and family-worship, which should be neglected by none in any rank of life.—Finally in this removal of the ark, let us contemplate the Redeemer's ascension to glory, and seek to participate his precious gifts, and to serve him with ardent love and joy.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. (*Note,* v. 11.) David, now peaceably possessed of the kingdom, victorious over all his enemies, and at rest in his palace, considered how he might employ his leisure and prosperity in the service of God: when it occurred to his mind how stately his own house was, and how meanly the ark was lodged; and he conceived a design of building a magnificent temple for its reception. (*Notes, Ps.* cxxxii. 2—5. *Matt.* vi. 33, 34.) This he intimated to Nathan the prophet, a man of great piety and wisdom, who appears to have been his companion and counsellor. And Nathan, assured that the design arose from zeal for the glory of God, who was with David in all his undertakings, encouraged him to proceed; yet he gave his advice, not by revelation from God, but according to his own private judgment. (*Note,* 1 *Cor.* vii. 39, 40.)

V. 4. The message which follows was sent without delay, probably that David might not remain under a mistake, or set his heart on a work not intended for him: and it was sent by Nathan, that *he* might not be discouraged by having his counsel contradicted by another prophet.—Nathan was not faulty in encouraging David, any more than David was in purposing to build a temple: they both did well, but the Lord had wise reasons for determining otherwise. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 15—21.)

V. 5. *Shalt thou,* &c.] That is, 'Dost thou entertain

k 1 Kings v. 3. viii. 18, 19. 1 Chr. xvii. 4. xxii. 7, 8. xxviii. 3.
Josh. xviii. 1. 1 Kings viii. 16. 1 Chr. xvii. 5, 6.
m Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15. xl. 35—38. Lev. xxvi. 23, 24. 27, 28. Num. x. 33—36. Deut. xxiii. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. ii. 1.
n Ex. xl. 18, 19. 34. Acts vii. 44.
o 1 Chr. xvii. 6. *judges.*
p v. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72. Is. xl. 11. Jer. xxiii. 4. Ez. xxxiv. 2. 15. 23. Mic. v. 4. Matt. ii. 6. *marg.* John xxi. 15—17. Acts xxi. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2.
q 1 Sam. xvi. 11, 12. 1 Chr. xvii. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 70.
* Heb *after.*
r vi. 21. xii. 7. 1 Sam. ix. 16. x. 1.
s v. 10. viii. 6. 14. xxii. 30. 34—38. 1 Chr. xvii. 8.
t xxii. 1. 1 Sam. xxxi. 6. Ps. lxxxix. 23.
† Heb. *from thy face.*
u Gen. xii. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 8. 1 Chr. xvii. 8. Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. Luke i. 52.
x Ps. lxxxvii. 3—6.
y 1 Chr. xvii. 9. Ps. xliv. 2. lxxx. 8. Jer. xviii. 9. xxiv. 6. Ez. xxxvii. 25—27. Am. ix. 15.
z Ps. lxxxix. 22, 23. Is. lx. 18. Hos. ii. 18.

k Thus saith the LORD; Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?

6 Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have m walked in a n tent and in a tabernacle.

7 In all *the places* wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the o tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to p feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, q I took thee from the sheep-cote, from * following the sheep, to be r ruler over my people, over Israel.

9 And s I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have t cut off all thine enemies † out of thy sight, and have made thee u a great name, x like unto the name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth.

10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will y plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; z neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, a as beforetime,

11 And as b since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel, and c have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the d LORD telleth thee, that d he will make thee an house.

12 And e when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt f sleep with thy fathers, g I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 h He shall build an house for my name, and i I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 k I will be his father, and he shall be my son: l if he commit iniquity, m I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But n my mercy shall not depart away from him, o as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And p thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

a Ex. i. 13, 14. 22. Judg. iv. 3. vi. 2—6. 1 Sam. xiii. 17.
b Judg. ii. 14—16. 1 Sam. xii. 9—11. Ps. cvi. 42.
c 1. Job v. 18, 19. xxxiv. 29. Is. xlvi. 9.
d 27. Ex. i. 21. 1 Kings ii. 24. 1 Chr. xvii. 10. xxii. 10. Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4. cxxvii. 1. Prov. xiv. 1.
e 1 Kings ii. 1. viii. 20.
f Deut. xxxi. 16. 1 Kings i. 21. Dan. xii. 2. Acts xiii. 36. 1 Cor. xv. 51. 1 Thes. iv. 14.
g Gen. xv. 4. 1 Kings viii. 20. 1 Chr. xvii. 11. Ps. lxxxix. 29. cxxxii. 11. Is. ix. 7. xi. 1—3. 10. Matt. xxii. 42—44. Acts ii. 30.
h 1 Kings v. 5. vi. 12. viii. 19. 1 Chr. xvii. 11. 12. xxii. 9, 10. xxviii. 6. 10. Zech. vi. 12. Matt. xvi. 18. Luke i. 31—33. Heb. iii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 5.
i 16. 1 Chr. xxviii. 7. Ps. lxxxix. 4. 21. 36, 37. Is. ix. 7. xlix. 8. Luke i. 32, 33.
k 1 Chr. xvii. 13. xxviii. 6. Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27. Matt. iii. 17. Heb. i. 5.
l Ps. lxxxix. 30—35.
m Deut. viii. 5. Job v. 17. Ps. xciv. 12, 13. Prov. iii. 11, 12.
n Ps. lxxxix. 28. 34. Is. liv. 8. lv. 3. Acts xiii. 34—37.
o 1 Sam. xv. 28. xvi. 14. 1 Kings xi. 13. 34—36. Is. ix. 7. xxxvii. 35.
p Gen. xlix. 10. 2 Kings xix. 34. 1 Chr. xvii. 13, 14. Ps. xlv. 6. lxxii. 5. 17—19. lxxxix. 36, 37. Is. ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. Matt. xvi. 18. Luke i. 32, 33. John xii. 34. Rev. xi. 15.

such a purpose, which did not enter into the thoughts of any that were before thee? yet thou shalt not accomplish that design; for the work is assigned to another person.' —It appears that Nathan spoke more to David than is here recorded: for other reasons are afterwards given, why David was not permitted to build the temple. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxii. 6—10. xxviii. 2—8.)

V. 6, 7. Though the building of a temple accorded with the spirit of the Mosaick dispensation, it was not commanded by any law; and was not therefore peculiarly any one's duty, without some further intimation from God. In the days of Moses the Lord had, by the ark the symbol of his presence, dwelt and removed with his people, in a tabernacle of his own appointing. (*Notes, Num.* x. 33—36.) Since Israel had been settled in Canaan, none of the rulers or *judges*, who had been raised up out of several of their *tribes*, were commanded to build a temple: yet the Lord had accepted their worship, while the ark abode within curtains. It was not therefore necessary either to the glory of God, or the good of Israel, to have a temple; and the erecting of one might therefore very well be delayed a little longer. (*Notes, Is.* lxvi. 1, 2. *Acts* vii. 44—50.)

V. 8—11. The Lord did not employ David in building the temple, but he did not in anger reject his intended service: for it was not proper, either that he should engross all the honour, or do all the work. He had been advanced from a very inferior situation to the throne of Israel, and employed in subduing *their* enemies, as well as made triumphant over *his own;* and he was, or would become, one of the most honourable and renowned characters in the world. (*Marg. Ref.* u, x.) Moreover the Lord had further employment for him of another sort, which was proper to be done before the building of the temple. The Canaanites still dwelt in the land, and greatly harassed the people; and the neighbouring nations frequently afflicted them. This had been the case from their first entrance into Canaan, even in the time of the judges, who wrought only temporary deliverances from their more grievous oppressors. Indeed, it was reserved for David to crush the remnant of the Canaanites, to subjugate the other enemies of Israel, and to put them in full and quiet possession of the land of promise; so that it was by their subsequent revolts and apostasies alone, that they afterwards lost the benefit of his victories. This was his peculiar work; and as a promise thus given to Israel, was intended to mark out David's line of usefulness.—He was also employed in reforming the state of religion, regulating the courses of the priests and Levites, and composing hymns of praise for the use of the church in after ages; and he made immense preparations even for the temple itself. (*Notes,* xxiii. 1, 2. 1 *Chr.* xxii, xxiii. xxvi. xxviii, xxix.)

V. 12—16. The Lord intended to establish David's

7 1 Chr. xvii. 15. Acts xx. 20. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 3.

7 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

18 ¶ Then went king David in, and r sat before the LORD, and he said, s Who *am* I, O LORD God? and what *is* my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

r 1 Chr. xvii. 16. Is. xxxvii. 14.

s Gen. xxxii. 10. Ex. iii. 11. Judg. vi. 15. 1 Sam. ix. 21. xv. 17. xviii. 18. Ps. viii. 4.

19 And t this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O LORD God; but u thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. x And *is* this the *manner of man, O LORD God?

t xii. 8. Num. xvi. 9. 13.

u 11—16. 1 Chr. xvii. 17.

x Ps. xxxvi. 7. Is. lv. 8, 9. Eph. ii. 7. iii. 19, 20.

* Heb. *law.*

20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, LORD God, y knowest thy servant.

y 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. cxxxix. 1. John ii. 25. xxi 17. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.

21 For z thy word's sake, and a according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know *them.*

z Num. xxiii. 19. Deut. ix. 5. Josh. xxiii. 14. 15. Ps. cxv. 1. cxxxviii. 2. Matt. xxiv. 35. Luke i. 54, 55. 72.

a Matt. xi. 26. Luke x. 21. xii. 32. 1 Cor. i. 1. Eph. i. 9. iii. 11.

posterity upon the throne of Israel; which was a special favour not granted to Moses, to Joshua, or to any of David's predecessors: and therefore the work and honour of building the temple were reserved for his son, who *was hereafter to be born;* for, by the future tense in this connexion, both Absalom and Adonijah, and all the children which David then had, were excluded from the succession. This son and successor of David would be of a peaceable disposition, and enabled to live at peace, through the success of his father's wars, and would have more leisure and ability to complete the design. To him and his posterity very precious promises were given: the Lord engaged to be a Father to him, to deal with him as his son, and to establish the throne of his kingdom; and if he sinned, to correct him, as men do their children, according to what they are able to endure, and for their good; yet not to take the kingdom from him, as he had done from Saul, but to establish it from generation to generation.—Though for Solomon's sin the ten tribes were rent from his son; (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi. 9—13. 29—31. xii. 21—24;) yet the kingdom over Judah remained, unto the Babylonish captivity, in the family of David and Solomon.—These promises were, however, in an especial manner, predictions of Christ, the son of David, the true Solomon, "the Prince "of peace," who builds the spiritual temple of true believers, to be "an habitation of God through the Spirit." (*Notes*, *Zech.* vi. 12, 13. *Eph.* ii. 19—22.) Accordingly a part of the prophecy is applied to Christ in the New Testament. (*Heb.* i. 5.) The stability and perpetuity of the kingdom in the house of David is, in Christ, fully accomplished. (*Notes*, *Ps.* ii. lxxii. lxxxix. 19—37.) The clause concerning the merciful chastisement of David's son if he offended, and the engagement not to reject him for his transgressions, belongs to his people, who are his seed, and one with him. In a parallel passage, it is put in the plural number, "If his *children* forsake my law, &c." (*Ps.* lxxxix. 30—33.)—The expression, "before thee," might perhaps be a gracious intimation, that though these things would take place after David's death, yet he would be acquainted with them, and rejoice in them.

V. 17. Nathan did not hesitate to contradict his own counsel; nor did he fear lest this should expose him to censure or contempt! (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xx. 1—6.)

V. 18. David cordially acquiesced in the will of God; and likewise found his love, gratitude, hope, and joy greatly excited, by these remembrances of past, and promises of future mercies, to himself, his people, and posterity; especially as they all centred in the promised Saviour who was to descend from him. Without delay, therefore, he went to the tabernacle of God before the ark, and poured out his heart in prayer.—It is said, that "he "*sat* before the LORD;" but it is the only place in Scripture, which mentions *sitting* as the posture of any servant of God in religious worship; and, though circumstances may sometimes render it necessary, it does not otherwise seem becoming. Probably, the expression only means his *continuance* before the LORD for a considerable time, and does not determine the posture in which he prayed.—When David considered the mean estate from which he had been advanced to the throne, and how he had been employed, prospered, and honoured; and when he recollected the infinite majesty and holiness of God, and his own sinfulness and insignificancy before him: he thought nothing of his own endowments or performances, but regarded the whole as the subject of admiring gratitude and praise; and was surprised that the Lord had hitherto upheld and blessed so insignificant and worthless a person in such an extraordinary manner. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xxxii. 9—12. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19.)

V. 19. A more particular consideration of the blessings, which had now been entailed upon his family, as well as upon himself, still more enhanced David's holy admiration; and he adored the riches of the divine mercy, as infinitely surpassing the largest bounty of man. It is not the manner of men thus to notice the mean, the base, the unworthy: thus to make one kindness an introduction to another, and an earnest of further favours, and a reason for bestowing them. No, this is beyond example or conception!—Or, 'Is this thy manner of dealing with polluted, rebellious man!' (*Note*, *Is.* lv. 8, 9.) How wonderful then the love of a holy God to us sinful creatures, especially in the gift of his "only-begotten Son, to be the "Propitiation for our sins!" (*Notes*, 1 *John* iii. 1—3. iv. 9—12.)

V. 20, 21. David could find nothing to ask for himself, or his people, or his posterity, but what had already been covenanted to him: so that his prayer consisted of thankful repetitions of the promises. For the Lord *knew* his servant, and would do every thing in perfect truth, wisdom, and love, for his good; and he desired no prosperity, wealth, or honour, except in reference to the will and glory of God. He could assign no reason for the Lord's former kindness to him, but his sovereign will, according to his own heart, dictating his gracious promises, and then for his word's sake fulfilling them: and he had the same ground for expecting all other blessings, according to his holy covenant. (*Notes*, *Deut.* vii. 6—8. *Rom.* viii. 28—31. *Eph.* i. 3—8. ii. 4—10. *Jam.* i. 16—18. 1 *Pet.* i. 3—5.)—'God, he knew, would fulfil his promise made 'by Samuel and Nathan; to the making of which he

22 Wherefore [b] thou art great, O LORD God: for *there is* [c] none like thee, neither *is there any* god beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

23 And [d] what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people, *even* like Israel, whom God [e] went to redeem for a people to himself, and to [f] make him a name, and to do for you [g] great things and terrible, for thy land, before [h] thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, *from* the nations and [i] their gods?

24 For thou hast [k] confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, *to be* a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, [l] art become their God.

25 And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, [m] establish *it* for ever, and do as thou hast said.

26 And [n] let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established [o] before thee.

27 For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast [*] revealed to thy servant, saying, [p] I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant [q] found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

28 And now, O LORD God, thou *art* that God, and [r] thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

29 Therefore now [†] let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O LORD God, hast spoken *it*, and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed [s] for ever.

b Deut. iii. 24. 1 Chr. xvi. 25. 2 Chr. ii. 5. Ps. xlviii. 1. lxxxvi. 10. xcvi. 4. cxxxv. 5.
c Ex. xv. 11. Deut. iv. 35. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Ps. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6. 8. Is. xl. 18. 25. xlv. 5. 18. 22. Jer. x. 6. Mic. vii. 18.
d Deut. iv. 7, 8. 32—34. xxxiii. 29. Ps. cxlvii. 20. Rom. iii. 1, 2.
e Ex. iii. 7, 8. xix. 5, 6. Num. xiv. 13, 14. Ps. cxi. 9. Is. lxiii. 7—14. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Rev. v. 9.
f Ex. ix. 16. Josh. vii. 9. 1 Chr. xvii. 21. Is. lxiii. 12. 14. Ezr. xx. 9. Eph. i. 6.
g Deut. x. 21. Ps. xl. 5. lxv. 5. lxvi. 3. cvi. 22. cxlv. 6.
h Deut. ix. 26. xv. 15. Neh. i. 10.
i Ex. xii. 12.
k Gen. xvii. 7. Deut. xxvi. 18.
l 23. Ex. xv. 2. Deut. xxvii. 9. 1 Chr. xvii. 22. Ps. xlviii. 14. Is. xii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 1. 33. xxxii. 38. Hos. i. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. John i. 12. Rom. ix. 25, 26. 1 Pet. ii. 10.
m Gen. xxxii. 12. Ps. cxix. 49. Jer. xi. 4, 5. Ez. xxxvi. 37.
n 1 Chr. xvii. 23, 24. xxix. 10—13. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. cxv. 1. Matt. vi. 9 John xii. 28.
o Gen. xvii. 18. 1 Chr. xvii. 23, 24. Ps. lxxxix. 36.
* Heb. *opened the ear.* Ruth iv. 4. 1 Sam. ix. 15. *marg.*
p 11.
q 1 Chr. xvii. 25, 26. Ps. x. 17.
r Num. xxiii. 19. John xvii. 17. Tit. i. 2.
† Heb. *be thou pleased and bless.* Num. vi. 24—26. 1 Chr. xvii. 27. Ps. cxv. 12—15.
s xxii. 51.

'had no other motive, but his own good will.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 22—25. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut.* iv. 20. 32—40. 1 *Sam.* ii. 2. 1 *Kings* viii. 23, 24. *Neh.* ix. 5—8.)—*For you.* (23) These words are not found in the parallel passage, (1 *Chr.* xvii. 21,) and seem here redundant.

V. 26. The Lord by his promises had connected the glory of his own truth, with the establishment of David's family; and David also expected and desired, that his descendants might be instrumental in maintaining true religion for the glory of God.—In Christ all the perfections of the Godhead are glorified; and by him the cause of truth and righteousness is, and will be, established upon earth. (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19. *Ps.* xxi. 13. lxxii. 17—19. *Matt.* vi. 13.) In all these respects David prayed for the magnifying of God's name, in the establishment of his posterity. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* xvii. 17—24. *v.* 24.)

V. 27—29. (*Marg. Ref.*) David could not have ventured to make such large requests, if the Lord had not promised the blessings which he implored: but he was humbly bold to ask all that God had engaged to give.—The promises of Scripture are not made *personally to us by name,* as these were to David; but they belong to all who believe in Jesus Christ, and plead them in his name. (*Note,* 2 *Pet.* i. 3, 4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

The greater leisure and ability any man is favoured with, the more should he form, and attempt to execute, plans of important usefulness; and those who are largely supplied with the providential gifts of God, and at the same time are richly replenished by his grace, will most comfortably enjoy their possessions, when they can render them subservient to his glory and the salvation of souls: they will often be grieved to reflect how much is expended on themselves, and how little in the service of God; and scarcely deem any thing done for him while so much remains undone. Such zealous and liberal Christians should be encouraged by their brethren, and by ministers, in the great designs which they conceive for the advancement of religion, as far as they agree with the Scripture. Yet many unexceptionable undertakings may fail of *success,* because they do not accord with the perfect plan of God; but none of them will fail to meet with a gracious recompence.—The wisest and best of men (not excepting prophets and apostles, unless when immediately speaking by divine inspiration,) have been liable to error; and therefore the claim of infallibility forms the very essence of blasphemous arrogance. But God will rectify the prejudicial mistakes of his upright servants, and prevent every bad consequence: and it is their true honour, as well as their duty, to retract what they have unadvisedly advanced, and to acknowledge themselves mistaken; and all wise men will respect them the more for doing so.—The Lord does not need the services of man, neither does he regard external splendour; we cannot therefore please him in his instituted worship, if we have not the warrant of his word for what we do.—He has accepted and blessed those, who *spiritually* worshipped him in the midst of external meanness; and he never rejected or found fault with them on that account: but no outward magnificence will render formal services pleasing to him.—Our desires, even of usefulness, must be subjected to his holy will, and regulated by his precept. He appoints unto every man his work, and endows him with suitable qualifications: and each of us should thankfully and faithfully mind our proper business; and rejoice in the superior talents, and more honourable and important services, of our brethren.—When we feel the risings of envy or discontent, and are ready to murmur at disappointment, we should reflect on what the Lord has already done for us; from what a wretched con-

CHAP. VIII.

David subdues the Philistines and Moabites, 1, 2. He smites Hadadezer and the Syrians, 3—8. Toi, king of Hamath, sends his son to David with presents, which he dedicates to God, with the spoils that he had taken, 9—13. He puts garrisons in Edom, 14. He reigns in equity, 15. The names of his chief officers, 16—18.

[a] vii. 9. xxi. 15—22. [*] Or, *the bridle of Ammah.* ii. 24. 1 Chr. xviii. 1. *Gath.*

[a] AND after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took [*] Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

[b] Num. xxiv. 17. Judg. iii. 29, 30. 1 Sam. xiv. 47. Ps. lx. 8. lxxxiii. 6. cviii. 9. [c] xii. 31. [d] 6. 12—14. 2 Kings i. 1. iii. 4—27. 1 Chr. xviii. 2. [e] 1 Sam. x. 27. 2 Chr. xxvi. 8. Ps. lxxii. 10, 11. Is. xxxvi. 16. [f] 1 Chr. xviii. 3. *Hadarezer.* [g] x. 6. 1 Sam. xiv. 47. 1 Kings xi. 23, 24. Ps. lx. *title.*

2 And [b] he smote Moab, and [c] measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive: [d] and [e] *so* the Moabites became David's servants, *and* [e] brought gifts.

3 David smote also [f] Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of [g] Zobah, as he

dition he has brought us; and what blessings he has prepared for us: and we shall readily perceive that we have been dealt with far better than we have deserved, or could reasonably have expected; nay, that if our desires be not granted, it is merely because our wise and gracious Lord sees it better for us that they should be refused.—Our own plans, though well intended, are often fit for nothing but to be laid aside, to make way for the Lord's purposes respecting us, of which perhaps we had no conception. But, in one way or other, God will bless, and make useful to his church those persons, who simply devote themselves and all they have to his glory. If the Lord deny them one supposed blessing, he will counterbalance the refusal with other tokens of his love, and by raising their expectations of other promised mercies: and he teaches them to rejoice in the prosperity of his church, as in their own felicity.—Israel, according to the flesh, forfeited by their sins the rest to which they were brought: and the cause of God has hitherto been greatly opposed and run down. Yet the time is coming when this cause will gain the entire ascendancy, and overspread the earth; and when the Israel of God shall "be planted, and dwell in a place of their "own, and move no more, neither shall the children of "wickedness afflict them any more for ever."—The most favoured and honoured of men will soon fulfil their days, and sleep with their fathers; but they die at peace with God, and depart hence to join the blessed company before the throne.—We should indeed earnestly desire the entail of our blessings upon our posterity, that they may be the children of God also; but our chief comfort in life and death must arise from looking unto Jesus, the Son of God, and the everlasting King of Israel, and in participating his covenanted mercies. (*Note*, xxiii. 5.) In his human nature "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily," and by uniting his people to himself through his Holy Spirit, he builds the living temple, in which the Lord will dwell for ever. If we belong to him, he will not finally reject us: but when we offend, he will, by rebukes and chastenings, bring us to repentance, and establish us, as kings and priests before him, to all eternity. (*Notes, Heb.* xii. 4—8. *Rev.* iii. 18, 19. v. 8—10.)

V. 18—29.

When we have duly attended to the word, which the Lord has spoken; and when our affections are excited, or our consciences alarmed; let us without delay retire, to pour out our hearts before him in fervent prayer, grounded on his gracious promises in Christ Jesus.—The more God really honours any one, the lower he sinks in self-abasement; as conscious that he has nothing of his own, but meanness, sin, and misery, and that he owes all to the free mercy and goodness of God. But if the blessings which we have already received are so numerous, large, and unmerited; if it appears wonderful, as it does to every humble believer, that the Lord has brought him hitherto; what shall we say to the *future*, the *eternal* felicity, which he has covenanted to his people! or of the gift of his Son to be the ransom of our souls!—His thoughts and ways are not like ours, or he never would have bestowed such blessings on rebellious, polluted man. What can we then say more unto him? What can we ask or desire but the performance of those promises, which of his own sovereign mercy he has made to us? Comparing the former displays of the glorious excellences of our God, with those which he has manifested in his dealings with us, we shall at once have our admiring gratitude enlarged, and our expectation of further blessings increased; and shall find in our hearts to plead his precious promises, neither deeming them too large, nor too hard, for him to perform to us wretched sinners. Though he have not given us "a great "name, like unto the great men that are in the earth;" we shall be contented with "a name written in the book of "life," and a clear character among our brethren: and we can desire no more for our posterity, than that they may be "blessed with the blessing of the LORD for ever."

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xviii. 1.) It is probable, that *Metheg-ammah*, or "the *bridle of Ammah*," (*marg.*) was an eminence or natural fortress, on which Gath was built, and which gave the inhabitants an opportunity of retaining the neighbourhood in subjection. The Philistines had long oppressed Israel: Samson had begun to deliver his people from them; but David effectually subdued the Philistines, and left them no power any more to molest the Israelites. (*Notes, Judg.* xiii. 4, 5.)

V. 2. The Jews say, that the Moabites had slain David's parents. It may be supposed, that he had just cause for this war, and for the severity with which he treated the vanquished; as he seems to have measured their country, and desolated two-thirds of it, and to have slaughtered two-thirds of the captives. (*Note*, xii. 26—31.) Thus the Moabites became tributaries to Israel, as Balaam had predicted. (*Notes, Num.* xxiv. 17. *2 Kings* i. 1.)

V. 3. Zobah seems to have been a part of Syria, to the north-east of Canaan, to the south of Damascus, and reaching to the river Euphrates.—It is probable, that Hadadezer was jealous of David's growing greatness, and

went to recover his border, [h] at the river Euphrates.

4 And David took [*] from him a thousand [†] *chariots*, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and [i] David houghed all the chariot-*horses*, but [k] reserved of them *for* an hundred chariots.

5 And [l] when the Syrians of Damascus [m] came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

6 Then David put [n] garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, *and* brought gifts. And [o] the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

7 And David took the [p] shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

8 And from [q] Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took [r] exceeding much brass.

9 ¶ When [s] Toi king of [t] Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer,

10 Then Toi sent [u] Joram his son unto king David, to [‡] salute him, and [x] to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: (for Hadadezer [§] had wars with Toi:) and *Joram* [‖] brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass;

11 Which [y] also king David did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued:

12 Of [z] Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

13 And David [a] gat *him* a name when he returned from [*] smiting of the Syrians in [b] the valley of salt, [†] *being* eighteen thousand *men*.

14 And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons: and [c] all they of Edom became David's servants. And [d] the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

15 ¶ And David reigned [e] over all Israel; and [f] David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.

16 And [g] Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and [h] Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* [‡] recorder;

17 And [i] Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of [k] Abiathar, *were* the priests; and Seraiah *was* the [§] scribe;

18 And [l] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was over* both [m] the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were [‖] chief rulers.

[h] Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31. Deut. xi. 24. 1 Kings iv. 21. Ps. lxxii. 8.
[*] Or, *of his.*
[†] As 1 Chr. xviii. 4.
[i] Deut. xvii. 16. Josh. xi. 6. 9. Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 16, 17.
[k] 1 Kings x. 26.
[l] 1 Kings xi. 23—25. 1 Chr. xviii. 5, 6. Is. vii. 8.
[m] Job ix. 13. Ps. lxxxiii. 4—8. Is. viii. 9, 10. xxxi. 3.
[n] 2 Sam. xxiii. 14. 1 Sam. xiii. 3. xiv. 1. 6. 15. 2 Chr. xvii. 2. Ps. xviii. 34—46.
[o] 2 Sam. vii. 9. 1 Chr. xviii. 13. Ps. v. 11, 12. cxxi. 7, 8. cxl. 7. cxliv. 1, 2. Prov. xxi. 31.
[p] 1 Kings x. 16, 17. xiv. 26, 27. 1 Chr. xviii. 7. 2 Chr. ix. 15, 16.
[q] 1 Chr. xviii. 8. *Tibhath. Chun.*
[r] 1 Chr. xxii. 14. 16. xxix. 7. 2 Chr. iv. 1—18.
[s] 1 Chr. xviii. 9. *Tou.*
[t] Am. vi. 2.
[u] 1 Chr. xviii. 10. *Hadoram.*
[‡] Heb. *ask him of peace.* Gen. xliii. 27. Is. xxxix. 1.
[x] 1 Sam. xiii. 10. *marg.* 1 Kings i. 47. Ps. cxxix. 8.
[§] Heb. *was a man of wars with.*
[‖] Heb. *in his hand were.*
[y] 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr. xviii. 11. xxii. 14—16. xxvi. 26—28. xxix. 2. Mic. iv. 13.
[z] x. 11. 14. xii. 26—31. 1 Chr. xviii. 11.
[a] vii. 9. 1 Chr. xviii. 12. Ps. lx. *title.*
[*] Heb. *his smiting.*
[b] 2 Kings xiv. 7. 2 Chr. xxv. 11.
[†] Or, *slaying.*
[c] Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 29. 37. 40. Num. xxiv. 18. 1 Kings xxii. 47. 1 Chr. xviii. 13. Ps. lx. 8, 9. cviii. 9, 10.
[d] *See on* 6.
[e] iii. 12. v. 5.
[f] xxiii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. xviii. 14. Ps. xlv. 6, 7. lxxv. 2. lxxviii. 71, 72. ci. 1—8. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxii. 15. xxiii. 5, 6
[g] xix. 13. xx. 23. 1 Chr. xi. 6. xviii. 15—17.
[h] 1 Kings iv. 3.
[‡] Or, *remembrancer*, or *writer of chronicles.*
[i] 1 Chr. vi. 8. 53. xxiv. 3, 4.
[k] 1 Chr. xviii. 16. *Shavsha.*
[§] Or, *secretary.*
[l] 1 Kings i. 44. ii. 34, 35. 1 Chr. xviii. 17.
[m] xv. 18. xx. 7. 23. xxiii. 20—23. 1 Sam. xxx. 14. Ez. xxv. 16. Zeph. ii. 5.
[‖] Or, *princes.* xx. 26.

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came to assist the Moabites, in order to secure his own dominions: and that this gave David a fair opportunity of extending his conquests to the Euphrates.—Some think, however, that David went to establish his dominion over all the countries as far as that river, according to the grant made to Israel; and that he was opposed by Hadadezer. (*Marg. Ref.* g, h.)

V. 4. *Seven hundred.*] Seven *thousand* horsemen are mentioned in Chronicles; (1 *Chr.* xviii. 4;) perhaps they were divided into seven hundred divisions of ten men each: however, David disabled the most of the horses, not desiring to trust in chariots or in horses, but in the living God. (*Note, Josh.* xi. 6.)—Yet he reserved horses for a hundred chariots; and this is the first time, that chariots of any kind are mentioned, as possessed by a ruler in Israel. (*Note, Deut.* xvii. 16.)

V. 5—8. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Syrians of Damascus were in alliance with Hadadezer, but not subject to him.

V. 9—11. Hamath lay north of Canaan, and south of Damascus.—Thus, by arms or alliances, these heathen nations became tributary to David, and furnished those riches, which he dedicated to the Lord for the building of the temple. (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xxii. 14. xxix. 1—9.)

V. 12. *Children of Ammon.*] Either some of the Ammonites at this time assisted the Moabites; or this is spoken by way of anticipation. (*Notes,* x. xii. 26—31.)

V. 13, 14. *Syrians.*] It is said in Chronicles, that "Abishai smote eighteen thousand *Edomites* in the valley "of salt." (1 *Chr.* xviii. 12.) Perhaps they were Edomites fighting for the Syrians. It is evident, however, that Edom was subjected in consequence of this victory, by which David acquired great renown.—Twelve thousand of Edom are elsewhere mentioned, as slain by Joab. (*Note, Ps.* lx. *title.*) Perhaps Joab and Abishai commanded distinct bodies of troops, and eighteen thousand were slain between them, six thousand by Abishai, and twelve thousand by Joab. —Thus the predictions concerning the Edomites began to be fulfilled. (*Notes, Gen.* xxv. 22, 23. xxvii. 27—29, 39, 40. *Num.* xxiv. 18, 19. *Ps.* lx. 6—12.)

V. 15—18. The assiduity, as well as the equity and impartiality of David's administration, is here stated; in which, as well as in his victories, he was a type of Christ.

CHAP. IX.

David enquires after Saul's family, and is informed, by Ziba, of Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, 1—4. He sends for him, and entertains him at his table for Jonathan's sake, 5—8. He restores to him the family-estate, entrusting the management to Ziba, 9—13.

AND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for [a] Jonathan's sake?

2 And *there was* of the house of Saul [b] a servant, whose name *was* [c] Ziba: and when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art* thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant *is he*.

3 And the king said, *Is* there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew [d] the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath [e] yet a son, *which is* lame on *his* feet.

4 And the king said unto him, Where *is* he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold he *is* in the house of [f] Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.

5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

6 Now when [g] Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, [h] he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant.

a i. 26. 1 Sam. xviii. 1—4. xx. 42. xxiii. 16—18. 1 Kings ii. 7. Prov. xxvii. 10. Matt. x. 42. xxv. 40. Mark ix. 41. John xix. 26, 27. Philem. 9—12. 1 Pet. iii. 8.

b Gen. xv. 2, 3. xxiv. 2. xxxix. 6.

c xvi. 1—4. xix. 17. 27—29.

d Deut. iv. 37. x. 15. 1 Sam. xx. 14—17. Matt. v. 44, 45. Luke vi. 36. Tit. iii. 3, 4.

e iv. 4. xix. 26.

f xvii. 27—29.

g 1 Chr. viii. 34. ix. 40. *Meribbaal.*

h Gen. xviii. 2. xxxiii. 3. 1 Sam. xx. 41. xxv. 23.

Under David Joab was commander-in-chief of the forces. Jehoshaphat recorded and brought forward every business in an orderly manner, or acted as judge or chancellor. Under Abiathar the high priest, Ahimelech his son, and Zadok descended from Eleazar, were the presiding priests; probably the one on mount Zion, the other at Gibeon where the tabernacle was. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* iii. 4. 1 *Chr.* xvi. 37—43.) Seraiah was scribe or secretary, to inspect and manage all writings concerning foreign or domestick transactions. And Benaiah commanded the Cherethites and Pelethites, David's constant attendants or guards, who were chosen out from his other troops, and probably consisted chiefly of those, who had accompanied him in his distresses; or of such as had joined him from among the Philistines, who are called Cherethites. (*Marg. Ref.* m.) His sons, also, when grown up, were initiated into publick business, as they became capable of it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In due season and succession, every promise and prediction of God's word will receive its full accomplishment. —Short is the triumphing and certain the ruin of all his enemies, however strong and confederated. But those who confide in his protection, and are doing his work, will be preserved and prospered, "whithersoever they go." They will not allow themselves to glory in their success, or to establish any other ground of confidence, than the mercy, power, and truth of him who has hitherto helped them, to whom they will dedicate the fruits of their prosperity; and in this they will be distinguished from all the other mighty ones, who have been renowned upon the earth.—It is true wisdom to court the friendship of those whom the Lord prospers.—A safe and honourable peace should be the object of all wars: and the diligent, impartial administration of justice, the business of those who are advanced above others; for their authority was given them to do good with.—Thus the Son of David subjects his enemies: his gospel is a savour of life to some, and of death to others; and he will be glorified *upon* his obstinate opposers, and *by* those who welcome him as their Lord and Saviour. Many assist in building his spiritual temple, who have no place in it: his government is in judgment and in justice, as well as in mercy: and all who adhere to him faithfully in a state of humiliation and suffering, shall reign with him for ever in glory. Let us then submit to him and seek his friendship, counting his service our honour and our pleasure, and diligently attending to the work which he assigns us in our different stations and relations, in the church, the community, and in relative life.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1. Mephibosheth was only five years old at his father's death; (iv. 4;) but at this time he had a son (12): so that many years must have elapsed before David made this enquiry. For above seven years he had been opposed by Ish-bosheth, and his engagements afterwards had been numerous. He had not indeed *injured* any of Saul's family: yet he seems to have been too forgetful of his friendship with Jonathan, and his engagements to him. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 3, 4. xx. 14—17. xxiii. 16—18.) As however Mephibosheth was brought up in obscurity beyond Jordan, and perhaps purposely concealed by the suspicious care of his friends, David might not know that Jonathan had any child living (4). But at length, recollecting himself, he desired to shew his entire forgiveness of Saul's injuries, and his gratitude for Jonathan's kindness, by restoring Saul's estate to some of his remaining posterity; and by conferring further favours on them, for the sake of his friend. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Matt.* xii. 46—50. *John* xix. 25—27.)

V. 2. *Ziba.*] *Notes*, 9—11. xvi. 1—4. xix. 24—30.

V. 3. *The kindness of God.*] For the sake of the oath of God sworn to Jonathan, or according to the example of the LORD's kindness unto himself.—*Lame*, &c.] *Note*, iv. 3, 4.

V. 4. *Machir.*] This person was afterwards a very useful friend to David; and perhaps the more willingly, on account of David's kindness to Mephibosheth, whom he had generously brought up. (*Note*, xvii. 27—29.)

V. 6. David might have heard of the name of Mephibo-

7 And David said unto him, [i] Fear not: [j] for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt [k] eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou should-est look upon such [l] a dead dog as I *am?*

9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, [m] I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son [n] shall eat bread alway at my table. [o] Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, [p] According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Mephibosheth had a young [q] son, whose name *was* Micha: and all that dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* [r] servants unto Mephibosheth.

13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for [s] he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

i Gen. xliii. 18. 23. l. 18—21. 1 Sam. xii. 19, 20. 24. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Mark v. 33, 34. Luke i. 12, 13. 29, 30.
j See on i. 3.—Ruth ii. 11, 12. 2 Tim. i. 16—18.
k 11. xix. 28. 33. 1 Kings ii. 7. Jer. lii. 33, 34. Luke xxii. 30. Rev. iii. 20.
l iii. 8. xvi. 9. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. xxvi. 20. Matt. xv. 26, 27.
m xvi. 4. xix. 29. 1 Sam. ix. 1. 1s. xxxii. 8.
n 11. xix. 28. 2 Kings xxv. 29. Luke xiv. 15.
o xix. 17.
p xvi. 1—4. xix. 26, 27.
q 1 Chr. viii. 34—40. ix. 40—44. *Micah.*
r Mic. vii. 6.
s 7. 10, 11.

CHAP. X.

David sends ambassadors to comfort Hanun, the king of Ammon, on the death of his father; who grossly insults them, 1—4. David counsels and comforts them, 5. The Ammonites, assisted by the Syrians, are overcome by Joab and Abishai, 6—14. Hadarezer sends another army, which David conquers, slaying Shobach its general, 15—18. The kings of Syria submit to David, 19

AND it came to pass after this, that the [a] king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead.

a Judg. x. 7—9. xi. 12—28. 1 Sam. xi. 1—3. 1 Chr. xix. 1—3.

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sheth; or perhaps he had seen him in his infancy, and now recollected his features, though he knew not before that he was living.

V. 7. Saul's paternal estate came into David's hands after the death of Ish-bosheth, and it seems to have been large. This was now restored by him to Mephibosheth as the right heir; and he was besides admitted to a place at David's own table, as one of his near friends or relatives.

V. 8. *A dead dog.*] (*Marg. Ref.* l.) That is, a person who is very mean, and incapable of being any way serviceable. Mephibosheth adverted, not only to his unworthiness, but to his bodily infirmities, in this expression of grateful surprise. He seems to have been an unambitious, modest, friendly, and pious man.

V. 9—11. Ziba had been greatly enriched under Saul, and was now entrusted with the management of Mephibosheth's estate, because of his professed affection for his family: but David seems to have been more generous than prudent in this appointment. Mephibosheth's family must be provided for out of the estate, though he himself lived at David's table.—Some understand the last clause, as the words of Ziba, proposing in a boasting manner to entertain Mephibosheth royally at his own table: but they seem to be the words of David.

V. 12. *Micha.*] The posterity of Jonathan and Mephibosheth, by Micha, was very numerous. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* viii. 29—40. ix. 35—44.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Amidst a multiplicity of affairs, we are prone to forget the gratitude we owe, and the engagements we are under, not only to our friends, but to the Lord himself: but persons of real and eminent piety, when they recollect their obligations, will have no rest till they have discharged them: they will be burdened with those possessions, which they suppose *in equity* belong to another; and impatient to express their forgiveness of those by whom they have been injured, and their gratitude to the persons or the relations of those who have been kind to them.—Those who have much in their power should sedulously *enquire* after opportunities of doing good; for frequently the most deserving objects of our compassion are concealed by modesty and patient resignation.—Kindness, shewn to the most helpless persons, is sometimes recompensed in a very seasonable manner, by those from whom we had no expectation of obtaining or wanting assistance.—To be trained up in privacy, poverty, and hardship, and afterwards more prospered, is far more comfortable, than to be brought up in pride and delicacy, with great expectations, and then to be reduced to poverty and distress. "When riches in-"crease, they are increased that eat them:" and, though the liberality of friends should be thankfully acknowledged, it can contribute little to our real happiness, further than providing us with the necessaries or conveniencies of life. But the love of Jesus, who seeks out, provides for, enriches, and entertains us poor, ruined, worthless sinners, confers substantial and enduring felicity. May we humbly acknowledge our unworthiness of his mercies, thankfully accept them, and return him our cheerful praises and willing services, and shew our gratitude to him, by kindness to those whom he owns, as his "brethren, sisters, and "mother."

2 Then said David, I will [b] shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, [c] as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him, by the hand of his servants, for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.

3 And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, * Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? [d] hath not David *rather* sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?

4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, [e] and shaved off the one half of their beards, and [f] cut off their garments in the middle, *even* to their buttocks, and sent them away.

5 When they told *it* unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at [g] Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they [h] stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired [i] the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king [k] Maacah a thousand men, and of [†] Ish-tob twelve thousand men.

7 And when David heard of *it*, he sent Joab, and [l] all the host of the mighty men.

8 And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zoba, and of [m] Rehob, and Ish-tob, and Maacah, *were* by themselves in the field.

9 When Joab saw that [n] the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice *men* of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians.

10 And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put *them* in array against the children of Ammon.

11 And he said, [o] If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee.

12 Be [p] of good courage, and let us [q] play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and [r] the LORD do that which seemeth him good.

13 And Joab drew nigh, and the people that *were* with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and [s] they fled before him.

14 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled,

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NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 2. It is probable, that Nahash was kind to David in the days of Saul, from resentment and dislike to that prince: but it may be questioned, whether David ought to have shewn respect to the memory of so cruel an enemy to his people; especially as the law forbad Israel to seek the peace and prosperity of the Ammonites. (*Notes*, *Deut.* xxiii. 3—6. 1 *Sam.* xi. 1—3.) They were not, however, of the *devoted* nations; so that, perhaps, it was not wrong for David to express a sense of gratitude to a benefactor, without deciding upon the motives of his conduct; and to render the customary civilities to his son, on his decease.

V. 3, 4. The princes of Hanun, who had great authority with him, seem to have been suspicious of David, from consciousness of the injuries which they had done to Israel, and were still meditating against it. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xxix. 4—6.) But if they had seen cause to be reserved, they ought not to have abused and insulted David's ambassadors. This was a violation of the most sacred laws of nations; the greatest affront imaginable to the prince whom they represented; and a direct declaration of war against him. —According to the sentiments and customs of those days, the Ammonites treated David's ambassadors in the most contemptuous manner, which they could possibly devise. (*Marg. Ref.* e, f.)

V. 5. *Jericho.*] This was a village near the spot where Jericho had stood: for that city was not yet rebuilt. (*Notes*, *Josh.* vi. 26. 1 *Kings* xvi. 34.)—In this place, as soon as the ambassadors had crossed Jordan, they were advised to remain till their beards were grown; (which were considered as necessary to the appearance in publick of grave and venerable persons:) that thus the disgrace which they had received might be obliterated.

V. 6. (*Note*, *Gen.* xxxiv. 30.) The Ammonites had made themselves so odious to David, that they could not expect but that he would make war on them: and therefore they determined to form alliances, and act offensively. —Little more can be determined with certainty concerning the different tribes of the Syrians, than what may be collected from the texts referred to in the margin. Maacah seems to have been the name of a district, and not of a king: and the clause may be rendered, "of the king of "Maacah." (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xix. 6, 7.)

V. 8—14. This battle seems to have been fought at

then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

15 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they [t] gathered themselves together.

16 And [u] Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that *were* beyond [*] the river; and they came to Helam: and [†] Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer *went* before them.

17 And when it was told David, [x] he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam: and the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him.

18 And the Syrians [y] fled before Israel; and David slew *the men of* seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand [z] horsemen, and smote [a] Shobach the captain of their host, who died there.

19 And when all the kings *that were* [b] servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians [c] feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

t Ps. ii. 1. Is. viii. 9, 10. Mic. iv. 11, 12. Zech. xiv. 2, 3. Rev. xix. 19—21.
u viii. 3—8. 1 Chr. xviii. 3. 5.
* That is, *Euphrates.*
† Or, *Shophach.* 1 Chr. xix. 16.
x 1 Chr. xix. 17.
y viii. 4. Ps. xviii. 38. xlvi. 11.
z 1 Chr. xix. 18. *footmen.*
a Judg. iv. 2. 22. v. 26.
b Gen. xiv. 1—5. Josh. xi. 10. Judg. i. 7. 1 Kings xx. 1. Dan. ii. 37.
c viii. 6. 1 Chr. xix. 19. Ps. xlviii. 4, 5. Is. xxvi. 11. Rev. xviii. 10.

CHAP. XI.

Joab besieges Rabbah, 1. David commits adultery with Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah, 2—4. She informs David, that she is pregnant, 5; who sends for Uriah, and in vain tries to induce him to visit his wife, 6—13. He sends by Uriah a letter to Joab; according to which Uriah, with others, is slain by the Ammonites, 14—17. Joab sends word to David, and he answers the messengers in very improper language, 18—25. David marries Bath-sheba, who bears him a son; but God is displeased, 26, 27.

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the gate of Medeba, a city upon the borders of the Ammonites, and in their possession. (1 *Chr.* xix. 7.) Joab's forces were opposed by two armies, before and behind: but his arrangement was judicious, and his address spirited. —His valour and regard to his country were *real* and eminent: and the language of faith and piety which he employed, probably under some transient convictions, was honourable to God, and might be useful to the soldiers. Perhaps the slaughter was not very great, as both the Syrians and Ammonites took shelter in the city.

V. 18. The men of *seven hundred,* &c.] "Seven "thousand *men which fought* in chariots." (1 *Chr.* xix. 18.) Probably *seven thousand men belonging to seven hundred chariots;* and forty thousand men, who fought on foot, or on horseback, as there was occasion or opportunity. Or, some were foot-soldiers and some horsemen.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to sympathize with the afflicted, and shew gratitude to our friends: but nothing, except vexation and disappointment, can be expected by courting the friendship of ungodly men.—Treacherous minds are always suspicious: as they are conscious, that they themselves mean to deceive when they can gain by it, they naturally suppose that others intend the same; and weak and wicked princes generally employ counsellors of this description.—It is the heighth of folly to awaken the resentment of those, by insult and contempt, whose power of taking vengeance cannot be thus diminished: and the fatal effects of rash affronts, though little feared, are often severely felt.—We should shew respect and kindness, to those who have been unjustly disgraced; yet it is needless to lay mere affronts and insults to heart: unmerited reproaches or contempt will soon wear away, and a clear conscience should be deemed sufficient to counterbalance the present uneasiness. Yet, by measures of this kind, valuable persons are often driven for a season into obscurity, to the loss of the publick rather than of themselves.—Those, who are the most ready to commit injustice, are commonly the most averse to reconciliation: and confidence in numbers, strength, or valour, frequently buoys up men to their destruction; for "though hand join in hand the wicked shall "not be unpunished." But a good cause and a single dependence upon the Lord afford the surest indications of success: and when valiant men are cordial to the interests of their country, and are defending its civil and religious liberties, their animation and presence of mind will often increase in proportion to dangers and difficulties.—It is our duty, in every emergency, to do our utmost, and to encourage others to do the same, helping one another as occasion may require; and thus committing the event to the Lord; "Let him do what seemeth him good." But alas, many use good words, and seem, in perilous circumstances, to depend on God, and to be submissive to him, whose hearts are not upright in his sight: and many are very serviceable to his church, who have no part in its peculiar blessings.—But especially let the impenitent and unbelieving and disobedient recollect, that the son of David will assuredly resent their contempt of his ambassadors, whom he sends to them with a message of peace and love; and that he will consider the ill-usage of them as a declaration of war against himself. In this warfare numbers and confederacies are utterly unavailing, and destruction is inevitable. Those therefore, who have rashly engaged in the desperate contest, should without delay, separate from his enemies, fearing any longer to help them; and make it their great object to obtain his forgiveness, and to be numbered among his subjects. All his people should be valiant in his cause, and for his truth and righteousness: and ministers should neither fear, nor be ashamed, to exercise their embassy of reconciliation, however despised, insulted, or persecuted; for he will plead their cause, comfort them under their trials, and reward their faithfulness with "a crown of glory which "fadeth not away."

AND it came to pass, * after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that [b] David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged [c] Rabbah: but David tarried still at Jerusalem.

2 And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David [d] arose from off his bed, and walked upon [e] the roof of the king's house: and from the roof [f] he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman *was* [g] very beautiful to look upon.

3 And David [h] sent and enquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this [†] Bath-sheba the daughter of [‡] Eliam, the wife of [i] Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David [k] sent messengers, and took her: and she came in unto him, and [l] he lay with her, (for [l] she was [m] purified from her uncleanness,) and she returned unto her house.

5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, [n] I *am* with child.

6 And David sent to Joab, *saying*, [o] Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded *of him* [‖] how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

8 And David said to Uriah, [p] Go down to thy house, and [q] wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's

* Heb. *at the return of the year.* 1 Kings xx. 22. 26. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10. Ec. iii. 8.
b 1 Chr. xx. 1. Zech. xiv. 3.
c xii. 26. Deut. iii. 11. 1 Chr. xx. 1. Ez. xxi. 20.
d iv. 5. 7. Prov. xix. 15. xxiv. 33, 34. Matt. xxvi. 40, 41. 1 Thes. v. 6, 7. 1 Pet. iv. 7.
e Deut. xxii. 8. Jer. xix. 13. Matt. x. 27. Acts x. 9.
f Gen. iii. 6. vi. 2. xxxiv. 2. Job xxxi. 1. Ps. cxix. 37. Matt. v. 28. 1 John ii. 16.
g Gen. xxxix. 6. Prov. vi. 25. xxxi. 30.
h Jer. v. 8. Hos. vii. 6, 7. Jam. i. 14, 15.
† Or, *Bath-shua.*
‡ Or, *Ammiel.* 1 Chr. iii. 5.
i xxiii. 39. 1 Chr. xi. 41.
k Gen. xxxix. 7. Job xxxi. 9—11. Ps. l. 18.
l Ps. li. *title.* Jam. i. 14.
m Or, *and when she had purified herself, &c. she returned.* Prov. xxx. 20.
n Lev. xii. 2—5. xv. 19, &c. xviii. 19.
n Deut. xxii. 22. Prov. vi. 34.
o Gen. iv. 7. xxxviii. 18—23. 1 Sam. xv. 30. Job xx. 12—14. Prov. xxviii. 13. Is. xxix. 13. Matt. xxvi. 70. 72. 74.
‖ Heb. *of the peace of Joab.* Gen. xxix. 6. xxxvii. 14. 1 Sam. xvii. 22. *marg.*
p Ps. xliv. 21. Is. xxix. 15. Luke xii. 2. Heb. iv. 13.
q Gen. xviii. 4. xix. 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—5. David committed the management of the war against Ammon to Joab, and continued at ease in his palace, when he ought to have been "fighting the battles of the LORD:" and thus, being out of the line of present duty, he slothfully wasted his time. Without doubt his prosperity had gradually rendered him more negligent than formerly in his devotional exercises, and more self-indulgent; and perhaps had occasioned a measure of self-confidence and carnal security. Thus his passions gathered force, in proportion as his holy affections abated: and, having been accustomed, without censure, to marry any single woman, for whom he conceived an affection, his inclinations had not been habituated to a denial. When therefore, after an unseasonable sleep, he was walking on the flat roof of his house, and by some means had a view of a very beautiful woman, who was washing herself from a ceremonial uncleanness, he allowed himself to gaze upon her, until he lusted after her in his heart; and, perhaps supposing her not to be a married woman, he sent to enquire after her, in order to add her to the number of his wives. But his sinful passion had acquired such an ascendancy, that he was the more inflamed by being informed, that she was the wife of one of his bravest and most faithful officers. He therefore sent messengers for her, who could not be ignorant of his intentions: and though she was previously a person of virtue and reputation, he obtained her compliance, (probably by means of those hopes which his rank in life was capable of inspiring,) and committed adultery with her.—This crime was attended with manifold aggravations: it was a gross violation of the seventh commandment: it was likewise punishable by the death of both parties according to the *judicial* law. (*Lev.* xx. 10.) David was chief magistrate, to whom it belonged to carry that law into execution: he was at this time about fifty years of age; and he had already many wives; and many children also, approaching to man's estate, to whom the example would be prejudicial in the extreme. His acquaintance with the divine law, his open profession of true religion, his high reputation for piety and wisdom, and the immense obligations which the Lord had conferred on him; the rank and character of Bath-sheba too, and the service for him and his country in which Uriah was engaged, were all circumstances which exceedingly aggravated his offence.—When Bath-sheba found that she was with child by David, she justly dreaded the resentment of her husband, who had been absent from her for a considerable time; and she sent to inform David, that by the iniquitous interposition of his authority, which perhaps he had promised, she might be preserved from being made a publick example. (*Note, Matt.* i. 18, 19.)—Most of the Jewish writers, on the most frivolous pretences, exculpate both David and Bath-sheba, as to the adultery; and only condemn David, as to the murder! This is a specimen of their morality!

V. 6, 7. It is probable that Uriah was descended from the Hittites; but he was a proselyte, and had the heart of an Israelite.—Under the guilt of his very heinous sin, David was more anxious to conceal his shame, and prevent the temporal consequences, than to obtain forgiveness from God! indeed the former seems, for the time, to have almost wholly occupied his mind. (*Note, Ps.* xxxii. 3—5.)—Perhaps he feared lest Uriah, in his deep resentment, should raise rebellion against him: and certainly he dreaded the reproaches which he might well expect from every quarter, when his shameful misconduct should be publickly known. In this state of mind, he did not consider the treachery and injustice, of drawing in Uriah to consider himself as the father of the child, with which Bath-sheba was pregnant: but, having formed his plan, he sent to Uriah, as if he could depend more on him to inform him of the state of the war, than on any other person.

V. 8, 9. Uriah's house was near David's palace, perhaps because he commanded some of the Cherethites and Pelethites, who were the king's guard. (*Note*, viii. 15—18.) David never questioned but that he would gladly embrace the opportunity of visiting his wife, and accordingly provided them an entertainment. But whether any thing had excited Uriah's suspicions; or whether, through a

house, and [r] there [*] followed him [s] a mess *of meat* from the king.

9 But [t] Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest not thou from *thy* journey? why *then* didst thou not go down unto thine house?

11 And Uriah said unto David, [u] The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and [x] my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields: shall I then go into mine house to eat, and to drink, and to lie with my wife? [y] *as* thou livest, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

12 And David said to Uriah, [z] Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day and the morrow.

13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he [a] made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

14 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David [b] wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, [c] Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the [†] hottest battle, and retire ye [‡] from him, that he may be smitten, [d] and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that [e] he assigned Uriah unto a place, where he knew that valiant men *were*.

17 And the men of the city went out and fought with Joab: and [f] there fell *some* of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

[r] Ps. xii. 2. lv. 21.
[*] Heb. *went out after him.*
[s] Gen. xliii. 34.
[t] Job v. 12—14. Prov. xxi. 30.
[u] vii. 2. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 4. xiv. 18.
[x] xx. 6. Matt. x. 24, 25. John xiii. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 25—27. 2 Tim. ii. 3. 4. 12. Heb. xii. 1, 2.
[y] xiv. 19. 1 Sam. i. 26. xvii. 55. xx. 3. xxv. 26.
[z] Jer. ii. 22, 23. 37.
[a] Gen. xix. 32—35. Ex. xxxii. 21. Hab. ii. 15.
[b] 1 Kings xxi. 8—10. Ps. xix. 13. lii. 2. lxii. 9. Jer. ix. 1—4. xvii. 9. Mic. vii. 3—5.
[c] 17. 1 Sam. xviii. 17. 21. 25. Ps. li. 4. 14. Jer. x. 23.
[†] Heb. *strong.*
[‡] Heb. *from after him.*
[d] xii. 9.
[e] 21. iii. 27. xx. 9, 10. 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. 1 Kings ii. 5. 31—34. xxi. 12—14. 2 Kings x. 6, 7. Prov. xxix. 12. Hos. v. 11.
[f] Acts v. 29. xii. 9. Ps. li. 14.

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hardy self-denied disposition, he scorned to fare better than his commander and comrades, he would not go home, but slept with the other soldiers: and thus the Lord defeated David's design of "covering his transgression." (*Note, Prov.* xxviii. 13.)

V. 10, 11. The circumstance of the ark being constantly placed in a tabernacle, and not a temple, could be no reason why Uriah should not go home to his house. It is therefore probable, that the ark was on this occasion carried with the army to the war. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* iv. 4, 5. xiv. 16—23.)—Uriah's answer was so decided, 'that David's heart, it might have been expected, should have been 'deeply touched, to think how he had abused so brave a 'man; and made him reflect, how vilely he indulged him-'self in sinful pleasure, while this man and the rest glo-'riously endured all manner of hardships, and refused the 'most innocent pleasure, for the sake of their country. 'But he was so corrupted for the present, that he was 'troubled to find Uriah so true a soldier!' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12, 13. David pretended further business with Uriah, and great kindness for him, in order to deceive him; that, if possible, he might break his resolution. Accordingly he entertained him at his own table: and, in addition to his other injuries, became his tempter to drunkenness; hoping that when his passions were inflamed, he might be induced to go home to his wife: but in this too he found himself disappointed. (*Notes,* xiii. 22—29. *Gen.* xix. 31—38. *Hab.* ii. 15—17.)

V. 14—17. Satan having gradually drawn David on into one sinful attempt after another, had prepared his mind for still more atrocious wickedness. (*Notes, Matt.* xxvi. 14—16. 25. 30—35. 40, 41. 69—75. *John* xii. 1—8. xiii. 18—30.) He now perceived that, if Uriah lived, he must detect his wife's unfaithfulness; to prevent this was at present his leading object, and all other consequences were for the moment forgotten. David, however, would not kill Uriah with his own hands, nor order his servants to assassinate him, nor put him to death under colour of law: for his reputation must have been ruined by such measures; nay, perhaps the direct injustice and murder would have disquieted his conscience, insensible as it was become. But he devised a more plausible and secret method of getting rid of him; which seemed at the time less atrocious, though in reality it was unspeakably more complicated and heinous. The known valour, fidelity, and zeal for his country, of this gallant officer, suggested the method of murdering him! David had such confidence in this much-injured man, that he did not hesitate to entrust him with the letter which decreed his death: and whatever else Uriah suspected, he did not betray his trust. Joab, and those "who retired from Uriah," were thus made accomplices in the murder; and the soldiers who were slain with Uriah, were no less murdered by David, than he was. Whatever casuistry David might use with his conscience, this was *deliberate murder of many persons with malice prepense,* aggravated exceedingly by the circumstance, that these men were slain in the very act of fighting for him and his kingdom. Perhaps Joab imagined that the king had some *political* reason for thus taking off Uriah: but probably he was rejoiced to see him involved in the guilt of murder as well as himself. (*Notes,* iii. 26—39.)—And is this David, who repeatedly spared his enemy, and whose heart smote him, when he had cut off Saul's skirt! (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 4—15. xxvi. 8—20.) Alas, how is he changed and fallen!—'*Quantum mutatus ab illo!*'

18 Then Joab sent, and told David all the things concerning the war;

19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king;

20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?

g Judg. ix. 53. 21 Who smote [g] Abimelech the son
h Judg. vi. 32. vii. 1. *Jerub-baal.* of [h] Jerub-besheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a mill-stone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say
i iii. 27. 34. Ps. xxxix. 8. Is. xiv. 10. Ez. xvi. 51, 52. thou, [i] Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.

23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.

24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants, and *some* of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing * displease thee; * Heb. *be evil in thine eyes.*
k for the sword devoureth † one as well k Josh. vii. 8, 9. 1 Sam. vi. 9. Ec. ix. 1—3. 11, 12.
as another: l make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow † Heb. *so and such.*
it; and encourage thou him. l xii. 26.

26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, m she mourned for her husband. m iii. 31. xiv. 2. Gen. xxvii. 41.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and n fetched her to n iii. 2—5. v. 13—16. xii. 9.
his house, and she became his wife, and o Gen. xxxviii. 10. 1 Chr. xxi. 7.
bare him a son. ‡ But the thing that ‡ Heb. *was evil in the eyes of.* Ps. v. 6. li. 4, 5. Heb. xiii. 4.
David had done † displeased the LORD.

V. 21. *Then say*, &c.] This was a plain intimation to the messenger, that the death of Uriah would be so agreeable to David, as to reconcile him to the loss which had been sustained. Thus he began already to be despised even by his accomplices!—Amidst all the painful sensations excited by reading this chapter, it is pleasing to find David's soldiers so ready at quoting the Scripture: for probably the book of Judges was then extant as a part of Holy Writ. (*Note, Judg.* ix. 50—57.)

V. 25. Provided the brave Uriah were dead, David seems not to have regarded who were slain with him. He spoke on this occasion with an insensibility about the lives of his subjects, which borders on infidelity, and strongly marks the state of his heart at this time. On other occasions he would have considered such an event as a rebuke, which required humiliation, prayer, and sacrifices, and a more entire dependence on God in future; (*Notes, Josh.* vii. 6—9. 1 *Chr.* xv. 12—14:) and he would have censured the imprudence of the commanders, and charged them, on pain of his displeasure, to be more careful of the lives of their brethren.

V. 27. David married Bath-sheba as soon as it could be done with decency, and the customary mourning (which was in this case a vile mockery,) was ended. But though there remained no injured husband to avenge the adultery, the premature birth of the child would discover it.—All this time, as it appears from the narrative, David continued impenitent, and comparatively unconcerned. Probably, he still attended on the ordinances of religion. By some ingenious self-flattery he endeavoured to palliate his conduct to himself; and no one reproved him for it. Perhaps the general practice of other princes induced him to conclude, that persons in his high station were not, in this respect, bound to the same strictness as their subjects. However, though he had no deep remorse of conscience, we may be sure that he lost all spirituality and comfort in religion: for small transgressions, like slight wounds, give much pain to the believer's conscience; but enormous crimes, like a violent blow upon the head, leave him for a season in an unaccountable state of insensibility.

But the thing, &c.] Such marriages, as this of David with Bath-sheba, with whom he had previously committed adultery, were not forbidden in the law, as some of the rabbies suppose; for this was needless, as both parties were condemned to die: and David was not afterwards ordered to put her away. Yet as he married her in order to cover his iniquity, and as the desire of possessing her may be supposed to have been an inducement to the murder of Uriah, it formed an additional aggravation of the crime: and the whole transaction, from first to last, was in all respects displeasing to the Lord.—But why was this permitted? or why was it recorded? It is certain that thousands, through succeeding generations, have, by this fall of "the man after God's own heart," been prejudiced against true religion, hardened in infidelity, or emboldened in blasphemy: while others have thence taken occasion to commit *habitual wickedness* under a religious profession, and with presumptuous confidence, to the still greater discredit of the gospel. It should, however, be considered, that all these have been, previously, either open enemies to true religion, or hypocritical pretenders to it: and it is the righteous purpose of God, that stumbling-blocks should be thrown in the way of such men, that they "may stum-"ble, and fall, and be snared, and taken, and perish:" it is his holy will thus to detect the secret malignity of their hearts, and to make way for the display of his justice in their condemnation.—On the other hand thousands, from age to age, have by this awful example been rendered more suspicious of themselves, more watchful, more afraid of temptation, more dependent on the Lord, and more

CHAP. XII.

Nathan by a parable causes David to pass sentence on himself, 1—6. David, convicted by Nathan, confesses his guilt; and is pardoned, but told that the child shall die, 7—14. The child is smitten and dies, though David fasted and prayed for him while he lived, 15—18. Finding that the child is dead, David worships God, and takes comfort, 19—23. Solomon is born, and named Jedidiah, 24, 25. David takes Rabbah, and treats the Ammonites with severity, 26—31.

fervent in prayer; and by means of David's fall, have themselves been preserved from falling. Numbers, who have been overcome by temptation, have thus been preserved from despair. Every upright soul will *eventually* derive benefit from the impartial record of this event; and none will finally be injured by it, except those, who desire an excuse for sin, or an objection to the religion of the Bible. Bees will collect honey, and spiders poison, from the same plants, according to their different natures. No excuse can be made for David; he attempted none for himself: and much self-knowledge is requisite to account for his conduct, or to deem it *possible* that a man, who had so long enjoyed communion with God, in the highest exercises of devotion, could commit such enormous crimes, and continue so long impenitent. But the Lord's design in leaving him to himself was doubtless wise, righteous, and merciful; and he can and will over-rule it for great good to those who fear and love him. The glory of all the good is his due; the blame of all the evil, *original* or *consequent*, belongs to those who commit it. (*Notes, Gen.* l. 20. 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 30—33, *v.* 31. *Matt.* xxvi. 69—75.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

A deep conviction, that the human heart, even the heart of every man, is "deceitful above all things, and despe-"rately wicked," is of the greatest importance to the due exercise of repentance, faith, and every Christian grace: and in order to impress this humiliating conviction on the minds of those who attend to the word of God, a few of his most eminent servants have been left to fall in such a manner, as fully to prove, that every evil dwells in each of us; and that in circumstances of concurring temptations, we are capable of committing any crime; even that which we at present and habitually most dread and detest! Neither eminent piety, nor a long and close walk with God, habits of obedience and of the government of the passions, nor the sobriety of advancing age, nor peculiar obligations from God, great reputation and usefulness, nor clear knowledge of the divine law; nor even the Spirit of prophecy, have been found capable of extirpating the most hateful propensities of the human heart: though restrained, dethroned, and crucified, they have still lived; and have revived, obtained advantages, and for a season *seemed to reign* with the most destructive tyranny! Who then are we, that we should deem ourselves secure? We are never in this world out of the reach of temptation; never exempted, in respect of any sin, from the necessity of watchfulness, prayer, and dependence on divine grace. Let us not then be high-minded; but beg of God that he would enable us to pass the time of our sojourning in humble jealous fear.—The declensions of believers are commonly gradual: exemption from trials, and worldly prosperity, induce habits of negligence in duty, and inexpedient self-indulgence; and thus the soul falls into a careless and unwatchful frame. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xi. 1—8.) Then a man is drawn to the verge of prohibited gratification; and far beyond the bounds of expediency and moderation, in things not absolutely unlawful: and when his passions have been accustomed to indulgence, he is the more easily prevailed on to commit evident evil. The eye, the ear, the outward senses are not turned away from forbidden objects; by these inlets the sinful imagination is excited, and concupiscence is produced. Perhaps he hopes that the desire may be lawfully gratified, and on that vain pretence the mind is allowed to dwell on it. (*Notes, Gen.* iii. 2—6.) But when lust is conceived, every restraint generally increases its vehemence: the thoughts of future consequences, and the consideration of the presence, purity, and justice of God, are excluded; his law and authority are disregarded: faith and fear and love are out of exercise; and the enhanced imagination of the satisfaction to be found in indulgence, possesses and engrosses the soul. Thus sin is brought forth: and, notwithstanding palliations, and previous hopes of concealment and impunity, the mind is soon tortured with that dread of future consequences, which far exceeds all guilty pleasures. (*Notes, Gen.* iii. 7. *Jam.* i. 13—15.) But when the bait is swallowed, Satan hath caught the sinner; and no power except that of God can deliver him, or prevent his being more and more entangled. (*Note, 2 Tim.* ii. 23—26.)—The fear of contempt, and even of disgracing the cause of religion, leads the believer, who is thus fallen, to devise methods of concealment; and such thoughts for a season exclude others of much greater importance, and afford Satan an opportunity of tempting him to still further iniquities: while the conscience, once corrupted, makes feeble opposition to *fraudulent* measures of preserving the reputation, or of preventing the consequences of transgression. Every concession hardens the heart, and provokes the departure of the Holy Spirit. The end being considered necessary; means of every kind, which promise success, seem needful also: and when a man's obligations to God are forgotten, no wonder if all the ties of justice, gratitude, and friendship are disregarded; and to impose upon the credulity and confidence of men, to injure them in their property, reputation, and connexions, and to temp' them to commit sin, are obvious, and, alas! common measures.

V. 14—27.

When a man has so far given place to the devil, as not only to commit scandalous sins, but to use disingenuous and base means of concealing them, and sees a prospect of having the whole exposed to publick view; what shall prevent his being pushed forward, by the same influence and from the same motives, to treachery, malice, and murder, till crimes are multiplied and aggravated, beyond computation, and till every nobler consideration is extinguished? If conscience be thus stupified, it will be easy for the same artful enemy to amuse the deluded offender, with some form of godliness, some palliation or cloke of iniquity, which shall quiet the rising scruple: and success

AND [a] the LORD sent Nathan [b] unto David: and [c] he came unto him, and said unto him, [d] There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich *man* had [e] exceeding many flocks and herds;

3 But the poor *man* had nothing, save [f] one little ewe-lamb, which he had bought, and nourished up; and it grew up together with him, and with his children: it did eat of his own [*] meat, and drank of his own cup, and [g] lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came [h] a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but [i] took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And [k] David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, [l] *As* the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this *thing* [†] shall surely die:

6 And he shall [m] restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and [n] because he had no pity.

a vii. 1—6. xxiv. 11—13. 1 Kings xiii. 1. xviii. 1. 2 Kings i. 3.
b xi. 10—17. 25. xiv. 14. Is. lvii. 17, 18.
c Ps. li. *title*
d xiv. 6—11. Judg. ix. 7—15. 1 Kings xx. 35—41. Is. v. 1—6. Matt. xxi. 33—45. Luke xv. 11, &c. xvi. 19, &c.
e 8. iii. 2—5. v. 13—16. xv. 16. Job i. 3.
f xi. 3. Prov. v. 18, 19.
* Heb. *morsel.*
g Deut. xiii. 6. Mic. vii. 5.
h Gen. xviii. 2—7. Jam. i. 14.
i xi. 3, 4.
k Gen. xxxviii. 24. 1 Sam. xxv 21, 22. Luke vi, 41, 42. ix. 55. Rom. ii. 1.
l 1 Sam. xiv. 39.
† Or, *is worthy to die.* Heb. *is a son of death.* 1 Sam. xx. 31 xxvi. 16. *marg.*
m Ex. xxii. 1 Prov. vi. 31. Luke xix. 8.
n Jam. ii. 13.

in such a course may even be considered as a divine sanction, and induce the language of indifference or of infidelity; while the heart is rendered callous, when the exercise even of atrocious cruelty is needful for the end proposed. But can a real and eminent believer ever tread this downward path, and, as it were, fall asleep in the arms of Satan? (*Notes* and *P. O. Judg.* xvi.) Can a person, who has committed such atrocious crimes, and so long remains impenitent, be indeed a child of God, a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, and an heir of eternal glory? Can one spark of divine life exist unextinguished in such an ocean? It is plain that these things are possible; but no man in such a case can have warranted evidence to conclude that he is a believer: the higher his confidence, who has sunk thus low in wickedness, the greater proof is there of his presumption and hypocrisy. Though grace be not lost in such an awful case, the assurance and consolation of it must be wholly suspended. Let not then any hypocrite, who resembles David in nothing but his transgressions, and who adds the habit of allowed sin to all other aggravations, buoy up his confidence with his example: let him first imitate David's humiliation, repentance, and other eminent graces, before he thinks himself, or requires others to consider him, as merely a backslider. (*Notes*, xii. 13—15. xv. 24—29. 1 *Chr.* xxix. *Ps.* li.) Neither let any opposer or despiser of the truth say, Are these the fruits of faith and devotion? We confidently answer, No. They are the effects of a corrupt nature, the tendency of which to evil must be inconceivably strong, when it overcomes the contrary tendency of truth and grace in the heart of an eminent servant of God.—And let us all watch against the beginnings of negligence and self-indulgence, and keep at the utmost distance from that precipice, whence David fell, earnestly beseeching God to close our senses, imaginations, and affections to all forbidden objects, thoughts, and desires. Let us study moderation, expediency, and superiority to all animal inclinations, in things lawful: continually attend to our proper work, and pray always that we may not be led into temptation. Then will our lives best shew the tendency of our principles, and confute those who accuse us of encouraging men to sin by the freeness of salvation.—But again: Is it possible that such a backslider from God can be recovered, and admitted afterwards to comfortable communion with him? Doubtless it is; "for "with the LORD there is mercy, and with him there is "plenteous redemption:" and he will neither cast out one humble penitent believer, whatever his former crimes have been; nor suffer Satan to pluck any of his sheep out of his hand. (*Note, John* x. 26—31.) Let then those who are fallen, return to the Lord without delay, and seek forgiveness through the Redeemer's atoning blood.—But how poor is every success and gratification, when the Lord is displeased with us! Either in this world or the next, he will surely expose us to shame for our crimes.—It is also grievous to observe how the sins of believers quiet the consciences and rejoice the hearts of wicked men, who are ready to insult and say, "Art thou also become as one "of us!" But while many will thus abuse these humiliating instances, may we be unfeignedly thankful, if we have been restrained from such dreadful falls. May we commit our souls to him, who is able to keep us from falling: may we take warning by David's sins; and imitate the generosity, self-denial, and attachment to the cause of Israel, of the gallant and deeply injured Uriah.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—6. When God was displeased with his servant David, he did not immediately inflict heavy judgments upon him; but he sent a prophet, to call him to repentance. Nathan did not go, of his own accord and in his own name, to reprove David for his offences: but when sent by the Lord, he plainly delivered his message; without being induced by David's royal authority, his previous eminent character as a saint and psalmist, or his own peculiar affection for him, to conceal or mutilate it. It is probable, that this took place soon after the birth of David's son by Bath-sheba; when the scandalous transactions would begin to be generally noticed. But whatever others whispered and circulated, David seems not to have been in any due measure sensible of his exceedingly aggravated wickedness, till the Lord thus awakened his conscience.—In order to insinuate the necessary truths, without exciting the resistance of David's partial self-love; and to induce him to give sentence against himself before he was aware, Nathan introduced his message with a parable. (*Notes, Judg.* ix. 7—15.) 'There is never more use of 'wisdom, than in the contrivance of reprehension; espe-

7 And Nathan said to David, [o] Thou *art* the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [p] I anointed thee king over Israel, and [q] I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul:

8 And I gave thee [r] thy master's house, and thy [r] master's wives into thy bosom, and [s] gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and, if *that had* been too little, [t] I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou [u] despised the commandment of the LORD, [x] to do evil in his sight? [y] thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife *to be* thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore [z] the sword shall never depart from thine house; [a] because thou hast despised me, and [b] hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

o 1 Sam. xiii. 13. 1 Kings xviii. 18. xxi. 19, 20. Matt. xiv. 4.
p vii. 8. 1 Sam. xv. 17. xvi. 13.
q xxii. 1. 49. 1 Sam. xviii. 11. 21. xix. 10—15. xxiii. 7. 14. 26—28.
r 11. 1 Kings ii. 22.
s ii. 4. v 5.
t vii. 19. Ps. lxxxiv. 11. lxxxvi. 15. Rom viii. 32.
u 10. xi. 4. 14—17. Gen. ix. 5, 6. Ex. xx. 13, 14. Num. xv. 30, 31. 1 Sam. xv. 19. 23. Is. v. 24. Am. ii. 4. Heb. x. 28, 29.
x 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Ps. li. 4. xc. 8. cxxxix. 1, 2. Jer. xviii. 10.
y xi. 15—17. 27.
z xiii. 28, 29. xviii. 14, 15. 33. 1 Kings ii. 23—25. Am. vii. 9. Matt. xxvi. 52.
a Num. xi. 20. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Mal. i. 6, 7. Matt. vi. 24. Rom. ii. 4. 1 Thes. iv. 8.
b Gen. xx. 3. Prov. vi. 32, 33.

'cially of princes, and great persons.' *Bp. Patrick.* There scarcely ever was any thing more calculated, on the one hand to awaken emotions of sympathy, and on the other, those of indignation, than the case here supposed, and the several circumstances, by which the heart must be interested in the poor man's case, and by which the unfeeling oppression of his rich neighbour was aggravated. Several expressions, however, might have excited a suspicion, that more was intended, than merely to plead the cause of an injured man against his oppressor: yet David evidently supposed it to be matter of fact, till Nathan made the application.—The rich man, who had many flocks and herds, represented David with his many wives and concubines: the poor man, with his single ewe lamb, which was so tenderly brought up by him, was Uriah with his one well-beloved wife; and the traveller may mean David's sensual lust, which nothing could satisfy but the wife of Uriah. 'In the beginning it' (the evil desire) 'is 'but a traveller, but in time it becomes a guest; and in 'conclusion, is the master of the house.' *Jewish doctors in Bp. Patrick.* Yet this parable, apposite and beautiful as it was, pointed out only a small part of the enormity of David's conduct. Uriah's loyal and gallant services, and David's ingratitude and treachery, with the murder of him and his fellow soldiers, were not so much as alluded to. His injury to Uriah and Bath-sheba, in the crime of adultery, was alone shadowed forth: for perhaps the prophet meant to bring him by degrees to a view of his exceeding sinfulness; and would not make the case too exact in all particulars, lest he should suspect his intentions, and be kept from giving sentence against himself.—David, forgetful of his own crimes, was fired with indignation against the imaginary offender; and with a solemn oath condemned him, not only to make legal restitution, but also to suffer death; or at least declared, that he was deserving of death. (*Note, Gen.* xxxviii. 24—26.)

V. 7. David failed of making the application of the parable to himself: yet Nathan had gained a great point, in bringing him to pronounce so severe a sentence against a supposed offender, for crimes of far inferior malignity to his own. He therefore, with great firmness and courage, directly applied his parable to the conscience of the offender; and assured David, that *he* was the very person whose conduct had been delineated, and whose sentence had been denounced out of his own mouth: and he then proceeded in a very plain, convincing, and even severe discourse, to shew the extent, aggravations, and effects of his guilt. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xv. 13—25. 1 *Kings* xxi. 17—23. *Matt.* xiv. 3—5.)

V. 8. *Wives.*] Or, *Women.* We read of no more than one wife of Saul, and Rizpah his concubine; (xxi. 8. 1 *Sam.* xiv. 50;) and probably he had not any more. The women therefore of his court and family seem to be meant; which, according to the custom of the east, came into David's possession, when he succeeded to the kingdom. But if Saul had more wives or concubines, it is not probable that David married any of them, as Saul was his father-in-law. The LORD, by giving David these women in his providence, no more sanctioned his polygamy, than his giving Israel a king proved that they did well in desiring and asking one; or than his giving David's concubines to Absalom, sanctioned his detestable incest. (*Notes,* 11, 12. xvi. 20—23. 1 *Sam.* xii. 11—19.) But the multitude of unmarried women, of whom David had it in his power to make choice, aggravated his guilt in seizing upon the wife of another man. Nay, had he thought that any thing conducive to his comfort was yet wanting, he was allowed to ask for it, and the Lord declared that he would not have denied it, if he had seen it good for him. (*Note, Ps.* lxxxiv. 11, 12.)

V. 9. *Wherefore,* &c.] The clause may be rendered, "Wherefore hast thou despised *the word* of the LORD?" His *promises,* as well as his *precepts.* (*Notes, Job* ii. 10. *Matt.* xvi. 21—23.) David, *in this instance,* had shewn that he thought the general and special promises of God, either too scanty or too precarious, to suffice for his felicity, or to ensure it; for otherwise he could have no need to seek satisfaction in another way: and this was a great contempt of them. He had also treated the commandments of God, as rigorous and needless restraints; and as worthy to be neglected, dispensed with, nay trampled on, when they interfered with his present gratification. (*Notes,* xi. 14—17. 27.)

V. 10. *Despised me,* &c.] (*Note,* 1 *Sam.* ii. 30.) When David despised the word of God, he despised God himself; even his power and authority, his justice and purity, his omnipresence and omniscience, his favour and wrath, and all his glorious perfections: else, he would not thus have offended him, for the base gratification of his lusts. This was an aggravation of his crimes, less obvious to man's natural apprehensions, but full of deeper malignity, than all those enumerated in the former chapter. (*Notes,* xi. 1—17. *Ps.* li. 4. *Rom.* ii. 4—6.)—As the parable had particularly represented the evil of David's adultery, the address

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, [c] I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and [d] I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun;
12 For thou didst *it* [e] secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.
13 And [f] David said unto Nathan, [g] I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, [h] The LORD also hath put away thy sin; [i] thou shalt not die.
14 Howbeit, because [k] by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, [l] the child also *that is* born unto thee shall surely die.
15 ¶ And Nathan departed unto his house: and the LORD [m] struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.
16 David therefore [n] besought God for the child; and David [*] fasted, and went in, and [o] lay all night upon the earth.
17 And [p] the elders of his house arose, *and went* to him, to raise him

c xiii. 1—14. 28, 29. xv. 6. 10.
d xvi. 21, 22. Deut. xxviii. 30. Ez. xiv. 9. xx. 25, 26. Hos. iv. 13, 14.
e xi. 4. 8. 13. 15. Ec. xii. 14. Luke xii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
f 1 Sam. xv. 20 1 Kings xiii. 4. xxi. 20. xxii. 8. 2 Kings i. 9. 2 Chr. xvi. 10. xxiv. 20—22. xxv. 16. Matt. xiv. 3—5. 10.
g xxiv. 10. 1 Sam. xv. 24. 25. 30. Job vii. 20. xxxiii. 27. Ps. xxxii. 3—5. li. 4. Prov. xxv. 12. xxviii. 13. Luke xv. 21. Acts ii. 37. 1 John i. 8—10.
h Job vii. 21. Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. cxxx. 3, 4. Is. xxxviii. 17. xliii. 25. xliv. 22. Lam. iii. 32. Mic. vii. 18, 19. Zech. iii. 4. Heb. ix. 26. Ps. li. 16. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Rom. viii. 33, 34.
i Lev. xx. 10. Num. xxxv. 31—33.
k Neh. v. 9. Ps. lxxiv. 10. Is. lii. 5. Ez. xxxvi. 20—23. Matt. xviii. 7. Rom. ii. 24.
l Ps. lxxxix. 31—33. xciv. 12. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Am. iii. 2. 1 Cor. xi. 32. Heb. xii. 6. Rev. iii. 19.
m Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. xxv. 38. xxvi. 10. 2 Kings xv. 5. 2 Chr. xiii. 20. Ps. civ. 29. Acts xii. 23.
n 22. Ps. l. 15. Is. xxvi. 16. Joel ii. 12—14. Jon. iii. 9.
* Heb. *fasted a fast.* Esth. iv. 16. Ps. lxix. 10. Is. xxii. 12. Acts ix. 9.
o xiii. 31. Job xx. 12—14.
p iii. 35. 1 Sam. xxviii. 23.

of Nathan is most pointed against his murder of Uriah.—The word rendered *never*, in this connexion, only implies *perpetuity*. (*Note, Gen.* xvii. 7, 8.) So long as David lived, one after another of his family was slain, and Adonijah just after his death. (*Notes*, xiii. *22—29.* xviii. 9—14. 1 *Kings* ii. 15—25.)

V. 11, 12. David was not at Jerusalem when Absalom perpetrated his abominable crime; but it was committed in so shameless a manner, that it was as notorious as if he had seen it with his own eyes. (*Note*, xvi. 20—23.)—The Lord raised up this evil out of his own house: yet he did not put the wickedness into the hearts of his sons; but he left them to their own vile passions, and over-ruled the effects of them for David's chastisement. (*Notes, Luke* xxii. *21—23. v. 22. Acts* ii. *22—24.* iv. *23—28.*)

V. 13. The dormant spark of divine grace in David's heart now began to rekindle; and by means of this plain and faithful statement of facts, in the name of God, his evasions vanished, and his guilt appeared in all its magnitude. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xvi. 7—10. xxiv. 19—22. xxv. 14—16.) He therefore was far from resenting the pointed rebuke of the prophet, or attempting any palliation of his conduct; but, in deep humiliation of heart, he confessed, "I have sinned against the LORD." The words are few; but the event proved them to have been the language of genuine repentance, which regards sin as committed against the authority and glory of the Lord, whether or not it have occasioned evil to any fellow-creature. (*Note, Ps.* li. 4.) And Nathan assured him, (perhaps not at that time, but when the sincerity of his repentance had been further proved,) that the "LORD had put away his sin, "and he should not die."—Murder and adultery were crimes punishable by death: no Israelite indeed had authority to execute this sentence upon the Lord's anointed; yet David might justly fear that God himself would cut him off by some sudden judgment. But the prophet informed him, that he should not die in this manner, or be cast out of his kingdom; and this intimated, that the eternal punishment also would be remitted.

V. 14. Perhaps the Ammonites, and other idolatrous enemies of God and Israel, had received information of these sins of the highly favoured servant and zealous worshipper of JEHOVAH, and blasphemed his name on that account: and the wicked Israelites, especially those of Saul's party, would reflect upon the divine justice, in that Saul had been rejected for *apparently* less heinous crimes, and David was spared notwithstanding these enormities. (*Notes, Matt.* xviii. 7—9. 1 *Tim.* vi. 1—5. *Tit.* ii. 3—6.) But the Lord did not punish Saul above his deservings, and therefore did him no injustice in forgiving David: and he judges not merely by the outward action, but by the inward disposition of the heart; and there he perceived a very important difference, and even contrariety, in the two characters. In the temporal punishment, however, of David in his family, the Lord determined to silence these blasphemies; and he began by the death of the child which Bath-sheba had born to him. This event, though in fact a mercy to all parties, yet being predicted and publickly declared to be a rebuke for his sin, would be for the time a sharp and painful chastisement.

V. 15. The prophet, having delivered his message, returned home, probably to pray for the king: and David retired, and poured out his soul in godly sorrow and ingenuous confessions; and perhaps immediately wrote, and soon after published, the fifty-first Psalm; which forms the most complete specimen and standard of genuine and deep repentance, that is any where extant. (*Notes, Ps.* li.)

V. 16. David might hope, that there was a secret condition in the threatening; and that upon his humiliation, attended by fasting and prayer, the child might yet be spared. (*Marg. Ref.*) He considered the infant as an innocent sufferer for *his* crimes; (*Note*, xxiv. 17;) he had doubtless a very great affection for him; his spirit was at that time peculiarly tender; and perhaps Bath-sheba likewise was overwhelmed with a load of guilt and sorrow (24). On all these accounts, he thus deeply humbled himself before God, and sought the life of the child, though he would have lived a monument of his sin and shame.—We may conceive of him, as laying aside his royal robes, and appearing as a penitent in a mean and mournful garment, fasting, lying on the ground, confessing his guilt, mourning over it, and praying with all fervency, and without intermission, during the whole night. (*Notes, Joel* ii. 12—14. *Jon.* iii. 5—9.)

V. 17. *Eat bread with them.*] 'As he was wont to do 'at other times, when the principal persons of the court

up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then * vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

* Heb *do hurt to.*

19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

20 Then David [q] arose from the earth, and washed, and [r] anointed *himself*, and changed his apparel, and came into [s] the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

[q] Job i. 20. ii 10. Ps xxxix 9. Lam. iii. 39—41.
[r] Ruth iii. 3. Ec ix. 8.
[s] vi 17. vii. 18.

21 Then said his servants unto him, [t] What thing *is* this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child *while it was* alive; but when the child was dead thou didst rise and eat bread.

[t] 1 Cor. ii. 15.

22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, [u] I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell *whether* God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

[u] Is. xxxviii. 1—3. Joel i. 14. Am. v. 15. Jon. i. 6. iii. 9, 10. Jam. iv. 9, 10.

23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? [x] I shall go to him, but [y] he shall not return to me.

[x] Gen. xxxvii. 35. Job xxx. 23. Luke xxiii. 43.
[y] Job vii. 8—10.

24 And David comforted Bath-sheba, his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and [z] she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon; and the LORD loved him.

[z] vii. 12. 1 Chr. iii. 5. xxii. 9, 10. xxviii. 5, 6. xxix. 1. Matt. i. 6.

25 And he sent by the hand of [a] Nathan the prophet, and he called his name † Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

[a] 1—14. vii. 4. 1 Kings i. 11. 23.
† That is, *Beloved of the Lord.* Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5.

26 ¶ And [b] Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.

[b] xi. 25. 1 Chr xx. 1.

27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against [c] Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters.

[c] xi. 1. Deut. iii 11. Ez. xxi. 20.

28 Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take the city, and ‡ it be [d] called after my name.

‡ Heb. *my name be called upon it.*
[d] John vii. 18.

29 And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.

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sat at table with him.' *Bp. Patrick.* Probably, some days past before the child died; but, whatever sustenance David might take during that time, no doubt it was mean, scanty, and taken privately. (*Note, Dan.* x. 2, 3.)

V. 18. Some think that the child died on the seventh day from his birth; and that this was an additional rebuke, as he died uncircumcised. But others suppose that the continuance of the child's sickness, and of David's sorrow and mortification is meant.

V. 20. By changing his raiment, and going up to the house of God to worship, David publickly expressed his acceptance of the chastisement, his submission to the will of God, and his gratitude to him for sparing his life. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Job* i. 20—22.)

V. 21—23. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* 1 *Cor.* ii. 14—16.) While David entertained any hope of the child's life, humble fasting and prayer formed the present duty: but after the event, meek submission was required. He could not profit the child; and he might injure himself, and neglect his duty, by mourning for him. The child, released from sufferings, and gone before to a better world, was no loser; the publick sustained no detriment, as in the death of useful persons; and there remained no farther reason for sorrow, except he should repine against the will of God: and this he would not do, but rather prepare to follow his son, and hope to meet him in the world above.

V. 24, 25. David's marriage with Bath-sheba was in many respects very sinful; (*Note,* xi. 27;) yet it must not be disannulled. In the mystery of the divine counsels, it made way for the performance of the promises before given: (*Note,* vii. 12—16:) and Bath-sheba has her name inserted in the genealogy of the Redeemer!—As a token of the Lord's reconciliation to David and Bath-sheba, this son by her was named Solomon, or *the peaceable;* and Jedidiah, or *Beloved of the* LORD, because of the LORD'S peculiar favour to him. (*Marg.—Notes, Gen.* xlix. 10. *Matt.* i. 20—23.) In this he especially typified Him of whom the Father hath said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom "I am well pleased."—'It is observable, that there is not 'one word said to Bath-sheba, in all this relation.... She 'was punished... in the calamity that befell David; who 'enticed her, not she him, to commit the foul sin of adul-'tery; and she was innocent in the murder of Uriah.' *Bp. Patrick.* It seems, that she was released from the *legal* punishment of death, by the same act of grace, which pardoned David: but she was, probably, for some time both in great sorrow and distress, and overwhelmed with fears, and remorse, and shame.

V. 26—31. The sacred historian, having finished the account of David's fall and repentance, resumes the subject of the war with Ammon.—As the siege of Rabbah seems to have been considerably advanced when Uriah was slain, the event here recorded must be supposed to have occurred not long after. The Lord was very gracious

[e] 1 Chr. xx. 2

30 And he [e] took their king's crown from off his head, (the weight whereof *was* a talent of gold, with the precious stones,) and it was *set* on David's head: and he brought forth the spoil
* Heb. *very great.* of the city [*] in great abundance.
31 And he brought forth the people that *were* therein, and [f] put *them* under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.

[f] viii. 2. Ps. xxi. 8, 9.

to David, in thus prospering his arms, notwithstanding his aggravated offences: and Joab approved himself very faithful to his prince, and attentive to his reputation. The crown of the king of the Ammonites is said to have *weighed* a talent; but that, being above a hundred weight, seems enormous: probably it means the value of it with the precious stones.—David appears to have been too much pleased with this crown: whereas his *anointing*, as the king of God's people, was a far more honourable distinction.—It is not certain what the punishments were, which he inflicted upon the prisoners; whether he put them to death, under saws, axes, and harrows; or whether he condemned them to wear out their lives in severe bondage, by various labours. He meant to punish their cruelty to the men of Jabesh-gilead, and their contempt of his embassadors: (*Notes*, x. 3, 4. 1 *Sam.* xi. 1—3:) but if there were, as it seems probable, an undistinguishing severity exercised towards them, we must ascribe it to the state of his mind at that time.

City of waters. (27) The other part of the city, being supplied with water, from that part of which Joab had got possession, could not hold out long, but must be soon forced to surrender.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Our falls into sin originate from the evil of our depraved hearts, but our recoveries are from the Lord. He commonly employs the ministry of the word in bringing sinners to repentance: and the plain, authoritative declaration of the divine law, and of the evil nature and effects of sin, is the appointed method of awakening the careless conscience, and of bringing men to condemn themselves. In some cases, great prudence and address are necessary in delivering the message of God, especially to those in exalted stations. Apt illustration often forms the most compendious and effectual method of producing conviction: and it is well when such an indirect address will spare the painful necessity of more explicit reproofs. But self-flattery renders us quicksighted to the faults of others, though of inferior malignity, and blind to our own most atrocious offences; and in proportion as men are tender to their own sins, they are often unreasonably severe in animadverting upon those of their neighbours. Hence arises the necessity of "great plainness of speech" in the publick ministry of the gospel; that the conduct and cases of sinners of every description may be explicitly declared, and that the conscience of every one that is guilty may say to him, "Thou art the man." Nor is this *personal;* provided the general cases of multitudes are described, and the *peculiarities* of an individual's character are not so marked, as to draw the attention of the auditors from themselves to him. But it is often necessary, *in private*, to be still more explicit and particular, with such professed Christians as cannot, or will not, understand the plainest *publick* address; and this without any reserve or respect of persons, and with all seriousness, energy, and expostulation. It will never be well with the church of God, till secret lamentations over unreproved scandals and abuses, and private conversations concerning the faults of the absent, be generally changed, by the ministers of Christ especially, for faithful plain dealing with men *in private:* and those who are of reputation ought to take the lead, and to set the example, in this arduous but salutary business.—The true minister's message will comfort or distress the consciences of those who regard it, according as they are walking with God, or the contrary: nay, the believer himself can expect no consolation from a scriptural statement of the truth, while he lies under the guilt and power of unrepented sin; and if he obtain any, it is either through the minister's error or unfaithfulness, or his own self-flattery, and ill-grounded confidence.—Every instance of the divine goodness to us increases the heinousness of our transgressions: but the extent of the promises, and the Lord's readiness to hear prayer, and to give every good thing to his people, peculiarly aggravate our guilt, when we desire forbidden gratifications. We need not wonder that men in general despise the promises and commandments of God; yea, and the Lord himself, in his whole character, and in all his relations to them: when even eminent believers, in some instances, are capable of the same folly and ingratitude. From this source all our sins proceed: man's contempt of the infinite excellency and invaluable favour of God; disregard to his authority, aversion to his service, and enmity to his justice and holiness, give being and malignity to every species of disobedience; and they are in themselves utterly inexcusable.—But, however iniquity may have prevailed, where true grace exists there is also *sensibility*, and a ground in which the word of God may take root. (*Note, Matt.* xiii. 23.) The humbled sinner will not be offended by his faithful reprover, but rather thank him; and God will never refuse forgiveness to true penitents.—It is however grievous to think, what great occasion of blasphemy to the enemies of the Lord the falls of his professing people afford: yet none except his enemies will make this use of them; and the open confessions of the penitent offenders, their future holy conduct, the severe corrections which they experience, and their patience under them, will manifest the equity and purity, as well as the mercy of God, in pardoning their offences; and will mark an essential difference, of *habitual character and disposition*, between them and unhumbled sinners of every description. (*Notes, Rom.* vii. 13—17.)

V. 15—31.

The Lord often causes his offending people to read their

CHAP. XIII.

Amnon, David's son, loves his sister Tamar, 1, 2: and by Jonadab's advice he feigns sickness, that Tamar might wait on nim; and taking that opportunity he ravishes her, 3—14. He hates her and drives her away, and she in grief and shame retires to Absalom, 15—20. David is angry; but Absalom conceals his hatred, 21, 22. Absalom invites his brethren to a feast; where Amnon at his command is murdered, 23—29. David grieves vehemently, supposing that all his sons are slain; but is comforted by Jonadab, and learns the truth, 30—36. Absalom flees to Geshur; but David longs after him, 37—39.

[a] iii. 2, 3. 1 Chr. iii. 2.
[b] xi. 2. Gen. vi. 2. xxxix. 6, 7. Prov. vi. 25. xxxi. 30.
[c] xiv. 27. 1 Chr. iii. 9.

AND it came to pass after this, that [a] Absalom, the son of David, had [b] a fair sister, whose name *was* [c] Tamar; and Amnon the son of David [d] loved her.

[d] 15. Gen. xxix. 18. 20. xxxiv. 3. 1 Kings xi. 1.

2 And Amnon was so [e] vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she *was* a virgin: and [*] Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her.

[e] 1 Kings xxi. 4. Cant. v. 8. 2 Cor. vii. 10.
[*] Heb. *it was marvellous, or hidden, in the eyes of Amnon.*

3 But Amnon had [f] a friend, whose name *was* Jonadab the son of [g] Shimeah, David's brother: and Jonadab *was* a very [h] subtle man.

[f] Gen. xxxviii. 1. 20. Judg. xiv. 20. Esth. v. 10. 14. vi. 13. Prov. xix. 6.
[g] 32. 1 Sam. xvi. 9. *Shammah.*
[h] xiv. 2. 19, 20. Gen. iii. 1. Jer. iv. 22. 1 Cor. iii. 19. Jam. iii. 15.

4 And he said unto him, [i] Why *art* thou, *being* the king's son, [†] lean [‡] from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, [k] I love Tamar, [l] my brother Absalom's sister.

[i] 1 Kings xxi. 7. Esth. v. 13, 14. Luke xii. 32.
[†] Heb. *thin.*
[‡] Heb. *morning by morning.*
[k] Is. iii. 9. Jer. viii. 12. Mic. vii. 3.
[l] Lev. xviii. 9. xx. 17.

sins in their punishment; he puts them to *open* shame for their *secret* offences; and, by the sufferings of those whom they most tenderly love, he fills their hearts with the keenest anguish. Under such rebukes they will be led to deeper and deeper humiliation, to chasten themselves with fasting, and to pour out more fervent and incessant prayers; and especially for those who are suffering on their account, and are unable to pray for themselves. Yet, the same principles will teach them to moderate their sorrows for those beloved objects, whom God has taken from them, and to prepare diligently to follow them: and nothing should induce them to neglect their present duty. After the same manner, as long as life lasts, let the discouraged sinner seek the Lord, humble himself, and pour out his prayers before him; if only able to say, "Who knoweth if God "will be gracious to me!"—Those, who are ignorant of the divine life, cannot comprehend the reasons of a believer's conduct in his varied experiences: they mistake deep humility and fervent prayer, for impatience and an inordinate love to created objects; acquiescence in the Lord's will, and cheerful gratitude under sharp trials, will be deemed indifference and apathy; and in a thousand different ways they will shew their incapacity to judge of the consistency and reasons of his behaviour. (*Notes, Acts* xvi. 1—5. *P. O.* 1 *Cor.* ii. 10—16.) But God accepts those services which man censures: a humble, submissive spirit prepares the way for divine consolations, notwithstanding former crimes; and we should encourage the desponding hearts of our fellow-sinners, with the comforts which the Lord has graciously afforded us: and when the heart is thus prepared, the message of the minister will again be peace and joy.—Our prayers for our children are graciously answered, if some of them die in their tender infancy, (for they are well taken care of,) and the others live "be-"loved of the LORD."—Vengeance will in due season overtake the persecutors and abusers of God's people and ministers; and in their severest sufferings He will be righteous, though the instruments should be unreasonably and iniquitously severe.—In proportion as we lose sight of the honour that cometh from God, we become ambitious and vain of worldly distinctions: (*Note, 2 Kings* xx. 12—19:) and we are most compassionate, kind, and forgiving to our fellow-sinners, when we most feel our need of the Lord's forgiving love to our own souls, and experience the comfort of it.—Finally, in whatever service the Lord may please to employ us, may we, (as Joab with David,) execute his will faithfully, and then give him the whole glory without any reserve.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. Nathan's word began to take effect not very long after it was delivered. (*Notes*, xii. 10—12.)—David seems to have been far too indulgent of his children: probably, their mothers had a great share in their education, and some of these instilled into them bad principles; indeed these are the natural effects of polygamy. Yet his sons had been restrained from open wickedness, by his example, influence, and occasional instructions, until he had committed those crimes which have been considered. But notwithstanding David's repentance, they, now grown up, would *naturally* consider that his conduct gave some licence to their youthful inclinations, and conclude that he could not greatly censure them, after he had set them such an example. Thus he might clearly trace the sins of his children from his own misconduct, and this would increase the anguish of the chastisement.—Tamar was Amnon's sister as the daughter of David, but of another mother. (*Note*, iii. 2—5.) If Amnon had not been *secretly* habituated to vice, he surely never could, in the *first* instance, have yielded to so unnatural a passion! (*Note, Lev.* xviii. 6—17.) By gazing upon Tamar's beauty his concupiscence was excited, and, being indulged, it gained an entire ascendency. (*Notes*, xi. 1—5. *Matt.* v. 27, 28.) He was not restrained from attempting to accomplish his base purpose by the fear of God; by conscience, shame, regard to the peace or favour of his father, or to the reputation, virtue, or comfort of Tamar; or by any foresight of evil consequences: but, because of her modesty, and the care which was taken of her, he could not find an opportunity of getting her into his power. His passion therefore preyed upon his spirits, and impaired his health. (*Notes, Cant.* v. 8. 2 *Cor.* vii. 9—11.)

V. 3, 4. Amnon deemed Jonadab his friend, because he was his flatterer, and the caterer for his lusts. He was "a very subtle man;" (*Notes*, 32, 33. xvi. 20—23. *Gen.* iii. 1;) one very sagacious, as to this present world; or

5 And Jonadab said unto him, [m] Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see *it*, and eat *it* at her hand.

6 So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come and [n] make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.

7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat.

8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took [*] flour, and kneaded *it*, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes.

9 And she took a pan, and poured *them* out before him, but he refused to eat. [o] And Amnon said, Have out all men from me: and they went out every man from him.

10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* into the chamber to Amnon her brother.

11 And when she had brought *them* unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, [p] Come, lie with me, my sister.

12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not [†] force me; for [‡] no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this [q] folly.

13 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. [r] Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee.

14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but, being stronger than she, [s] forced her, and lay with her.

15 Then Amnon [t] hated her [§] exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her *was* greater than the love wherewith he had loved her: and Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.

16 And she said unto him, *There* is no cause; this evil in sending me away *is* greater than the other that thou didst unto me: but he would not hearken unto her.

17 Then he called his servant that

m xvi. 21—23. xvii. 1—4. Ps. l. 18, 19. Prov. xix. 27. Mark vi. 24, 25. Acts xxiii. 15.

n Gen. xviii. 6. Matt. xiii. 33.

* Or, *paste.*

o Gen. xlv. 1. Judg. iii. 19. John iii. 20.

p Gen. xxxix. 7. 12.

† Heb. *humble.* Gen. xxxiv. 2. Deut. xxii. 29

‡ Heb. *it ought not so to be done.* Lev. xviii. 9. xx. 17.

q Gen. xxxiv. 7. Judg. xix. 23. xx. 6. Prov. vii. 7.

r Gen. xix. 8. Judg. xix. 24.

s xii. 11. Deut. xxii. 25—27. Judg. xx. 5. Esth. vii. 8.

t Ez. xxiii. 17.

§ Heb. *with great hatred greatly.*

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rather, a very crafty courtier, who readily discerned the inclinations of his superiors, and was very ingenious in devising means for the gratification of them. Observing Amnon to look more and more languid one day after another, he suspected the cause, and intimated to him, that a person of his rank might obtain his desires if he went about it: and thus he drew from him the shameful secret. Had he not interposed, probably Amnon's passion might have been suppressed, and at length supplanted by an affection for some other object. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 4—7.) But when Jonadab understood the state of his mind, he speedily put him in a way of obtaining his wishes. Amnon was the heir-apparent of the crown: David was growing old, and probably shewed Jonadab but little favour though he was his nephew; being the son of David's brother Shimeah, called also Shammah, and Shimma. (32. 1 *Sam.* xvi. 9. 1 *Chr.* ii. 13.) He therefore paid court to Amnon; and supposed that his rank and authority would bear him out in any crime, which he was disposed to commit.

V. 5—14. This plot was laid very artfully. Amnon's sickly looks gave plausibility to his pretended illness: David's tender affection to his children was well known: persons, who have been accustomed to indulgence, are naturally whimsical in their diet when sick: David would be sure to visit Amnon, and be disposed to humour him in every thing, and would not at all suspect so base a design concealed under his request: and thus he would readily obtain David's consent to Tamar's coming to him. Nor could *she* have any suspicion of such horrid villainy from one, who *seemed* very ill and in danger of death: but when he commanded all to leave the room, whilst he ate of her cakes, she might very justly have apprehended some bad design.—Tamar's skill and readiness in such ordinary employments, though a king's daughter; her compassionate attention to her half-brother; and all her answers and behaviour, are suited to give us a very favourable opinion of her character. She pleaded that he, as her brother, ought to protect her, instead of injuring her; that such behaviour was peculiarly foolish and wicked in an Israelite; that it would for ever disgrace and ruin her; and would expose him to scorn and hatred, as one of the most abandoned of men. (*Marg. Ref.* p—r.) Her proposal to him, to ask her of the king, who would rather allow him to marry her, than leave him to die of his sickness, was doubtless solely meant to prevent present violence; for she knew that David would afterwards protect her. (*Note*, *Gen.* xix. 6—9.) And it is probable, that she accompanied her complaints and expostulations with unavailing outcries, which Amnon's domesticks doubtless disregarded: for she seems to have been entirely free from blame in the scandalous transaction.

V. 15—18. The determined language and conduct of

ministered unto him, and said, Put now this *woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her.

[a] Gen. xxxvii. 3. 32. Judg. v. 30. Ps. xlv. 14.

18 And *she had* [a] a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters *that were* virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.

[x] ii. 2. Josh. vii. 6. Job ii. 12. xlii. 6.

19 And Tamar [x] put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that *was* on her, and [y] laid her hand on her head, and went on crying.

[y] Jer. ii. 37.

20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath [*] Amnon thy brother been with thee? [z] but hold now thy peace, my sister: he *is* thy brother; [†] regard not this thing. So Tamar remained [‡] desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

[*] Heb. *Aminon.*

[z] Prov. xxvi. 24. Rom. xii. 19.

[†] Heb. *set not thine heart on.*

[‡] Heb. *and desolate.* Gen. xxxiv. 2. xlvi. 15.

21 But when king David heard of all these things, [a] he was very wroth.

[a] iii. 28, 29. xii. 5. 10. Gen. xxxiv. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 22—25. 29. Ps. ci. 8.

22 ¶ And Absalom [b] spake unto his brother Amnon [c] neither good nor bad: for Absalom [d] hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

[b] Lev. xix. 17, 18. Prov. xxv. 9. Matt. xviii. 15.

[c] Gen. xxiv. 50. xxxi. 29.

[d] Prov. x. 18. xxvi. 24. xxvii. 4—6. Ec. vii. 9. Eph. iv. 26. 31. 1 John iii. 15.

23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had [e] sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which *is* beside Ephraim: and Absalom [f] invited all the king's sons.

B. C. 1030.

[e] Gen. xxxviii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xxv. 2. 4. 36. 2 Kings iii. 4. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10.

[f] 1 Kings i. 9. 19. 25.

24 And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheep-shearers; [g] let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants, go with thy servant.

[g] xi. 8—15. Ps. xii. 2. lv. 21. Jer. xli. 6, 7.

25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he [h] pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but [i] blessed him.

[h] Gen. xix. 2, 3. Judg. xix. 7—10. Luke xiv. 23. xxiv. 29. Acts xvi. 15.

[i] xiv. 22. *marg.* Ruth ii. 4.

26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, [k] let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?

[k] iii. 27. xi. 13—15. xx. 9. Ps. lv. 21. Prov. xxvi. 24, 25.

27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.

[l] xi. 15. Ex. i. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xxii. 17, 18. Acts v. 29.

[m] xi. 13. Gen. ix. 21. xix. 32—35. Judg. xix. 6. 22. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. 1 Kings xx. 16. Esth. i. 10. Dan. v. 2—6. 30. Nah. i. 10. Luke xxi. 34.

28 Now Absalom had [l] commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's [m] heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, [n] fear not: [§] have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be [‖] valiant.

[n] Num. xxii. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xxviii. 10. 13.

[§] Or, *Will you not, since I have commanded you?* Josh. i. 9.

[‖] Heb. *sons of valour.*

29 And the [o] servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded: then all the king's sons arose,

[o] 1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19. 1 Kings xxi. 11—13. 2 Kings i. 9—12. Prov. xxix. 12. Mic. vii. 3.

Tamar, probably joined with sharp reproaches, so irritated Amnon, that his licentious love was at once changed into the most vehement hatred: and without regarding her remonstrances, he ordered her to be turned out of doors, with every circumstance of aversion and abhorrence, 'as 'if she had been an infamous intruder.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Gen.* xxxix. 13—16.) This was doubtless additional and most malignant ill usage, and tended to publish her disgrace, which might otherwise have been concealed: but we must attribute it to the confusion and distress of her mind, that she stated this to be the greater injury; unless she supposed that, in so singular a case, he might and ought to have married her.

V. 19, 20. Tamar went home in the manner, and with all the gestures of an inconsolable mourner. (*Marg. Ref.*) Doubtless her mind was filled with extreme anguish; but perhaps she meant also thus to protest, that though unfortunate she was not criminal. Absalom dissembled his deep and implacable resentment, and persuaded her to compose her mind, and not further to expose the shame of her family.—It seems that Tamar not only shunned society at the time; but also lived all her days a single and retired life. (*Note, Gen.* xxxiv. 31.)

V. 21. Amnon's *incest* was an express violation of the divine law; and to one prohibition it is added, "they "shall be cut off;...he shall bear his iniquity." (*Lev.* xviii. 9. xx. 17.) Yet the magistrate was not explicitly commanded to put the offender to death. Neither was it enjoined, that he who forced a woman should be put to death, unless she was betrothed; because otherwise he would have been obliged to marry her. (*Notes, Ex.* xxii. 16, 17. *Deut.* xxii. 22—27.) Perhaps these circumstances united with David's excessive paternal tenderness, especially to his eldest son, and with the consciousness of his own guilt, to satisfy his mind in leaving Amnon to the judgment of God, without inflicting any punishment upon him. But certainly he ought to have manifested his displeasure in some very decided manner; and this complication of crimes would have justified the severest punishment: but as he neglected his duty, the Lord afterwards took vengeance on Amnon, in a way which added still more to David's domestick trials. (*Notes*, 22—33. 1 *Sam.* ii. 29—34.)

V. 22—29. Absalom harboured the deepest resentment of the gross affront put upon himself, and the irreparable injury done to his sister: yet for two years he concealed his hatred under the appearance of total indifference! (*Notes, Gen.* xxvii. 41, 42. *Prov.* xxvi. 24—27. *Eph.* iv. 26, 27.) This imposed on Amnon, who on that very account ought to have been more afraid of him: at length, however, Absalom deemed matters ripe for the execution of his determined revenge. According to the custom of those times, having flocks of sheep, and making a feast when they were shorn, he formed his plot upon that circumstance. To cover his design he invited his father with all his attendants to come to his feast, sensible that from pru-

and every man * gat him upon his [p] mule and fled.

30 And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left.

31 Then the king [q] arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and [r] all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.

32 And [s] Jonadab the son of [t] Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose *that* they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the [†] appointment of Absalom this hath been [‡] determined, from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.

33 Now therefore [u] let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.

34 But [x] Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill-side behind him.

35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: [§] as thy servant said, so it is.

36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice, and wept; and the king also and all his servants wept [‖] very sore.

37 But Absalom fled, and went to [y] Talmai, the son of [*] Ammihud, king of Geshur. And *David* mourned for his son every day.

38 So Absalom fled, and went to [z] Geshur, and was there three years.

39 And [a] *the soul of* king David [†] longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was [b] comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

* Heb. *rode.*
p xviii. 9. Gen. xxxvi. 24. Lev. xix. 19. 1 Kings i. 33.
q xii. 16. Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34 Josh. vii. 6. Job i. 20.
r i. 11. iii. 31.
s 3—5.
t 1 Sam. xvi. 9. *Shammah.*
† Heb. *mouth.*
‡ Or, *settled.* Gen. xxvii. 41. Ps. vii. 11, 12.
u xix. 19.
x 38. Gen. iv 8—14. Prov. xxviii. 17. Jer. xlviii. 44. Am. v. 19.
§ Heb. *according to the word of thy servant.*
‖ Heb. *with a great weeping greatly.* 16. *marg.* xii. 21. xviii. 33.
y iii. 3. 1 Chr. iii. 2.
* Or, *Amihur.*
z xiv. 23. 32. xv. 8.
a Gen. xxxi. 30. Deut. xxviii. 32. Phil. ii. 26.
† Or, *was consumed.* Ps. lxxxiv. 2. cxix. 20.
b xii. 23. Gen. xxiv. 67. xxxvii. 35. xxxviii. 12.

dential reasons he would decline the invitation: but he thus obtained his approbation to Amnon's going with the rest of his brethren; and David perhaps hoped that a reconciliation between them would be thus effected or cemented. Probably, Absalom was urged on the more resolutely to the murder of his brother, because he was the next heir to the crown; if Chileab were dead, as it is generally supposed. (iii. 3.) His atrocious crime was greatly aggravated, by being a breach of hospitality, and committed under the mask of affection, in the presence of his brethren; and by his father being drawn in *unintentionally* to be accessary to it. He involved his servants also in the guilt of murder, as if his command could warrant their transgression of God's law! (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 9, 10. 1 *Kings* xxi. 8—14.) He took the opportunity of killing Amnon, when he was drunk, or nearly so, as if he had meant to murder body and soul at once: and his servants, without hesitation, punctually executed his most iniquitous command. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 17—19.)—*His mule.* (29) Mules seem about this time to have come greatly into use among the superior persons, being substituted in the place of asses: for horses were still little employed in Israel. (*Marg. Ref.* p.) Yet the breeding of mules was a violation of the divine law. (*Lev.* xix. 19.)—Probably, they were imported.

V. 32, 33. It cannot be supposed, that Absalom would make Jonadab his confident; but being a sagacious man he had, from some circumstances, or casual expressions, suspected his malicious intentions. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 3, 4.) It would, however, have been far more profitable sagacity, to have foreseen these consequences, and to have forwarned Amnon, before he had perpetrated the crime which provoked this fatal revenge. (*Jer.* iv. 22.—*Note*, *Jer.* viii. 8, 9.)

V. 37—39. (*Notes*, *Gen.* iv. 9—12.) Absalom fled for refuge to the court of his mother's father; (*Marg. Ref.* y;) and there he continued for three years: and David so far from requiring him to be delivered up, that he might be punished according to the law of God; after a time impatiently desired to recall him, and to be reconciled to him. In this he too closely copied Eli's example, and honoured his sons more than God; (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* ii. 29;) who therefore made them his scourges, and then punished them himself. David's sons however were not *priests*, and so did not disgrace the sanctuary: he could not have proceeded against Absalom, without condemning him to die; as Eli might have done against his sons: and David's own blood-guiltiness, too much resembling Absalom's, (in that he murdered Uriah under the guise of friendship by the hand of others, after having previously tempted him to drunkenness,) might tend to enervate his resolution and dispose him to lenity. (*Notes*, xi. 12—17.) These considerations may account for his conduct, but they by no means *excuse* it.—Absalom's servants fled with him, and thus escaped the doom which they merited, and so were reserved for further mischief. (xiv. 30. xv. 10.)

Mourned for his son. (37) Absalom seems here exclusively intended; for David was comforted for "Amnon;" who was buried privately, as it appears; and not, as Abner had been, with any publick honour. (*Notes*, iii. 33—39.) Amnon's base conduct had, it may well be supposed, rendered him unpopular: and an honourable interment would have been a strong protest against Absalom's crimes, which David was not disposed to enter.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The judgments of God upon those, who are finally saved, may be so terrible, varied, and continued, as effectually to proclaim his abhorrence of their crimes; and no

CHAP. XIV.

Joab instructs a woman of Tekoah, and sends her to David, 1—3. With a feigned tale and artful management she induces him to recall Absalom, 4—20. Joab is sent to bring him to Jerusalem; yet he is not allowed to see the king, 21—24. His beauty, 25, 26. His children, 27. After two years, he prevails with Joab to introduce him to David, 28—33.

reflecting person, with these records before his eyes, would venture to commit iniquity, even if he could be sure to escape eternal misery; any more than a man would, for a trifling advantage, throw himself from a precipice and break his bones, if he could be assured that his life would be preserved: for he would be sensible, that he must suffer immense pain, and probably be a cripple all his days.—The Lord *over-rules* the wickedness of men, (while they are hurried on by their own lusts and Satan's temptations,) to accomplish his holy and righteous purposes.—External accomplishments are generally a detriment to the possessors, and a temptation to others: none therefore ought to be vain of them, or to regret the want of them.—So depraved is the human heart, that even natural affection may degenerate into licentiousness; and the intercourse even between near relations should be conducted with caution and prudence, that no opportunity may be given to those who are disposed to commit iniquity.—What men dignify with the name of *love* is commonly a base sensual inclination, entire selfishness, which triumphs over conscience and the fear of God, and without pity consigns its object to irreparable disgrace and misery, for the sake of a momentary gratification! How different from that *love*, which the law of God commands! yea, how contrary to it!—Men's domineering lusts, when restrained by external hindrances, become their tormentors, drink up their spirits, and disorder their bodies; and probably the fury of sinful passions, without any possibility of gratification, will form one dreadful part of the misery of the damned: let the tremendous thought lead every reader to seek the mortification of them, that by the grace of God they may be extirpated from his heart.—Who can conceive, what the state of this world would be, if every sinner's power was equal to his inclination, for the commission of wickedness?—If indulged melancholy be improper for those, who possess eminent stations and great affluence in this world; how inconsistent is it with the profession, privileges, and prospects of the children of God! and if they are "lean from "day to day" in their souls, it is commonly the effect of yielding to sloth and worldly affections.—When iniquity is conceived in the heart, all the powers of the understanding will be employed in devising how to effect it; and even sickness will not always be sufficient to take men off even for the time from licentious pursuits.—When debauched persons occupy exalted stations, they will be attended by "very subtle men," nearly resembling Satan; sagacious prompters, and crafty advisers in iniquity! These will assist them in overcoming the opposition of shame and conscience; and encourage them to gratify themselves, without regarding truth or justice, or the interests or happiness of others. Such are deemed and treated as friends; but the event will prove them to have been, merely for their own advantage, the most destructive enemies.—Many violent, but concealed, evil desires would be extinguished, did not such prompters discern and draw forth the confession of them, and contrive the method of gratification. Such plausible villains know how to take advantage of the affection, candour, modesty, and unsuspecting confidence of pious persons, for the accomplishment of their own infamous designs: and when iniquity is resolved on, a perfect infatuation takes place, and all probable or certain consequences are forgotten.—But silent abhorrence is the proper censure of these abominable deeds of darkness, which are especially horrible under the light of revelation: even ungodly persons will execrate those, who perpetrate such outrages against common decency. and they will appear as fools and reprobates to their neighbours in general; notwithstanding high rank, or even princely or royal dignity.

V. 15—39.

Sensual love is readily changed into hatred, and concupiscence into loathing: nor can it reasonably be expected, that those, who make no scruple of debauching the persons for whom they *pretend affection*, will feel any remorse at deserting them with cruelty and disdain, at exposing them to shame and contempt, or at leaving them to all the horrors of penury or prostitution. Let no one ever expect better treatment from those, who are capable of attempting to seduce them.—But whatever anguish and distress may result from injuries received, nothing will eventually harm us except our own iniquity: and it is better to suffer the *greatest wrong*, than to commit the *least sin*, though apparently with impunity and without rebuke.—It is every one's duty to comfort those who are in distress: and generally it is most advisable for injured persons to be quiet, and leave their cause with God.—When less atrocious crimes escape punishment from man, more and greater will be committed: and the magistrate's indignant anger against heinous offences should stimulate him to enforce the laws without respect to persons: but all others must learn to bear every injury without seeking to revenge themselves; and if mild expostulations and prayers will not prevail, they must quietly leave the event to God.—Hatred and revenge, however, possess the hearts of ungodly men: and some are so artful and malicious, that they defer their vengeance, and cover it with the appearance of affection, till they have an opportunity of executing it with more determined malignity.—Often have festive interviews, and seasons of sensual indulgence, been the chosen scenes for assassinations and massacres; and men have been sent into the eternal world from the midst of riot and excess!. Such is human nature, left to itself, armed with power, and emboldened by prosperity: what need then have we to pray for converting grace, and to be satisfied, in our inferior stations!—No crime is so great or evident, that men in general will not be found daring enough to commit, in order to please their superiors: but alas! their command will not bear out the guilty at the day of judgment, for violating the law of God!—Evil tidings are generally enhanced: yet the imaginary calamity proves a real affliction for the time, and may serve the purpose of an humiliating chastisement.—Children are always uncertain comforts: but *indulged* children will surely prove trials to pious pa-

NOW [a] Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart *was* [b] toward Absalom.

2 And Joab sent [c] to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now [d] mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead:

3 And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab [e] put the words in her mouth.

4 And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she [f] fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, [*] Help, O king.

5 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, [g] I *am* indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead.

6 And thy handmaid had two sons, [h] and they two strove together in the field, and *there was* [†] none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.

7 And behold, [i] the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and [k] so they shall [l] quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband *neither* name nor remainder [‡] upon the earth.

8 And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and [m] I will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, [n] the iniquity *be* on me, and on my father's house: [o] and the king and his throne *be* guiltless.

10 And the king said, Whosoever saith *ought* unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

11 Then said she, I pray thee, [p] let the king remember the LORD thy God, that [§] thou wouldest not suffer [q] the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, [r] *As* the LORD liveth, there shall [s] not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

[a] ii. 18. 1 Chr. ii. 16.
[b] xiii. 39. xviii. 33. xix. 2. 4. Prov. xxix. 26.
[c] 2 Chr. xi. 6. xx. 20. Neh. iii. 5. 27. Jer. vi. 1. Am. i. 1. *Tekoa.*
[d] xi. 26. Ruth iii. 3. Ps. civ. 15. Ec. ix. 8. Matt. vi. 17.
[e] 19. Ex. iv. 15. Num. xxiii. 5. Deut. xviii. 18. Is. li. 16. lix. 21. Jer. i. 9.
[f] i. 2. 1 Sam. xx. 41. xxv. 23.
[*] Heb. *Save.* 2 Kings vi. 26—28. Job xxix. 12—14. Luke xviii. 3—6.
[g] xii. 1—3. Judg. ix. 8—15.
[h] Gen. iv. 8. Ex. ii. 13. Deut. xxii. 26, 27.
[†] Heb. *no deliverer between them.*
[i] Gen. iv. 14. Num. xxxv. 19. Deut. xix. 12.
[k] Gen. xxvii. 45. Deut. xxv. 6.
[l] xxi. 17.
[‡] Heb. *upon the face of.*
[m] xii. 5, 6. xvi. 4. Job xxix. 16. Prov. xviii. 13. Is. xi 3, 4.
[n] Gen. xxvii. 13. Matt. xxvii. 25.
[o] iii. 28. Num. xxxv. 33. Deut. xxi. 1—9. 1 Kings ii. 33.
[p] Gen. xiv. 22. xxiv. 2, 3. xxxi. 50. 1 Sam. xx. 42.
[§] Heb. *the revenger of blood do not multiply to destroy.*
[q] Num. xxxv. 19. 27. Deut. xix. 4—10. Josh. xx. 3—6.
[r] 1 Sam. xiv. 45. xxviii. 10.
[s] 1 Kings i. 52. Matt. x. 30. Acts xxvii. 34.

rents, whose foolish fondness induces them to neglect their duty to God: yet parental affection can scarcely be extinguished by any degree of misconduct. But the case of parents is very deplorable, when the children copy their conduct in the crimes which they perpetrate; and when it is nevertheless their duty to punish them with great severity for those very imitations! Let this be a warning to us, to watch and pray against temptation, lest by the misconduct of one unguarded hour, we should occasion such fatal consequences to our offspring, and such misery to ourselves throughout our future lives. And let us not covet that worldly wisdom, which, with all its boasted sagacity, cannot prevent the destruction of those who are counselled by it: but let us seek that heavenly wisdom, which safely leads the possessor through all the dangerous paths of this life, to the perfect felicity of the eternal world.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—3. Joab perceived that David greatly desired to recall Absalom; but did not know how to do it, without disgracing his character and government: he therefore framed a plausible story, and employed an ingenious woman, in the character of a disconsolate widow, to relate it to him. He doubtless intended to obtain a concession from David, that in *some possible cases* the punishment of a murderer might be dispensed with; and then to apply it to the case of Absalom. Thus he hoped to ingratiate himself with both parties, with the king, and the next heir to the crown; as Absalom would be now considered. Doubtless he would also be glad to increase the number of precedents for the *impunity of murderers*, as he lay under the guilt of that crime himself.

V. 6, 7. (*Notes*, xiii. 22—29. *Gen.* iv. 8.) This feigned case was widely different from that which it was intended to represent. It was indeed stated that one brother had been slain by the other, and that the survivor, "the only "son of his mother who was a widow," was exposed to the sentence of the law; but David had many other sons; and the death of Absalom would not have "quenched his "coal that was left," or deprived him of the comfort of children to succeed him in his inheritance. Absalom had not slain Amnon in sudden anger and hasty striving, when they were alone; but in deliberate malice and revenge, in the presence of his brethren. There was no malicious prosecution carrying on against Absalom by those who coveted his inheritance: but the law of God demanded his death, as a satisfaction to justice, and for a salutary example to all others. Had the case been drawn more similar, it would have betrayed the design, and defeated Joab's purpose: and the state of David's heart rendered it unnecessary to be very exact: for he wanted, not *a good reason*, but *a plausible excuse for following his inclinations*, as Joab well knew.

V. 8—11. It would not have answered the intent of the woman, or of Joab her prompter, had David merely engaged to examine into the case: a present absolute decision in favour of the supposed criminal was the object. The woman therefore having excited David's compassion, urged her plea with great earnestness; and assured him that she was so satisfied of the goodness of the cause, that

12 Then the woman said, [t] Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, [u] speak *one* word unto my lord the king. And he said, [x] Say on.

13 And the woman said, [y] Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the [z] people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, [a] in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished.

14 For [b] we must needs die, and *are* [c] as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: * neither doth [d] God respect *any* person; yet doth he [e] devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.

15 Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, *it is* because the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.

16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man *that would* destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.

17 Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be [†] comfortable: for [f] as an angel of God, so *is* my lord the king [‡] to [g] discern good and bad: therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee.

18 Then the king answered and said unto the woman, [h] Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak.

19 And the king said, *Is not* the hand [i] of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said,

[t] 1 Sam. xxv. 24.
[u] Gen. xviii. 27. 32. xliv. 18. Jer. xii. 1.
[x] Acts xxvi. 1.
[y] xii. 7. 1 Kings xx. 40—42. Luke vii. 42—44.
[z] vii. 8. Judg. xx. 2.
[a] xiii. 37, 38.
[b] xi. 25. Job xxx. 23. xxxiv. 15. Ec. iii. 19, 20. ix. 5. Heb. ix. 27.
[c] Job xiv. 7—12. 14. Ps. xxii. 14. lxxix. 3.
* Or, *because God hath not taken away his life, he hath also devised means, &c.*
[d] Deut. x. 17. Job xxxiv. 19. Matt. xxii. 16. Acts x. 34. Rom. ii. 11. 1 Pet. i. 17.
[e] Ex. xxi. 13. Num. xxxv. 15. 25. 28.
† Heb. *for rest.*
[f] 20. xix. 27. 1 Sam. xxix. 9. Prov. xxvii. 21. xxix. 5.
‡ Heb. *to hear.*
[g] 1 Kings iii. 9. 28. Job vi. 30. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. *marg.* Heb. v. 14.
[h] 1 Sam. iii. 17, 18. Jer. xxxviii. 14. 25.
[i] iii. 27. 29. 34. xi. 14, 15. 1 Kings ii. 5, 6.

she was willing all the guilt, if there were any, should rest on her and her father's house, and not upon David or his kingdom. Thus she engaged for what was out of her power; (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 9, 10;) for the neglect of punishing murder would, notwithstanding, bring guilt upon both king and people. (*Note*, *Num.* xxxv. 31—34.) She, however, requested him to "remember the LORD his God:" that is, to give her the security of an oath, that he would spare and protect her son; and he was prevailed upon to grant her unreasonable demand. In this, David acted more according to his feelings than his judgment, and was very precipitate. If the party concerned in the supposed case did not deserve to die, the city of refuge would have afforded him a safe retreat, and a fair trial: (*Note*, *Josh.* xx. 2—6:) and if he merited death, David had no right to dispense with the divine law by protecting him; and moreover he had examined no other witness, *than one interested party!*

V. 13—17. The woman, having thus far carried her point, proceeded, gradually and *ambiguously*, to apply David's concession to the case of Absalom; and her speech was most artfully devised, so that she might retract, or be more explicit, according as he took it. She intimated that the king's severity to his son was injurious to the people of God; and that he was wanting in his duty to the kingdom, in delaying to recall him: as if Absalom had been so excellent a young man, that all the hopes of Israel centred in him! She represented his flight to Geshur as a *banishment*, which had already been too severe a punishment of his offence. She pleaded the certainty of death, and the impossibility of recalling the dead to life again; by which she would either insinuate that Amnon would have died in some other way, if Absalom had not slain him; or that the punishment of Absalom would not bring him to life again; or that, as David himself must at length die, it was proper that Absalom should be recalled to succeed him. But whatever she meant, it was nothing to the purpose: for God hath commanded the death of the murderer, which exceedingly tends to the preservation of the life of man, though it cannot raise the dead; and if such an argument were of any force, no malefactor must be put to death! 'When we have a mind to a thing, all reasons seem strong 'to persuade us to it.' *Bp. Patrick.*—She also pleaded the mercy of God, in sparing, and re-admitting sinful men into his presence and favour, though justly banished from it; in which she seems to have referred to the return of the manslayer to his inheritance, at the death of the high priest.—The marginal reading (14), "because God hath "not taken away his life, he hath also, &c." appears to be the proper translation; and it is intimated, that as God had spared Absalom, David ought to pardon him.—But God pardons none who are impenitent; nor any, to the dishonour of his law and justice, or to the encouragement of crimes, and the injury of others. Perhaps she meant to hint, that the people expressed their dissatisfaction with Absalom's banishment so openly, that they made her afraid of an insurrection: but she *purposely* so confounded the feigned cause of her son, with the real cause of Absalom, that part of her address is obscure. While however, she ventured to censure David for not *gratifying* himself; she took care repeatedly to give him flattering commendations for his wisdom and goodness, which in such a cause abundantly compensated for the ambiguity of her discourse, and the weakness of her arguments: (*Notes*, *Prov.* xxvi. 28. xxix. 5:) and to do her justice, her ingenuity in pleading so bad a cause was admirable. 'We love those that admire us.'

V. 18—20. (*Notes*, iii. 26—39. xi. 14—17.) Even when David perceived, and the woman had acknowledged, the drift of her discourse; she seems to have aimed to keep up the idea, that the case stated was real, though she had turned the discourse to Absalom; and that she could not hope the king would spare her son, if he would not recall his own.—Her flattery in the conclusion was very

k xi. 11. 1 Sam. i. 26. xvii. 55. xx. 3. xxv. 26. 2 Kings ii. 2.
l Num. xx. 17. Deut. v. 32. xxviii. 14. Josh. i. 7. Prov. iv. 27.
m See on 3.—Ex. iv. 15. Luke xxi. 15.

k *As* thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can l turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and m he put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid:

n v 23.

20 To n fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord *is* wise, o according to the wisdom of an angel of God, p to know all *things* that *are* in the earth.

o 17. Job xxxii. 21, 22. Prov. xxvi. 28. xxix. 5.
p Gen. iii. 5. Job xxxviii. 16, &c. 1 Cor. viii. 1, 2.

21 ¶ And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, q I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again.

q 11. 1 Sam. xiv. 39. Mark vi. 26.

22 And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and * thanked the king: and Joab said, Today thy servant knoweth that r I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of † his servant.

* Heb. *blessed.* xix. 39. Neh. xi. 2. Job xxix. 11. lxxi. 20. Prov. xxxi. 28.
r Gen. vi. 8. Ex. xxxiii. 16, 17. Ruth ii. 2. 1 Sam. xx. 3.
† Or, *thy.*

23 So Joab arose and went to s Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

s iii. 3. xiii. 37.

24 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and t let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.

23. iii. 13. Gen. xliii. 3. Rev. xxii. 4.

25 ‡ But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: u from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him.

‡ Heb. *And as Absalom there was not a beautiful man in all Israel to praise greatly.* 1 Sam. ix. 2. xvi. 7. Prov. xxxi. 30. Matt. xxiii. 27.
u Deut. xxviii. 35. Job ii. 7. Is. i. 6. Eph. v. 27.

26 And x when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled *it:* because *the hair* was heavy on him, therefore he polled it;) he weighed the hair of his head, at y two hundred shekels after the king's weight.

x xviii. 9. Is. iii. 24. 1 Cor. xi. 14.
y Gen. xxiii. 16. Lev. xix. 36. Ez. xlv. 9—14.

27 And unto Absalom there were z born three sons, and one daughter, whose name *was* a Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

z xviii. 18. Job xviii. 16—19. Is. xiv. 22. Jer xxii. 30.
a xiii. 1 B. C. 1025.

28 ¶ So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.

29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; b but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come.

b 30, 31. Esth. i. 12. Matt. xxii. 3.

30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near ‖ mine,

‖ Heb. *my place.*

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great; even though she meant only the land of Israel, and not the whole earth: but in fact, David was not at this time giving much proof of his wisdom, as the event shewed!

V. 21, 22. David was willing to suppose that his oath, to spare the woman's son, obliged him to recall Absalom, who was the person really intended; though he could not but perceive the insufficiency of her arguments, and the disparity of the cases. *As a favour* therefore he gave Joab *permission* to fetch home Absalom; and Joab appeared as thankful to the king for allotting him this service, as if the most expensive kindness had been done him. There was much of the courtier in this; but it was far distant from godly sincerity!—If however Joab thought, that this conduct of David as a pledge of reconciliation, or act of indemnity, secured him, as a murderer, from punishment, he was deceived: for he was at length put to death for his crimes, and that by David's counsel. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* ii. 5, 6. 28—34.)

V. 24. David probably meant to quiet his own conscience, and to silence the censures of others, or to shew his abhorrence of murder, by laying Absalom under some tokens of disgrace, and by denying himself the pleasure of seeing him. This might also be intended to humble Absalom: but it entirely failed of producing that effect.

V. 25—27. Absalom was not praised for wisdom, justice, or piety; but merely for his beauty, and *effeminacy;* for such doubtless was his attention to his hair: and yet he was the admiration and the favourite of Israel! (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* xv. 1—6. 1 *Kings* i. 5, 6.) 'It is not certain 'that he cut his hair once a year: for the words in the 'Hebrew are, "from the end of days to days," ... at stated 'times, ... when it grew too heavy.' *Bp. Patrick.*—As 200 shekels, according to the usual meaning of the word, was no less than eight pounds four ounces Troy-weight; it has been thought, that the shekel of half an ounce is not meant, but a much less weight; or that the decorations used about his hair were included. Absalom's atrocious guilt however was forgotten, and his accomplishments universally celebrated; which increased his arrogance, and ended in his ruin.—His sons died before him. (xviii. 18.)

V. 28, 29. Perhaps Absalom was not only forbidden to visit his father; but was confined to his own house and its environs, and not allowed to go abroad. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* ii. 36—46.) Thus he would be greatly embarrassed in his ambitious projects: and this might be one reason of his impatient desire of being reconciled to David, and enjoying his full liberty; and also of being freed from the disgrace of his present situation, which would hinder many from attaching themselves to him. He seems, however, to have been secretly active in forming a party, even at this time: and either he had not favoured Joab for his former services, according to his expectations; or Absalom's popularity and ambition made that sagacious politician regard him as a dangerous person, with whom he did not wish to form any further connexions; so that he declined coming to him.

V. 30—33. Absalom's injurious and hectoring treat-

and he hath barley there; [c] go and set it on fire. [d] And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

31 Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto *his* house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?

32 And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? [e] *it had been* good for me *to have been* there still: now therefore let me see the king's face; and [f] if there be *any* iniquity in me, let him kill me.

33 So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king [g] kissed Absalom.

c xiii. 28, 29. Judg. xv. 5.
d 1 Kings xxi. 9—14. 2 Kings ix. 23. x. 6, 7.
e Ex. xiv. 12. xvi. 3. xvii. 3.
f Gen. iii. 12. 1 Sam. xv. 13. Ps. xxxvi. 2. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. ii. 22, 23. viii. 12. Matt. xxv. 44. Rom. iii. 19.
g Gen. xxvii. 26. xxxiii. 4. xlv. 15. Luke xv. 20.

ment of so considerable a person as Joab; and his arrogant message to David, almost vindicating his conduct and demanding justice; plainly shewed his character and intentions, and his confidence in the favour of the people, and the ill-judged lenity of his father. This aggravated David's sin and folly in receiving him into full favour, in the manner he did; and which would give him access, without restraint, to all those, who before were reserved, or afraid of shewing their attachment to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—20.

It behoves princes and magistrates to be accessible, and to protect the destitute and oppressed: yet the most amiable dispositions must be regulated by discretion; or they will lead us to improper concessions.—While the *urgent wants* of the poor are unheeded by most men; the *secret wishes* of those, who possess authority and affluence, are discovered and anticipated by crafty courtiers and dependents, who seek their own interest by forwarding their indulgence: so that conscientious self-denial in such a situation is doubly difficult and doubly needful.—If scruples and fears deter great men from complying with their inclinations; some feigned precedent, some plausible arguments, or some partial illustration, will be devised and speciously suggested, to remove the hindrance. In *such a case*, the discerning favourite, or candidate for royal favour, will personally, or by some well chosen instrument, venture to find fault with his prince or his patron; and to represent to him, that the safety of the state, or some other important interest, demands those measures which he scruples to adopt: and by such addresses to the passions as are suited to his character and disposition, mixed with flattering commendations and expostulations, he will cover the fallacy of his reasonings, and the unlawfulness and impolicy of that conduct which he recommends. Thus many a one has been led to impose on his own judgment and conscience, and conclude that he could not resist such urgent importunities, and such cogent arguments; that his consent was almost extorted; and that to oblige such kind friends he had passed his word, and could not in honour retract it: while in reality he was overcome by his own inclinations, and only wanted a specious excuse for indulging them. If the required concessions are evidently contrary to the duty of a man's station, and the interests of society; it will plausibly be argued, that some exceptions must be admitted; that this was a singular case; and that here exactness would be harsh, injurious, and of bad consequence: by sophistry, so manifest and slight, many even wise and good men deceive themselves, where their affections are previously engaged.—Let us hence learn, what need we have to adhere closely to our rule of duty; to pray earnestly for the teaching of the Holy Spirit; and to watch against the deceitfulness of our own hearts, the bribery of our passions, and the agreeable poison of adulation.—Sin has so filled the world with misery, that real cases of distress may be found, more pitiable than any which the imagination can feign; and we should readily endeavour to relieve those, who are in trouble: but even compassion, amiable as it is, will not justify our violations of the divine law, or neglect of the important duties of our station. (*Note, Ex.* xxiii. 1—3.) With this single exception, alleviating misery is the noblest privilege and employment of the great; who should in this especially "remember the "LORD their God:" not only his authority and their accountableness to him; but his compassion and mercy to others and to themselves; and his justice and holiness, who in his love to sinners manifests most conspicuously his abhorrence of their crimes.—As all must die, and there is no recall from the tomb by human power, we should not spend our time in immoderate, unavailing lamentations for the dead; but should be employed in preparing for our own dissolution, and in seizing the fleeting opportunity of "serving our generation."—When we are most commended for our *discernment*, we generally act the *most foolishly*; for those very praises cloud the understanding and pervert the judgment. We deem it unnecessary for persons, of such acknowledged wisdom as we are, to waste time in nice distinctions; we can scarcely refuse to speak *comfortably* to them, who speak so agreeably to us: and hence extravagant commendations lead to self-deception, and entangle all parties in the net of the great deceiver of our fallen race.

V. 21—33.

In our treatment of children or others who have greatly offended, every method should be used, which has a tendency to mortify pride, and to bring them to repentance; and in aiming at this important object, the feelings of our hearts must be repressed. But when high rank, early indulgence, impunity in crimes, flattering commendations, personal accomplishments, and popular favour, concur to increase the natural haughtiness of the human heart; and when the Lord leaves a man to himself, it is inconceivable to what a pitch of arrogance and insolence he will arrive. A person of this description will vindicate the basest villanies, treat all superiors with contempt, and all benefactors with ingratitude; and overbear and terrify all around

CHAP. XV

Absalom, by fair speeches and affected courtesy, steals the hearts of the people, 1—6. Under pretence of a vow, he obtains leave to go to Hebron, where he raises rebellion, 7—12. David hearing it retires from Jerusalem, 13—18. Ittai the Gittite faithfully adheres to him, and the people weep over him, 19—23. Zadok and Abiathar are sent back with the ark, 24—29. David and his company ascend mount Olivet weeping, 30. Hearing that Ahithophel had joined Absalom, he prays that his counsel may be turned into foolishness, 31. Hushai is sent back with instructions, 32—37.

AND it came to pass after this, that [a] Absalom prepared him chariots, and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Absalom [b] rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was *so*, that when any man that had a controversy [*] came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city *art* thou? And he said, Thy servant *is* of one of the tribes of Israel.

3 And Absalom said unto him, See, [c] thy matters *are* good and right; but [†] *there is* no man *deputed* of the king to hear thee.

4 Absalom said moreover, [d] Oh, that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and [e] I would do him justice!

5 And it was *so*, that when any man came nigh *to him* to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and [f] took him, and [g] kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom [h] stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after [i] forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, [k] let me go and [l] pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD in Hebron.

8 For [m] thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at [n] Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then [o] I will serve the LORD.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose and went to Hebron.

a xii. 11. Deut. xvii. 16. 1 Sam. viii. 11. 1 Kings i. 5. 33. x. 26—29. Ps. xx. 7. Prov. xi. 2. xvi. 18. xvii. 19 Jer. xxii. 14—16.
b Job xxiv. 14. Prov. iv. 16. Matt. xxvii. 1.
* Heb. *to come.* Ex. xviii. 14. 16. 26. 1 Kings iii. 16—28.
c Num. xvi. 3. 13, 14. Ps. xii. 2. Dan. xi. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 10.
† Or, *none will hear thee from the king* downward. viii. 15. Ex. xx. 12. xxi. 17. Prov. xxx. 11. 17. Ez. xxii. 7. Matt. xv. 4. Acts xxiii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 17.
d Judg. ix. 1—5. 15. 29. Prov. xxv. 6, 7. Luke xiv. 8—11.
e Prov. xxvii. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 19.
f Ps. x. 9, 10. lv. 21. Prov. xxvi. 25.
g xiv. 33.
h Prov. xi. 9. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 3.
i B. C. 1021. 1 Sam. xvi. 13.
k xiii. 24—27.
l Prov. xxi. 27. Is. lviii. 4. Matt. ii. 8. xxiii. 14.
m Gen. xxviii. 20, 21. 1 Sam. i. 11. Ps. lvi. 12. Ec. v. 4.
n xiii. 37, 38. xiv. 23. 32.
o Josh. xxiv. 15. Is. xxviii. 15 Jer. ix. 3—6 xlii. 20.

him into compliance with his unreasonable demands.—But all this is the forerunner of destruction: and when parents or rulers countenance such imperious characters, they will soon experience the most fatal effects.—The Lord grant unto us the inward beauty of holiness, and the adorning of a meek and quiet spirit: for "favour is deceitful, and "beauty is vain:" and those only, who fear the Lord, are truly excellent and happy.

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—6. The last clause in these verses aptly marks the way, in which Absalom ingratiated himself with the people. He "stole the hearts of the men of "Israel." (*Note, Rom.* xvi. 17—20.) He did not gain their hearts by eminent services, or by a wise and virtuous conduct. But he affected to look great, as heir to the crown; and yet to be very condescending, and affable to his inferiors: he pretended a great regard to their interests, and threw out artful insinuations against David's administration: he flattered every one who had a cause to be tried, with the assurance that he had right on his side; that, if it went against him, he might be led to accuse David and the magistrates of injustice. Though Absalom knew not how to obey, and deserved to die for his atrocious crime; yet he expressed a vehement desire to be judge over all the land; and suggested, that suits should not then be so tedious, expensive, and partially decided as they were. This he confirmed by rising early and by apparent application; though it was to other people's business, and not to his own duty: and by such sinister arts, united with his personal attractions, magnificence, and address, he imposed upon multitudes all over the land, to prefer so worthless a character to the wise, righteous, and pious David!—Others of the king's sons were employed in publick business, but Absalom seems not to have had any place. (*Note*, viii. 15—18.) This might offend him; and his artifices tended to alienate the people from his brethren, as well as from his father.—The chariots and horsemen of Absalom, being a deviation from the divine law, should not have been allowed by David on any account: (*Notes*, viii. 4. *Deut.* xvii. 16. 1 *Kings* i. 5, 6:) and indeed he might easily have foreseen the consequences of Absalom's ostentation, and should at once have restrained it.

V. 7—9. The æra, from which the "forty years" here mentioned should be computed, cannot easily be assigned; nor are any of the conjectures of learned men on the subject fully satisfactory. The most approved seems to be, that they must be reckoned from the time of David's anointing by Samuel to the kingdom: yet that, being a private transaction, would scarcely have been referred to in a publick computation; no other events are dated from that æra; the subsequent history has no apparent connexion with it; and indeed it would fix Absalom's rebellion more early in David's reign, than it seems to have occurred.—It is evident that Josephus read *four years*, which he dates from Absalom's reconciliation; (a very proper time for his artful schemes to produce their effects;) and this seems to be the true reading; from which a trivial error

10 But Absalom sent [p] spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom [q] reigneth in [r] Hebron.

11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, *that were* [s] called; and they went in [t] their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

12 And Absalom sent for [u] Ahithophel the Gilonite, [x] David's counsellor, from his city, *even* from [y] Giloh, [z] while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for [a] the people increased continually with Absalom.

13 ¶ And there came a messenger to David, saying, [b] The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

14 And David said unto all his servants that *were* with him at Jerusalem, [c] Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not *else* escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and [*] bring evil upon us, [d] and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

15 And the king's servants said unto the king, [e] Behold, thy servants *are ready to do* whatsoever my lord the king shall [†] appoint.

16 And the king went forth, and all his household [‡] after him: and the king left [f] ten women, *which were* concubines, to keep the house.

p xiii. 28, 29. xiv. 30.
q xix. 10. Job xx. 5. Ps. lxxiii. 18, 19.
r ii. 1. 11. iii. 2, 3. v. 5. 1 Chr. xi. 3. xii. 23. 38.
s 1 Sam. ix. 13. xvi. 3—5.
t Gen. xx. 5. 1 Sam. xxii. 15. Prov. xiv. 15. xxii. 3. Matt. x. 16. Rom. xvi. 18, 19.
u 31. xvi. 20—23. xvii. 14. 23.
x Ps. xli. 9. lv. 12—14. Mic. vii. 5, 6. John xiii. 18.
y Josh. xv. 51.
z Num. xxiii. 1. 14. 30. 1 Kings xxi. 9. 12. Ps. l. 16—21. Prov. xxi. 27. Is. i. 10—16. Tit. i. 16.
a Ps. iii. 1. xliii. 1, 2.
b 6. iii. 36. Judg. ix. 3. Ps. lxii. 9. Matt. xxi. 9. xxvii. 22.
c xix. 9. Ps. iii. *title.*
* Heb. *thrust.* Ez. xlvi. 18. Matt. xi. 12. *marg.* Luke x. 15.
d xxiii. 16, 17. Ps. li. 18. lv. 3—11. cxxxvii. 5, 6.
e Prov. xviii. 24. Luke xxii. 28, 29. John vi. 66—69. xv. 14.
† Heb. *choose.*
‡ Heb. *at his feet.* Judg. iv. 10. 1 Sam. xxv. 27. 42. *marg.*
f xii. 11. xvi. 21, 22. xx. 3. Rom. xii. 2.

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easily made, was fallen into by some very ancient transcriber.—Absalom was born at Hebron; (iii. 2, 3;) and that gave him the pretext for asking to go thither to pay the vow, which he feigned to have made at Geshur: yet as David was made king at Hebron, (*Notes*, v. 1—5,) it was obvious to conclude from Absalom's whole character, that he was influenced by ambition rather than devotion. But he knew his father would be pleased to suppose that he paid any regard to religion; and therefore he cloked his intended treason and parricide, with hypocrisy. (*Note*, *Gen.* xxvii. 21—23.)

V. 10. Spies having been previously sent into all parts of the land, to sound the inclinations of the people, and to prepare the way; when the design was ripe for execution, trumpeters were sent after them: that, when the signal was given, the spies might, through all the tribes of Israel, proclaim Absalom king, without expressly avowing the treason, or saying whether David was dead, or had resigned, or had admitted Absalom to share the authority. Thus while David's loyal subjects would hesitate in uncertainty, Absalom's party became formidable.

V. 11. Absalom went to Hebron with David's approbation, and under the pretence of religion; and these persons, (who doubtless were of chief rank at Jerusalem,) being invited to a sacred feast, accompanied him, and thus undesignedly countenanced his rebellion. By involving them in the suspicion of treason, he doubtless intended either to fix them in his interests, or to prevent David from placing confidence in them.

V. 12. (*Marg. Ref.*) Ahithophel possessed great abilities; and he had professed much religion, and been David's counsellor and bosom-friend: but he was now retired from court, perhaps in some disgust. Bath-sheba was daughter to Eliam, and Eliam was son to Ahithophel; (xi. 3. xxiii. 34;) it has therefore been thought that he was her grandfather, and resented the dishonour done to his family. He, however, readily joined Absalom's conspiracy, and would have been the chief stay of it, had not God "turned "his counsel into foolishness." (*Note*, 31.) In many things he resembled Judas the traitor, and may even be said to have *typified* him. (*Notes*, *Ps.* xli. 9. lv. 12—15. 20, 21. cix. 2—20. *John* xiii. 18—30. *Acts* i. 16—18.)

The people increased, &c.] Various motives would induce numbers to assemble; and many of them might have no previous purpose of joining in a conspiracy against David: but the feasting, the conversation, the exultations, and menaces of the leading conspirators; with the promises, and fascinating objects held forth to their vain but sanguine hopes; drew them in to commit themselves, beyond their first intention, as it is usual on such occasions.—They heedlessly approached the vortex, and were irrecoverably drawn into it.

V. 13—15. It is most probable, that some of the two hundred men, who "went in their simplicity," sent David word concerning the conspiracy; and also represented it as extremely formidable. It must indeed have been expected, that the conspirators would act in the most decided manner: and though Jerusalem was a well fortified city, yet it might not be stored with a garrison or provisions for a siege. The small force, which David had with him, might be insufficient to defend it against Absalom; and perhaps he had no confidence in the inhabitants, or he was unwilling to expose that populous and *sacred* city to the effects of a siege. He might also deem it prudent to give the furious blaze of popular frenzy time to spend itself, hoping that numbers would soon be sensible of their folly and ingratitude.—It is probable, however, that conscious guilt; the hand of God evidently lifted up against him as it had been predicted; the treason of his much beloved Absalom; and the fickleness of the people after all his past services, and successes for their benefit; damped his wonted courage, and rendered him less prompt for battle, especially in so horrid and unnatural a war. It does not however appear that his measures were impolitick, or that his friends thought them so.

V. 16. David, it is probable, took his wives and children with him: but supposing that these concubines would be an additional encumbrance, and not apprehending that Absalom would injure them, he left them to take care of his house; by which inadvertency the Lord fulfilled his denunciation. (*Notes*, xii. 11, 12. xvi. 20—23.)

17 And the king [g] went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.

18 And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the [h] Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the [i] Gittites, six hundred men, which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

19 Then said the king to [j] Ittai, the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou *art* a stranger, and also an exile.

20 Whereas thou camest *but* yesterday, should I this day make thee [*] go up and down with us? [k] seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: [l] mercy and truth *be* with thee.

21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, [m] *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* my Lord the king liveth, [n] surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.

22 And David said to Ittai, Go, and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that *were* with him.

23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook [o] Kidron, and all the people passed over toward the way of the [p] wilderness.

24 ¶ And lo, [q] Zadok also, and all the Levites *were* with him, [r] bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up until all the people had done passing out of the city.

25 And the king said unto Zadok, [s] Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, [t] he will bring me again, and shew me *both* it and his [u] habitation.

26 But if he thus say, I [v] have no delight in thee; behold *here am* I, [x] let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, *Art not* thou [y] a seer? [z] return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

28 See, [a] I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me.

29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

V. 17. It is highly probable, from the original, that both David and all his company went *on foot*, upon this distressing occasion.—*After him.*] בְּרַגְלָיו. *At his feet.* 16. *marg.*

V. 18—22. The six hundred Gittites seem to have been a distinct body from the Cherethites and Pelethites: they had accompanied, or followed, David from Gath, and probably were proselyted Philistines, commanded by Ittai of the same nation. The Cherethites and Pelethites seem likewise to have been collected from among the several districts of the Philistines, or adjacent and allied tribes. (*Marg. Ref.* h. *Note*, viii. 15—18.) They were, however, numbered among David's most faithful attendants, being attached to him by esteem for his character, and love to his religion; and we may infer, that his sojourning in the land of the Philistines was over-ruled for very important good to numbers of that nation.—David was unwilling to expose Ittai and his men, who were strangers and exiles in Israel, (having been driven with their families from Gath, for their affection to David, and to his religion and people,) to so much hardship and peril, as were now before him; and he would have dismissed them with thanks and prayers for them: but their attachment to his person and cause was more strong, than that of most of the native Israelites; and they were determined to cleave to him, and serve him at all events. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xii. 16—18.)—David called Absalom *king* (19), as he had usurped the throne, and was at present in possession of regal authority.

V. 23. Though the multitude favoured Absalom, yet many sympathized with David.—Thus while the general cry against Jesus was, "Crucify him, crucify him;" there were those who wept, and bewailed him. (*Note, Luke* xxiii. 26—31.)

All the country wept, &c.] All the *land* (הָאָרֶץ) wept; that is, the weeping was general among the inhabitants; the adherents to Absalom being at a distance.—*Kidron.*] Our blessed Saviour passed this same brook, in his way to the garden, at or near to the mount of Olives, in the evening before his crucifixion. (*Note, John* xviii. 1—3, *v.* 1.)

V. 24—29. Abiathar was the high priest: yet Zadok, of the family of Eleazar, was more noticed than he, as more favoured by David; for Eli's family was gradually declining. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* ii. 30. 35, 36. 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27. 35.)—The priests and Levites were generally attached to David, which was honourable to them, and shewed that religion was upon the whole in a flourishing state. The presence of the ark and the high priest would have been a comfort, and an apparent advantage to David: but the ark had been placed, and the ordinances of God established, in Zion. David was under the divine rebuke, and would express his humiliation and submission to it; and not

30 And David went up by [b] the ascent of *mount* Olivet, [*] and wept as he went up, and had [c] his head covered; and he went [d] barefoot: and all the people that *was* with him covered every man his head, and they went up, [e] weeping as they went up.

31 ¶ And *one* told David, saying, [f] Ahithophel *is* among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, [g] O LORD, I pray thee, [h] turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

32 And it came to pass, that *when* David was come to [i] the top *of the mount*, where [j] he worshipped God, behold, [k] Hushai the [l] Archite came to meet him with his [m] coat rent, and earth upon his head:

33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, [n] then thou shalt be a burden unto me:

34 But if thou [o] return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; [p] *as* I *have been* thy father's servant hitherto, so *will* I now also *be* thy servant; [q] then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

35 And *hast thou* not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, *that* what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, [r] thou shalt tell *it* to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

36 Behold *they have* there with them [s] their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's *son*, and Jonathan Abiathar's *son*; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

37 So Hushai David's [t] friend came into the city, and [u] Absalom came into Jerusalem.

b Zech. xiv. 4. Luke xix. 29. 37. xxi. 37. xxii. 39. Acts i. 12.
* Heb. *going up and weeping.* Ps. xlii. 3—11. xliii. 1, 2. 5. Luke xix. 41.
c xix. 4. Esth. vi. 12. Jer. xiv. 3, 4.
d Is. xx. 2. 4. Ez. xxiv. 17. 23.
e Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Matt. v. 4. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26.
f 12. Ps. iii. 1, 2. xli. 9. lv. 12—14. Matt. xxvi. 14, 15. John xiii. 18.
g Ps. lv. 15—17. cix. 3, 4.
h xvi. 23. xvii. 14. 23. Job v. 12, 13. xii. 16—20. Is. xix. 3. 11—14. Jer. viii. 8, 9. 1 Cor. i. 20. iii. 18—20. Jam. iii. 15.
i 30. 1 Kings xi. 7. Luke xix. 29.
j 1 Kings viii. 44, 45. Job i. 20, 21. Ps. iii. 3—5. 7. iv. 1—8. 1. 15. xci. 15.
k xvi. 16—19.
l Josh. xvi. 2.
m i. 2. xiii. 19.
n xix. 35.
o 20. Josh. viii. 2. Matt. x. 16.
p xvi. 16—19.
q xvii. 5—14.
r xvii. 15, 16.
s 27. xvii. 17. xviii. 19, &c.
t xvi. 16. 1 Chr. xxvii. 33.
u xvi. 15.

assume, by the presence of the ark, that God was on his side, while he was suffering for his sins: (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* iv. 3—11:) but he would refer his cause to the Lord, either to bring him back to Zion in peace, or to let his unnatural and ungrateful foes prevail against him; being conscious that he deserved the worst at the hands of God, though not from them. (*Marg. Ref.* s—v.)—David's frame of spirit was excellent on this trying occasion: and his language beautifully humble, resigned, and pious.—It is not certain whether Zadok was endued with the Spirit of prophecy, or whether he sometimes enquired of the Lord in the place of the high priest; or whether David only meant to say, that he was a person of remarkable discernment and penetration, who could furnish him with important and authentick information by his observance of Absalom's conduct; and one in whose faithfulness he could entirely depend. He would not therefore go to any great distance, till he heard from Zadok.

V. 30. These were expressions of David's self-abasement, and sorrow for his sins, and for the miseries which he had brought on himself, on his family, and people. He thus "humbled himself under the mighty hand of God," which he saw lifted up against him: and the people joined him with the same tokens of godly sorrow and repentance. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 31. David apprehended more danger from Ahithophel's superior talents, and decisive energy of mind, than from all the courage and numbers of Absalom's followers: immediately therefore, upon hearing that he had joined the conspirators, he addressed the Lord in one short ejaculation; and it proved effectual. He did not pray against Ahithophel himself; but, "that his counsel might be "turned into foolishness;" either that he might be left to give foolish counsel, or that his prudent advice might be despised and neglected as folly: and all, who heard this petition, could not but be much impressed with the answer which it shortly received. (*Notes*, xvii. 1—14. 23.)—He afterwards worshipped God in a more solemn manner with his whole company (32).

V. 32—37. It seems, that David entirely confided in the fidelity and prudence of Hushai, and that his reputation as a wise counsellor was great: but either he was not able to endure the fatigues of war, or he was no soldier. David therefore stated, that in his present destitute condition, Hushai would only burden him and his friends, by attending him; and he pointed out how he might better serve his cause by remaining in Jerusalem.—Stratagems of war are lawful; for an enemy may as well be out-witted as over-powered: but the instructions given to Hushai imply a falsehood, which cannot be wholly vindicated. (*Note, Josh.* viii. 1, 2.)—The conduct of Ahithophel, in joining Absalom, would render Hushai's less suspected by the conspirators.—*Ahimaaz*, &c. (36) *Notes*, xvii. 15—21.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The ostentation of emulating or exceeding superiors in external pomp, is an evidence of a narrow mind, a weak judgment, and a depraved heart. It is, however, the common folly and ruin of *indulged* children, and frequently prepares the way for the most atrocious crimes. The very first appearance, therefore, of this affectation should be repressed by parents, with decision, and even with severity, if they would prevent the ruin of their families.—Those who least understand the duties, and could least endure the burdens of authority, are commonly most desirous of it. But when ambition prompts, the most self-indulgent assume the appearance of diligence; and the most haughty, that of affability and condescension: and while men aspire to the pinnacle of earthly grandeur, they, for the time, pay the most abject court to the meanest of the mob! Such fawning sons of ambition are peculiar to no age or nation: but let every wise and honest man shun them as a pestilence. They make their way by *openly* or *obliquely* tra-

CHAP. XVI.

Ziba imposes on David, and obtains a grant of Mephibosheth's estate, 1—4. Shimei a Benjamite curses and slanders David, who bears it humbly and meekly, 5—14. Hushai insinuates himself into Absalom's counsels, 15—19. By Ahithophel's advice, Absalom openly goes in to his father's concubines, 20—23.

ducing the characters, or censuring the measures, of their rulers; and the wisdom and perfection of an angel would be no security against their malignant insinuations. As self-love cannot but murmur at impartiality, and men are generally discontented and desirous of change, these demagogues always have proper persons on whom to practise. By joining in the groundless complaints of the disaffected, they feed their discontent; by flattering their persons and approving their cause, they humour their pride; by lavish promises (which cost and mean nothing,) of what they would do if they were in power, they excite their sanguine hopes of greater felicity; and by a voluble tongue, an insinuating address, personal accomplishments, and consummate impudence, they *steal* the hearts of the people, and prepare the way for popular tumults, insurrections, and rebellion. For such is human nature, that these arts and attainments go much further in gaining the favour of the multitude, than wisdom and justice, truth and piety, or the most important and long continued services! This is the old hackneyed way for men, destitute of conscience or honour, to wind themselves into important stations; and yet it is as much practised, and as little suspected, as if it were quite a new discovery!—No wise and good man, therefore, should on any account promise himself the continuance of popular favour, or be cast down if he meet with treachery and ingratitude: yet, in general, we may perceive the righteousness of God, in the basest treatment which we can receive from man; and may thence be reminded to humble ourselves before him, and to expect all our happiness from him alone.—No villainy can be termed *complete*, which is not disguised under the mask of religion; especially at those times, when the profession of godliness is treated with general respect. Pious persons are glad to see others, and particularly those whom they most love, appear to be religious, and are not apt to suspect them of hypocrisy: and this gives occasion to the most scandalous and pernicious deceptions.—The policy of wicked men and the subtlety of Satan are exerted to the utmost, in drawing in respectable persons to give an unintended and unsuspected countenance to the basest designs; by which, opinions, principles, and practices acquire a degree of regard, to which they are not at all entitled, and which they would not otherwise have obtained: but none so much strengthen the hands of profligates or infidels, as apostates from a religious profession.

V. 13—37.

Little dependence can be placed on earthly prosperity; and as little can be judged of causes or characters by success, until the final event of things shall arrive.—Our severest trials often come from those, in whom we most confided; and our firmest friends are sometimes raised up among persons, from whom we had the least expectations. But a truly pious man will never be entirely excluded from usefulness: some individuals, wherever he abides, will have to bless God for his example, converse, and prayers.—In our most critical and important concerns, we ought not to require any thing unreasonable from our friends; or "bind heavy burdens" on new converts, lest they should be discouraged: we should be thankful for fidelity and kindness from those, who are not likely to be further serviceable to us, and recompense them with our earnest prayers: and if the mercy and truth of God be with them, and with us and ours, we shall be safe and eventually happy, however at present afflicted or separated. But that love of the brethren, which is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, when it is vigorous, will not be restrained by the fear of hardship, danger, or even death, from rendering assistance to those in affliction.—We often in despondency think our enemies to be more numerous, and our friends fewer, than they are found upon trial: for our severest crosses are mingled with comforts, which afford us causes for thankfulness.—The ministers of God should always set an example of submission to "the powers that "be," in all things lawful; and of cordial attachment and faithful adherence to those rulers, who protect and countenance them in their pious labours; and especially in those seasons, when others oppose and revile them.—It behoves us to humble ourselves before God under the tokens of his displeasure; and godly sorrow, confession of sin, repentance, self-denial, and self-abasement are the proper methods of seeking deliverance out of those troubles, which are evidently chastisements for sins. (*Note, Is.* xxii. 8—14.) At such a time, therefore, it is improper to buoy up our confidence by the externals of religion, which do not always imply the gracious presence of the Lord. If he pardon our sins, and then again employ us, his house and ordinances will be our comfort: and he will do us no wrong, though he lay us aside, or cut us off by death, as though he had "no delight in us." Nothing, however, must prevent our worshipping the Lord, though we have not access to his more solemn ordinances: and as afflictions abound, the fervency of our prayers should also increase.—Vain is all worldly wisdom and power against "the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man;" as in answer to a single emphatical ejaculation, "the counsel of "the prudent is carried headlong," and the force of the potent is turned into perfect weakness.—Some are useful in one way, and some in another, to one common cause, when they are cordially united: yet alas! where shall we find wisdom and simplicity so united in any mere man, that we can perceive nothing which merits censure, and needs forgiveness? But when the Son of David was treated with all possible treachery, indignity, cruelty, and ingratitude; his wisdom, meekness, candour, and patience were unalloyed perfection. His inexpressible sufferings are now over: his humiliation is exchanged for the throne of glory, where unseen, except by realizing faith, he serves our cause in the world above. Let us follow, and serve, and cleave to him, in tribulation, life, and death. And let us not forget, that we are left behind among his enemies, to promote his cause; and his instruction is, that we be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (*Note, Matt.* x. 16—18.)

AND when David was a [a] little past the top *of the hill*, behold, [b] Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him [c] with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred *loaves* of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of [d] summer-fruits, and [e] a bottle of wine.

2 And the king said unto Ziba, [f] What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, [g] The asses *be* for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer-fruit [h] for the young men to eat; and the wine, [i] that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.

3 And the king said, And [j] where *is* thy master's son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, [k] To-day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.

4 Then said the king to Ziba, [l] Behold, thine *are* all that *pertained* unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, [*] I humbly beseech thee *that* I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.

5 ¶ And when king David came to [m] Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, [n] whose name *was* Shimei, the son of Gera: [†] he came forth, and [o] cursed still as he came.

6 And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people, and all the mighty men, *were* on his right hand and on his left.

7 And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou [‡] bloody man, and thou [p] man of Belial:

8 The LORD hath [q] returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, [§] behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief, because thou *art* a bloody man.

9 Then said [s] Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this [t] dead dog [u] curse my lord the king? [x] let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.

10 And the king said, [y] What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because [z] the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. [a] Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?

11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, [b] Behold, my son, which [c] came forth of my bowels, [d] seeketh my life: how much more now *may this* Benjamite *do it?* Let him alone, and let him curse; [e] for the LORD hath bidden him.

12 It may be that [f] the LORD will look on mine [‖] affliction, and that the LORD will [g] requite me good for his cursing this day.

13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and [h] cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and [*] cast dust.

14 And the king, and all the people that *were* with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves [i] there.

a xv. 30. 32.
b ix. 2. 9—12.
c xvii. 27—29. xix. 32. 1 Sam. xxv. 18. 1 Chr. xii. 40. Prov. xviii. 16. xxix. 4, 5.
d Jer. xl. 10. 12. Am. viii. 1. Mic. vii. 1.
e 1 Sam. x. 3. xvi. 20.
f Gen. xxi. 29. xxxiii. 8. Ex. xxxvii. 18.
g xv. 1. xix. 26. Judg. v. 10. x. 4.
h 1 Sam. xxv. 27.
i xv. 23. xvii. 29. Judg. viii. 4, 5. 1 Sam. xiv. 28. Prov. xxxi. 6, 7.
j ix. 9, 10. Ps. lxxxviii. 18. Mic. vii. 5.
k xix. 24—30. Ex. xx. 16. Deut. xix. 18, 19. Ps. xv. 3. ci. 5. Prov. i. 19. xxi. 28. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Jude 11.
l xiv. 10, 11. Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xix. 15. Prov. xviii. 13. 17. xix. 2.
* Heb. *I do obrisance.* xiv. 4. 22.
m 14. iii. 16. xvii. 18.
n xix. 16. 1 Kings ii. 8, 9. 36—44.
† Or, *he still came forth and cursed.*
o Ex. xxii. 28. 1 Sam. xvii. 43. Ps. lxix. 26. cix. 16—19. 28. Prov. xxvi. 2. Ec. x. 20. Is. viii. 21. Matt. v. 11, 12.
‡ Heb. *man of blood.* iii. 37. xi. 15—17. xii. 9. Ps. v. 6. li. 14.
p Deut. xiii. 13. 1 Sam. ii. 12. xxv. 17. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13.
q Judg. ix. 24. 56, 57. 1 Kings ii. 32, 33. Acts xxviii. 4, 5. Rev. xvi. 6.
r i. 16. iii. 28, 29. iv. 11, 12. Ps. iii. 2. iv. 2.
§ Or, *behold thee in thy evil.*
s iii. 30. 1 Sam. xxvi. 6—8.
t iii. 8. ix. 8. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14.
u *See on* Ex. xxii. 28. Acts xxiii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 17.
x 1 Sam. xxvi. 6—11. Job xxxi. 30, 31. Jer. xl. 13—16.
y iii. 39. xix. 22. 1 Kings ii. 5. Matt. xvi. 23. Luke ix. 54—56. 1 Pet. ii. 23.
z Gen. l. 20. 1 Kings xxii. 21—23. 2 Kings xviii. 25. Lam. iii. 38, 39. John xviii. 11.
a Job ix. 12. Ec. viii. 4. Dan. iv. 35. Rom. ix. 20.
b xii. 11, 12.
c vii. 12. Gen. xv. 4.
d xvii. 1—4. 2 Kings xix. 37. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21. Matt. x. 21.
e Is. x. 5—7. Ez. xiv. 9. xx. 25.
f Gen. xxix. 32, 33. Ex. ii. 24, 25. iii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. i. 11. Ps. xxv. 18.
‖ Or, *tears.* Heb. *eye.*
g Deut. xxiii. 5. Is. xxvii. 7. Matt. v. 11, 12. Rom. viii. 28. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 2 Thes. i. 7. Heb. xii. 10, 11. 1 Pet. iv. 12—19.
h 5, 6.
* Heb. *dusted* him *with dust.* Acts xxii. 23.
i 5.

NOTES

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—4. (*Notes*, ix.) Ziba took advantage of existing circumstances, to form an artful plan for obtaining a grant from David of Mephibosheth's estate. By his seasonable, and apparently generous present and his insinuating behaviour, he prepossessed David's mind in his favour: (*Notes, Prov.* xvii. 8. xviii. 16:) and then by false accusation he prejudiced him against Mephibosheth. It was indeed improbable, that Mephibosheth should prove so ungrateful, or form expectations of obtaining the kingdom: but what villainy could excite wonder, when Absalom was in arms against his own too indulgent father? And Ziba might hope that some event would secure him from detection, or that David would be ashamed to retract his grant, when he had once made it. (*Note*, xix. 24—30.) —It is evident, however, that David acted very precipitately, did great injustice to Mephibosheth, and even forgot his covenant with Jonathan, in passing sentence without hearing Mephibosheth's defence. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xx. 14—17.)

V. 5—14. Bahurim was a city of Benjamin; and Shimei was a relation of Saul: so that the translation of the kingdom to David marred all his prospects of preferment. He disregarded the express appointment of God, and his heart was full of implacable enmity to David, as a usurper of the throne. Contrary to the fullest evidence, he accused him of murdering Saul's family, and interpreted his affliction into a proof of his guilt; and he took this opportunity to pour out all kinds of imprecations and reproaches, and to express all the rage of impotent contempt and malice. But if David had been a *bloody* man, and disposed to slay the family of Saul, Shimei would soon have suffered the just punishment of his audacity; for

15 ¶ And [j]Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him.

16 And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, [*] God save the king, God save the king.

17 And Absalom said to Hushai, [k] *Is* this thy kindness to thy friend? [l] why wentest thou not with thy friend?

18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay, but [m] whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.

19 And again, Whom should I serve? [n] *Should I* not *serve* in the presence of his son? As I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence.

20 ¶ Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, [o] Give counsel among you what we shall do.

21 And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, [p] Go in [q] unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art [r] abhorred of [s] thy father: [t] then shall [u] the hands of all that *are* with thee be strong.

22 So they spread Absalom a tent [x] upon the top of the house: and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines [y] in the sight of all Israel.

23 And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, *was* [z] as if a man had enquired at the [†] oracle of God: so *was* [a] all the counsel of Ahithophel [b] both with David and with Absalom.

j xv. 37.

* Heb. *Let the king live.* 1 Sam. x. 24. 1 Kings i. 25. 34. 2 Kings xi. 12. Dan. ii. 4. v. 10. vi. 6. 21. Matt. xxi. 9.

k Deut. xxxii. 6.

l xv. 32—37. xix. 25. Prov. xvii. 17. xviii. 24.

m v. 1—3. 1 Sam. xvi. 13.

n xv. 34. 1 Sam. xxviii. 2. xxix. 8. Ps. lv. 21. Gal. ii. 13.

o Ex. i. 10. Ps. ii. 2. xxxvii. 12, 32. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. viii. 10. xxix. 15. Matt. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 23—28.

p Gen. vi. 4. xxxviii. 16.

q xii. 11. xv. 16. xx. 3. Gen xxxv. 22. Lev. xviii. 8. xx. 11. 1 Kings ii. 17. 22. 1 Cor. v. 1.

r Gen. xxxiv. 30. 1 Sam. xiii. 4.

s Gen. xlix. 3, 4.

t 1 Sam. xxvii. 12.

u ii. 7. Zech. viii. 13.

x xi. 2.

y xii. 11, 12. Num. xxv. 6. Is. iii. 9. Jer. iii. 3. viii. 12. Ez. xxiv. 7. Phil. iii. 19.

z Num. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. xxx. 8. Ps. xxviii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

† Heb. *word.* Ps. xix. 7.

a xvii. 14. 23. Job v. 12. xxviii. 28. Jer. iv. 22. viii. 9. Matt. xi. 25. Luke xvi. 8. Rom. i. 22. 1 Cor. iii. 19, 20. Jam. iii. 13—18.

b xv. 12. Ec. x. 1.

David was so well guarded that Shimei could only shew his malice at a distance: and David's prohibition alone prevented his nephew Abishai from putting him to death. This Shimei merited: but David was now under the divine rebuke for his sins. Though free from the guilt charged upon him, he was consciously guilty of having murdered Uriah: he therefore submitted to the justice of God, in this injurious treatment from Shimei; and he could not wonder that his enemies were stirred up against him, when his own son sought his life. The sin both of Shimei and of Absalom was from themselves and Satan: but David's affliction was from the Lord; and they were merely instruments, which he employed, without their intention, of correcting David for good. (*Notes, Gen.* l. 20. *Is.* x. 7. 15. *Ez.* xiv. 9—11. *Acts* ii. 22—24.) The curse causeless could only injure him who used it: and David hoped that his humble submission to such base usage from man, would prepare the way for the return of peace and comfort from a merciful God; and therefore he would not permit Shimei to be molested. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* xix. 19—23. 1 *Kings* ii. 8, 9. 36—46.)

Come out, &c. (7) Or rather, "Go out, go out." 'Get 'thee out of the kingdom, from whence thou deservest to 'be expelled.' *Bp. Patrick.—The Lord hath bidden him.* (11) 'Grotius thinks David excuses Shimei in these 'words: for speaking concerning the respect that is to be 'used to kings, in not giving them publick reproaches, he 'excepts those which are given by a prophet, who had a 'special command of God for it. Upon which account he 'saith, when David was openly upbraided by Shimei as a 'murderer, he had no excuse to make for him but this, that 'perhaps God had commanded him to do it.' *Ep. Patrick.* How could such a thought ever come into the mind of this learned and eminent man, or find a reception there? What prophet, in his most pointed reproofs, ever used such *virulent* and *slanderous* language as that of Shimei? not to speak of his casting stones and dust.

V. 15—19. Though Absalom interpreted Hushai's words as implying an express promise of fidelity, and an unreserved tender of his services, they did not necessarily imply these things. He said, "Let the king live," not *Let king Absalom live.* And when Absalom expressed his surprise, that he thus forsook his friend; he declared his resolution to accompany, and devote himself to *him,* whom the LORD and whom all Israel chose; but the event soon proved that this was not Absalom, however it appeared for a time. "He would also serve in the presence of the "son, as in the presence of the father." But whom would he serve? He would serve David in Absalom's presence, as faithfully as he had hitherto done. (*Note, Gen.* iii. 4, 5.) —If Absalom had not been blinded with pride and popularity, he would have suspected such ambiguous words, when used by the known and hitherto zealous friend of his father; and not have admitted him at once among his confidential counsellors.—It is indeed very difficult to conduct stratagems without such equivocations, if not direct falsehoods: and therefore it is best to keep at a distance from them if it be possible.—When Absalom said, "Is "this thy kindness to thy friend?" Hushai might have answered, 'Is this thy duty to thy father and king?'

V. 20—23. (*Note,* xv. 12.) Ahithophel's counsel was generally considered as "the oracle of God," because of his great sagacity: and at one time his professions of piety seem to have been equally depended on. He did not, however, shew his wisdom in joining himself to a party, so devoid of all principle, and headed by a rash young man of consummate villainy, which foreboded nothing but ruin. But his confidence in his own wisdom made him presume that he could render Absalom successful; and his mind seems to have been much embittered against David. His first counsel to Absalom, after his peaceable entrance into Jerusalem, was like an *oracle of Satan,* both for subtlety and atrocity. For his own security and that of the whole party, he intended to preclude all hope of reconciliation with David, that Absalom might determine to conquer or to perish: and he put him on an act of shameless

CHAP. XVII.

Hushai's counsel is preferred to the politick, but desperately wicked counsel of Ahithophel, by the secret appointment of God, 1—14. Hushai sends intelligence to David, who hastily passes over Jordan, 15—22. Ahithophel returns home and hangs himself, 23. David comes to Mahanaim, 24. Amasa is made captain of Absalom's army, which is encamped at Gilead, 25, 26. David's friends bring him provisions, 27—29.

MOREOVER, Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and [a] I will arise and pursue after David [b] this night:

[a] Prov. i. 16. iv. 16. Is. lix. 7, 8.
[b] Ps. iii. 3—5. iv. 8. cix. 2—4.

wickedness, which indeed was well suited effectually to ensure the purpose. (*Note, Gen.* xlix. 3, 4.) By Ahithophel's advice, Absalom, without expressing the least reluctance, and in defiance of the law of God, and even of common decency, in the most publick manner, lay with his father's concubines; thus inflicting on him the correction that had been denounced. (*Note,* xii. 11, 12.) It may be supposed that he meant to act as *king*, having dethroned and succeeded David: but had he been the rightful king, it would not in the least have excused his incest. —It is surprising, that this atrocious crime did not set the people against him.—So many concubines, besides his wives, were by no means honourable to David: and probably none of them expressed a proper degree of abhorrence of so gross an enormity. (*Notes,* xv. 16. xx. 3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Selfish men often affect to appear generous in giving away the property of others for their own advantage, and are great adepts in address and insinuation. Flatterers are generally back-biters; for it is as easy to them to forge slanders of the absent, as to pretend affection and respect for the present: and those servants, who purloin their masters' substance, commonly likewise asperse their reputations.—Both adulation and calumny are injurious to a great degree, but the former is the most hurtful; for to be tempted to sin is more injurious than to be robbed of riches, or even of our characters: and smooth speeches and well-timed presents, often seduce even the wise and righteous into improper measures.—When much treachery and ingratitude have been experienced, men are apt to become too suspicious, and to listen to every plausible tale of calumny: the mind being greatly agitated, views every thing through a false medium, and we are all naturally most precipitate when least capable of judging aright: but this is especially the danger of those persons whose affections are very strong, and easily excited. But while the dissimulation of false friends occasions sin; the rage, malice, and contumely of cruel enemies call forth the exercises of the believer's graces, and often prove advantageous to him.—Wicked men judge of right and wrong by self-interest; and count themselves robbed of every expected advantage which goes beside them. It gratifies malevolence to insult the afflicted, and to use imprecations and reproaches: and those, who think nothing of the authority, providence, or word of God in other respects, are often most ready to interpret the afflictions of their neighbours as divine judgments, in opposition to the clearest evidence. But it is good to see the hand of God *directing*, though not *dictating*, the injuries of men. Their calumnies may recall to memory some evil, or appearance of evil, which requires humiliation, watchfulness, and prayer: we deserve worse from the Lord than their most cruel and contemptuous treatment, and should consider it as his correction: and if we bear it humbly, patiently, and meekly, for his sake, he will graciously requite us with inward peace and consolation.—Seasons of peculiar humiliation before God, require peculiar long-suffering towards men: private revenge must never be indulged; and on such occasions it behoves us to be very reluctant in seeking the execution of publick justice, on those offenders who have injured us alone: for even the Judge of the world, in his humiliation *for our sins*, bore with those who reviled and crucified him, and prayed for them: yet he will at length execute vengeance on all the impenitent and unbelieving.—A deep sense of personal guilt will soften the spirit towards others, and dispose a man to be indignant and severe against himself: and the most zealous friends must be disregarded, and even reproved, when they counsel what is evidently wrong.

V. 15—23.

Men, who admire themselves, will be easily deceived by those who profess an attachment to them: yet they readily discern those faults in others, of which themselves are far more notoriously guilty; and are apt to express astonishment at them.—If a zealous disciple of Christ be betrayed into evident wickedness, even profligates will exclaim, "Is "this thy kindness to thy Friend!" But alas, how often might the Saviour himself address each of us in these words, to our shame and confusion! And how often should we thus check ourselves, and remember our ingratitude, to our deeper humiliation!—Destruction is before those, who hearken to deceitful and wicked counsellors: yet young people in general, especially in high life, will not regard any other.—How desperately wicked is the human heart, that can conceive, execute, and glory in those deeds of darkness, which it is shocking to think of, and shameful to mention! (*Note, Eph.* v. 8—14:) yet all this might be drawn forth out of *our hearts* by successive temptations, if Satan and his agents were permitted to practise upon us! —When eminent abilities and daring wickedness unite in one character, they form the express image of the devil: and, like that arch-apostate and rebel, men of this description will spare no pains to push others forward into those kinds and degrees of guilt, which may drive them desperate, and extinguish all thoughts of reconciliation unto God. But this wisdom will shortly appear the most wretched and contemptible folly, which perverts the noble powers of an angel, to increase and propagate guilt, condemnation, and eternal misery.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1—4. Ahithophel was fully aware, that delay must eventually ruin Absalom's cause; and he therefore proposed to assault David, while he and his men

2 And I will come upon him while
[c] he *is* [c] weary and weak-handed, and
will make him afraid: and all the peo-
ple that *are* with him shall flee, and
[d] I will smite the king only.
3 And [e] I will bring back all the
people unto thee; the man whom thou
seekest *is* as if all returned: *so* all the
people [f] shall be in peace.
4 And [g] the saying [*] pleased Absa-
lom well, and all the elders of Israel.
5 Then said Absalom, Call now
[h] Hushai the Archite also, and let us
hear likewise what [†] he saith.
6 And when Hushai was come to
Absalom, Absalom spake unto him,
saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after
this manner: shall we do *after* his [‡] say-
ing? if not, speak thou.
7 And Hushai said unto Absalom,
The counsel that Ahithophel hath
[i] given *is* [i] not good at this time.
8 For, said Hushai, thou knowest
thy father and his men, that they *be*
[j] mighty men, and they *be* [‖] chafed in
their minds, [k] as a bear robbed of her
whelps in the field: and [l] thy father *is*
a man of war, and will not lodge with
the people.
9 Behold, [m] he is hid now in some
pit, or in some *other* place: and it
will come to pass, when [n] some of them
be [*] overthrown at the first, that who-
soever heareth it, will say, There is a
slaughter among the people that fol-
low Absalom;
10 And he also *that is* valiant, whose
[o] heart *is* as the heart of a lion, shall
[p] utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth
that thy father *is* a mighty man, and
they which *be* with him *are* valiant
men.
11 Therefore I counsel, that [q] all
Israel be generally gathered unto thee,
from Dan even to Beer-sheba, [r] as the
sand that *is* by the sea for multitude,
and that [†] thou go to battle [s] in thine
own person.
12 So shall we come upon him [t] in
some place where he shall be found,
and [u] we will light upon him as the dew
falleth on the ground: and of him,
and of all the men that *are* with him,
there shall not be left so much as one.
13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a
city, then shall all Israel bring ropes
to that city, and we will draw it into
the river, until there be not [x] one small
stone found there.
14 And Absalom and all the men
of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai
the Archite *is* better than the counsel
of Ahithophel: for [y] the LORD had
[‡] appointed [z] to defeat the [a] good coun-
sel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the
LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.

c xvi. 14. Deut. xxv. 18.
d 1 Kings xxii. 31. Zech. xiii. 7. Matt. xxi. 38. xxvi. 31. John xi. 50. xviii. 4—8.
e iii. 21.
f Is. xlviii. 22. lvii. 21. 1 Thes. v. 3.
g 1 Sam. xviii. 20, 21. xxiii. 21. Esth. v. 14. Rom. i. 32.
* Heb. *was right in the eyes of.* 2 Chr. xxx. 4. Esth. i. 21. *marg.*
h xv. 32—37. xvi. 16—19.
† Heb. *is in his mouth.*
‡ Heb *word.*
i Heb. *counselled.* Prov. xxxi. 8.
j xv. 18. xxi. 18—22. xxiii. 8, 9. 16 18. 20—22. 1 Sam. xvi. 18. xvii. 34—36. 50. 51. 1 Chr. xi. 25—47. Heb. xi. 32—34.
‖ Heb. *bitter of soul.* Judg. xviii. 25. *marg.*
k 2 Kings ii. 24. Prov. xvii. 12. xxviii. 15. Dan. vii. 5. Hos. xiii. 8.
l 1 Sam. xxiii. 23.
m Judg. xx. 33. 1 Sam. xxii. 1. xxiv. 3.
n Josh. vii. 5. viii. 6. Judg. xx. 32. 1 Sam. xiv. 14, 15.
* Heb. *fallen.*
o i. 23. xxii. 20. Gen. xlix. 9. Num. xxiv. 8, 9. Prov. xxviii. 1.
p Ex. xv. 15. Deut. i. 28. Josh. ii. 9—11. Is. xiii. 7. xix. 1.
q xxiv. 2. Judg. xx. 1.
r Gen. xiii. 16. xxii. 17. Josh. xi. 4. 1 Kings iv. 20.
† Heb. *thy face,* or *presence, go, &c.*
s xii. 28. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 16.
t 1 Sam. xxiii. 23.
u 1 Kings xx. 26. 2 Kings xviii. 23. xix. 24. Is. x. 13, 14. Ob. 3.
x Matt. xxiv. 2.
y xv. 31. Gen. xxxii. 28. Ex. ix. 16. Deut. ii. 30. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. 20.
‡ Heb. *commanded.* Ps. xxxiii. 9, 10. Lam. iii. 37. Am. ix. 3.
z xv. 34. xvi. 23. Job v. 12—14. Prov. xix. 21. xxi. 30. Is. viii. 10. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20. iii. 19.
a Luke xvi. 8.

were weary and dispirited, and unprepared for battle, and he undertook to conduct the assault himself, perhaps fearing lest Absalom's rashness should defeat the design. Thus he thought that David might easily be smitten alone; and that this would effectually answer Absalom's purpose, and bring over the people to a quiet submission to his authority. The *desperate wickedness* of the proposal excited no opposition, either from Absalom or from the elders; and doubtless it was the most *politick* measure, which could possibly have been adopted in such circumstances.

V. 7—14. It is evident that Hushai aimed to gain time for David to remove to a greater distance, and to increase and encourage his army: and if he had put Absalom off from adopting Ahithophel's counsel and measure, only for one night, it might have proved of essential service, especially as he hoped to be able to give David intelligence of his danger. In pursuing this object, he opposed Ahithophel's proposal with consummate address: and with some *specious* arguments, taken from David's character for valour and military skill; from the courage and indignation of his followers; and from the probability that David would, by some stratagem of war, in which he was well versed, surprise and overcome his assailants, if they were not very numerous, and so discourage the whole party; he therefore stated that Ahithophel's counsel was not good at that time, though he generally was known to be a wise counsellor. But the measures, which he proposed instead of it, were addressed to the vain glory, the ambition, and perhaps the revenge, of Absalom and of his followers. (*Note*, xv. 1—6.) To raise a very large army, which Absalom, being the universal favourite, might easily accomplish; to command it himself, that the honour might be all his own; to carry matters with a high hand, to make sure work, and to destroy David and all his party: this was a more pompous scheme, and more suited to a man of Absalom's capacity and disposition, and to an unreflecting multitude, than the deep and sagacious counsel of Ahithophel. Hushai doubtless framed his speech, not to meet the approbation of the *wise*, but to please the humour of the *many:* and it pleased God so to infatuate Absalom and all his party, that it met with general approbation.—Ahithophel's *former* counsel was followed, for God intended to correct David: (*Note*, xvi. 20—23:) but his *latter* was not, for he did not mean to destroy *him*, but Absalom. Thus God answered David's prayer, and turned the *good*, that is, the *politick* counsel of Ahithophel into

15 ¶ Then said Hushai unto [b] Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled.

16 Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, [c] Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, [d] but speedily pass over; lest the king [e] be swallowed up, and all the people that *are* with him.

17 Now [f] Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by [g] En-rogel, (for they might not be seen to come into the city,) and a wench went and told them: and they went and told king David.

18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in [h] Bahurim, which had a well in his court, whither they went down.

19 And the woman took and [i] spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known.

20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where *is* Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, [j] They be gone over the brook of water. And [k] when they had sought, and could not find *them*, they returned to Jerusalem.

21 And it came to pass after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, [l] Arise, and pass quickly over the water; for [m] thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.

22 Then David arose, and all the people that *were* with him, [n] and they passed over Jordan: by the morning-light [o] there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

23 ¶ And when Ahithophel [p] saw that his counsel was not [*] followed, he saddled *his* ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to [q] his city, and [†] put his household in order, [r] and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

24 Then David came to [s] Mahanaim: and Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

b xv. 35.
c xv. 28.
d 21, 22. xv. 14. 1 Sam. xx. 38. Ps. lv. 8. Prov. vi. 4, 5. Matt. xxiv. 16—18.
e xx. 19, 20. Ps. xxxv. 25. lvi. 2. lvii. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 54. 2 Cor. v. 4.
f xv. 27. 36.
g Josh. xv. 7. xviii. 16. 1 Kings i. 9.
h iii. 16. xvi. 5. xix. 16.
i Josh. ii. 4—6.
j xv. 34. Ex. i. 19. Josh. ii. 4, 5. 1 Sam. xix. 14—17. xxi. 2. xxvii. 11, 12.
k Josh. ii. 22, 23.
l See on 15, 16.
m 1—3.
n 24. Prov. xxvii. 12. Matt. x. 16.
o Num. xxxi. 49. John xviii. 9.
p Prov. xvi. 18. xix. 3.
* Heb. *done.*
q xv. 12.
† Heb. *gave charge concerning his house.* 2 Kings xx. 1.
r xv. 31. 1 Sam. xxxi. 4, 5. 1 Kings xvi. 18. Job xxxi. 3. Ps. v. 10. lv. 23. Matt. xxvii. 5.
s ii. 8. Gen. xxxii. 2. Josh. xiii. 26.

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foolishness. (*Notes*, xv. 31. xvi. 15—19.)—*A bear*, &c. (8) *Note*, *Hos.* xiii. 5—8.

Appointed. (14) *Commanded.* (*Marg.*) It was God's determined purpose thus to defeat Ahithophel's counsel, and to preserve David; and the whole transaction was so conducted, by his secret influence on the minds of all concerned, that the event was as certainly secured, as if he had given an express *command* to that purpose. This accorded to the language of David concerning Shimei. (*Notes*, xvi. 5—14. *Ps.* lxxvi. 10. *Acts* iv. 23—28.)

V. 15, 16. Hushai feared, lest Absalom should be persuaded by Ahithophel to change his mind; and he was fully convinced that Absalom was determined to murder David, if possible, and without delay: he therefore sent him intelligence, and counselled him to provide immediately for his safety, by crossing Jordan without delay.

V. 17—21. Absalom and his party were restrained from injuring Zadok and Abiathar; but they seem to have suspected them. It was not, therefore, thought safe, or adviseable, for Jonathan and Ahimaaz to enter the city. But they abode at En-rogel, near the city, (*Marg. Ref.* g,) whither intelligence was sent to them by a young woman, as an unsuspected messenger, which, with very great danger to themselves, and by means of a stratagem, united with a degree of falsehood in others, they were at length enabled to deliver. (*Notes*, *Josh.* ii. 2—6. 1 *Sam.* xix. 12—17.)

V. 22. *Lacked not one*, &c.] This was a remarkable instance of God's providential care over his servant David and his friends, that not one was lost, or had deserted, out of the whole company; and he was in this a type of Christ, who loses none of his true followers.—About this time David wrote the third psalm.

V. 23. Ahithophel had by this time seen enough of Absalom, to consider his cause as already lost. His vexation, when he saw so wild a measure, as that proposed by Hushai, preferred to his sound policy, was intolerable. He expected nothing but extreme disgrace and a publick execution for his treason; but it is doubtful whether he despaired of mercy from God, or was hardened in presumption and infidelity: he, however, most deliberately murdered himself. (*Notes*, *Job* v. 11—16. *Prov.* xxiv. 21, 22.) —It is observable that three at least of those, who are recorded in Scripture as suicides, were apostate professors of godliness, viz. Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 3—6.) It is also remarkable that he should have *hanged himself*, rather than kill himself in any other way. (*Notes*, *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23. *Matt.* xxvii. 3—5.) David's prayer was answered more terribly than he expected or desired. (*Marg. Ref.*)

Hanged himself.] Απηγξατο. *Sept. Matt.* xxvii. 5. Gr. The whole narrative confutes the absurd gloss of those Jews, who would represent him as *choked with grief*, and not as having strangled himself.—He deliberately returned home, "gave charge concerning his house," (*marg.*) made his will, settled his affairs, and then hanged himself.

V. 24. (*Marg. Ref.*) While Absalom was collecting his army, David had time for taking effectual measures for resisting him.

f xix. 13. xx. 4. 9—12.

25 And Absalom made [f] Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa *was* a man's son whose name

g 1 Chr. ii. 16, 17. *Jether the Ishmaelite.* * Heb. *Abigal.* † Or, *Jesse.* 1 Chr. ii. 13. 16.

was [g] Ithra, an Israelite, that went in to * Abigail, the daughter of † Nahash, sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in

v Num. xxxii. 1, &c. Deut. iii. 15. Josh. xvii. 1.

the [v] land of Gilead.

27 And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi

x x. 1, 2. xii. 30. I Sam. xi. 1. ix. 4.

[x] the son of Nahash, of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and [y] Machir the

y xix. 31, 32. 1 Kings ii. 7. Ezra ii. 61.

son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and [z] Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,

a xvi. 1, 2. I Sam. xxv. 18. Is. xxxii. 8. ‡ Or, *cups.*

28 Brought [a] beds, and [‡] basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched *corn*, and beans, and lentiles, and parched *pulse*,

29 And honey, and butter, and

b 1 Sam. xvii. 18. c Luke viii. 3. Phil. iv. 15—19.

sheep, and [b] cheese of kine, [c] for David, and for the people that *were* with him,

d Ps. xxxiv. 8—10. lxxxiv. 11.

[d] to eat: for they said, [e] The people *is*

e Judg. viii. 4—6. Ec. xi. 1, 2. Is. xxi. 14. lviii. 7.

hungry, and weary, and thirsty, [f] in the

f xvi. 2.

wilderness.

CHAP. XVIII.

David musters his troops under three commanders, and charges them to spare Absalom, 1—5. Absalom's army is routed. he flees, and, his head being entangled in an oak, he is slain by Joab, and cast into a pit, 6—17. Absalom's place, 18. Ahinoam and Cushi carry tidings to David, 19—32. He laments most bitterly, 33.

AND David [a] numbered the people that *were* with him, and set [b] captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.

a Ex. xvii. 9. Josh. viii. 10.

b 1 Sam. viii. 12.

2 And David sent forth [c] a third part of the people under [d] the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of [e] Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, [f] I will surely go forth with you myself also.

c Judg. vii. 16. 19, 20. ix. 43. d x. 7—10.

e xv. 19—22.

f xvii. 11. Ps. lii. 6. xxvii. 1—3, cxviii. 6—8.

3 But the people answered, [g] Thou shalt not go forth: for, [h] if we flee away they will not * care for us; neither if half of us die will they care for

g xxi. 17.

h xvii. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 31. Zech. xiii. 7.

* Heb. *set their heart on us.*

V. 25. Nahash was evidently another name of Jesse. Ithra is supposed to have been an Ishmaelite by birth, but proselyted to the religion of Israel.—Amasa was nephew to David, by Abigail his sister, as were also Joab and Abishai, by Zeruiah. (1 *Chr.* ii. 13—17.—*Note*, 17.)

V. 27—29. Perhaps Shobi, the son of Nahash, had been advanced to reign over Ammon by David, instead of Hanun his brother; and thus expressed his gratitude: (*Notes*, x:) or perhaps he was proselyted and lived among the Israelites.—The various kinds of provisions, which were brought to David, not only expressed the liberality of his friends, but shewed the extreme distress to which his followers were reduced. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, ix. 4. xix. 31—39. 1 *Sam.* xxv. 18, 19. 1 *Chr.* xii. 23—40.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When Satan has seduced men into a wicked course of life, every crime makes more and greater enormities almost necessary; and they must go forward, or lose the fruit, and suffer the punishment, of their former villainies.—His decided servants are more sagacious and vigorous in their mischievous devices, than the Lord's servants are in doing good: and they have a very great *apparent* advantage; being freed from the restraints of conscience, gratitude, natural affection, and the fear of God.—That some few individuals should be monsters of iniquity would not excite much surprise: but from age to age immense multitudes are found, who with one consent break through every tie of duty; especially when engaged in opposing the cause of religion and its cordial friends: and this demonstrates, that man by nature is an enemy to the service and holiness of God.—When the heart is hardened in iniquity, it is righteous for God to infatuate the understanding: and when the rage of his enemies has accomplished his secret purposes, and they are about to proceed further, their machinations prove unsuccessful, and accelerate their own destruction. (*Notes*, *Is.* x. 7—19.)—The Lord can perform the greatest deliverances by the feeblest instruments: he can protect his servants in their extremest dangers, or provide for them in their most pressing necessities: he can restrain the malice of their most cruel enemies, and enlarge the heart of unexpected friends: and whatever wisdom, address, dispatch, or assistance, any man employs or affords; the success is from God alone, who will not suffer one of his people to perish.—When Satan has tempted men to successive crimes, till they are ripe for destruction; and when Providence has disappointed their ambitious and vain-glorious projects, and their lives are rendered miserable; the last device of that subtle enemy is to urge them to murder themselves: and in this way he sometimes deludes those, who have been most renowned for wisdom; but who are at length so foolish as to plunge themselves into everlasting misery, for fear of temporal disgrace and suffering! Let us then beware of hypocrisy and apostasy, which frequently have this event: let us fear sinning against knowledge and conscience, which is often the forerunner of judicial hardness: let us seek the wisdom which comes from God, and leads to heaven: let us watch against pride, malice, envy, and ambition; and learn to pity and relieve those who are in distress, with liberality proportioned to our ability.—Our King indeed needs not our help: but he has assured us, that what we do for the least of his brethren, who are sick, poor, or destitute, shall be accepted and recompensed, as if it were done to himself in person. (*Note*, *Matt.* xxv. 34—40.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1—3. As Ahithophel had foreseen,

us: but now *thou art* * worth ten thousand of us; therefore now *it is* better that thou † succour us out of the city.

4 And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood [g] by the gate-side, and all the people came out [h] by hundreds and by thousands.

5 And the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, [i] *Deal* gently for my sake with the young man, *even* with Absalom. And [k] all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

6 So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the [l] wood of Ephraim;

7 Where [m] the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David; and there was there [n] a great slaughter that day of [o] twenty thousand *men*.

8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and [p] the wood ‡ devoured more people that day, than the sword devoured.

9 And Absalom met the servants of David: and Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and [q] his head caught hold of the oak, and he was [r] taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that *was* under him went away.

10 And a certain man saw *it*, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.

11 And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest *him*; and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground, and I would have given thee ten *shekels* of silver, and a girdle?

12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should [s] receive a thousand *shekels* of silver in mine hand, *yet* would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for [s] in our hearing the king charged thee, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, [t] Beware that none *touch* the young man Absalom.

13 Otherwise I should have [t] wrought falsehood against mine own life: [u] for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against *me*.

* Heb. *as ten thousand of us.* Lam. iv. 20.

† Heb. *be to succour.* x. 11. Ex. xvii. 10—12.

g 24. Is. xxviii. 6.

h 1. 1 Sam. xxix. 2.

i xvi. 11. xvii. 1—4. 14. Deut. xxi. 18—21. Ps. ciii. 13. Luke xxiii. 34.

k 12.

l Judg. xii. 4—6.

m ii. 17. xv. 6. xix. 41—43.

n Prov. xi. 21. xxiv. 21, 22.

o ii. 26. 31. 2 Chr. xiii. 16, 17. xxviii. 6.

p Ex. xv. 10. Josh. x. 11. Judg. v. 20, 21. 1 Kings xx. 30. Ps. iii. 7. xliii. 1.

‡ Heb. *multiplied to devour.*

q xiv. 26. xvii. 23. Matt. xxvii. 5.

r Deut. xxi. 23. xxvii. 16. 20. Job xviii. 9, 10. xxxi. 3. Prov. xx. 20. xxx. 17. Jer. xlviii. 44. Mark vii. 16. Gal. iii. 13.

s Heb. *weigh upon my hand.*

s 5.

t Heb. *Beware, whosoever ye be, of the, &c.*

t i. 15, 16. iv. 10—12.

u xiv. 19, 20. Heb. iv. 13.

Absalom's delay afforded David's friends an opportunity of strengthening his army, which was now become capable of meeting their opponents in the field of battle. It is probable, that it was greatly inferior in numbers to Absalom's, but far superior in discipline; and consisted chiefly of old and approved friends, and such as acted from principle and conscience in adhering to their prince. This appears in the answer which they returned to his proposal of leading them to battle in his own person.

Ten thousand. (3) This seems to have been spoken, not only out of affection to David, but from a proper estimate of the importance of his life to the civil and religious interests of the nation; which was in great danger of falling into the most abject misery and the greatest ungodliness, if Absalom were successful in his wicked usurpation: and, no doubt, the truly pious Israelites adhered to David, with one accord.

V. 5. Absalom aimed directly at the life of his indulgent father; David desired nothing so much as the preservation of his rebellious son! (*Note*, xvii. 1—4.) But Absalom's crimes were too enormous to be pardoned, consistently with David's duty; and the peace of Israel could not be established while he lived. Perhaps David hoped, that if Absalom were not slain in battle, he might live to repent, and so escape future vengeance. But if he had been spared, he would probably have occasioned David further trouble and sin; and it pleased God to preserve his servant from the guilt of pardoning him, and from the anguish of punishing him.—David does not seem to have doubted of the victory, after his prayer against Ahithophel had been so remarkably answered.

V. 6. The wood of Ephraim here mentioned was beyond Jordan; and it is supposed to be the place where the Ephraimites had been slain in the days of Jephthah. (*Judg.* xii. 4—6.)

V. 8. *The wood*, &c.] More were slain in the pursuit, through the wood, than in the battle. It is also probable, that numbers perished by pressing on one another in the thickets, or were devoured by wild beasts. (*Marg. Ref.* o, p.)

V. 9. Either Absalom's hair, which he had effeminately tended, was so entangled in the boughs of the oak that he could not extricate himself; (*Note*, xiv. 25—27;) or his head itself was confined betwixt two arms of the tree, through the rapidity and inattention with which he rode, to escape the servants of David. In this dreadful situation he remained for a considerable time, doubtless with unspeakable horror, expecting his doom without being able in the least to help himself. His fate was as extraordinary as his crimes; and being *providentially* hanged on a tree, he was as it were pronounced *accursed* by God himself. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, xvii. 23.)

V. 13. *Wrought falsehood*, &c.] This man meant to say, that he should have cheated himself; and by seeking a reward have forfeited his life. His words were replete with truth, good sense, and sound argument; and Joab was conscious that they did not admit of an answer.

14 Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus * with thee. And he took three
* Heb. *before thee.*
v 5. Judg. iv. 21. v. 26. 31. Ps. xlv. 5. 1 Thes. v. 3.
darts in his hand, and v thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while
† Heb. *heart.* Matt. xii. 40.
he *was* yet alive in the † midst of the oak.

15 And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about, and smote Absalom, and slew him.

x ii. 28. xx. 22. Num. x. 2—10. 1 Cor. xiv. 8.
16 And Joab x blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood,
y Josh. vii. 26. viii. 29. x. 27. Prov. x. 7. Jer. xxii. 18, 19.
and y laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

18 Now Absalom in his life-time
z 1 Sam. xv. 12.
had taken and z reared up for himself a
a Gen. xiv. 17.
pillar, which *is* in a the king's dale:
b xiv. 27. Job xviii. 16, 17. Ps. cix. 13. Jer. xxii. 30.
for he said, b I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and c he called
c Gen. xi. 4. 1 Sam. xv. 12. Ps. xlix. 11. Dan. iv. 30.
the pillar after his own name: and it is
d Gen. xi. 9. Acts i. 18, 19.
called unto this day, d Absalom's place.

19 ¶ Then said e Ahimaaz the son of
e 23. 27—29. xv. 36. xvii. 17.
Zadok, Let me now run and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath
‡ Heb. *judged him from the hand, &c.* Ps. vii. 6. 8. 9. ix. 4. 16. x. 14. 18. Rom. xii. 19.
‡ avenged him of his enemies.

20 And Joab said unto him, Thou
§ Heb. *be a man of.* xvii. 16—21.
shalt not § bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day; but this day thou shalt bear no tidings,
f 5. 27. 29. 33.
f because the king's son is dead.

21 Then said Joab to Cushi, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But ‖ howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings * ready?

‖ Heb. *be what may.*

* Or, *convenient.* Rom. i. 28. Eph. v. 4.

23 But howsoever, *said he*, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and over-ran Cushi.

24 And David sat g between the two
g 4. 1 Sam. iv. 13.
gates: and h the watchman went up to
h 2 Kings ix. 17—20. Is. xxi. 6—9. 11, 12. Ez. xxxiii. 2—6.
the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he *be* alone, *there is* tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running, and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold, *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, † Me-
† Heb. *I see the running.* 2 Kings ix. 20.
thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, i He
i 1 Kings i. 42. Prov. xxv. 13. 25. Is. lii. 7. Rom. x. 15.
is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, ‡ All is well. And k he
‡ Or, *Peace be to thee.* Heb. *Peace.*
fell down to the earth upon his face
k i. 2. xiv. 4.

V. 14. Joab doubtless intended the interest of both Dávid and his kingdom, in killing Absalom; and his death was of salutary tendency, and even necessary: yet Joab cannot be excused in acting against the express command of his sovereign. He had no warrant from God or man to execute vengeance on Absalom: and, having deserved death himself, he was the last person who should have complained of the obstruction of publick justice.

V. 17, 18. It seems that Absalom's sons died young, as a just judgment upon him for seeking the life of his father: (xiv. 27:) and that, after their death, he erected a magnificent column, in or near which he meant to be interred; and by which he hoped to perpetuate his memory, with honour, to future generations. (*Notes, Gen.* xi. 3, 4. *Ps.* xlix. 11. *Dan.* iv. 28—33.) But, on the contrary, he was buried with ignominy as a malefactor: (*Josh.* x. 26, 27. *Prov.* x. 7.—*Notes, Josh.* vii. 25, 26. viii. 29:) and his pillar proved a monument of his folly and wicked ambition.

V. 19—22. Ahimaaz had continued with David, after he had brought tidings from Hushai; (xvii. 17—21;) and was present in the battle, probably sounding one of the sacred trumpets. (*Note, Num.* x. 1—10. *2 Chr.* xiii. 4—12.) He was desirous of being the first to announce to David the tidings of the Lord's having "judged him from "the hand of his enemies;" (*marg.*) both from disinterested love to him, and probably in hopes of gradually preparing David for the account of Absalom's death. (*Note*, 28—32.) But Joab was sensible that David would bitterly lament the death of Absalom, and was not willing to send so respectable a person as Ahimaaz with tidings which would be unsuitable to his friendly purpose, and unwelcome to David (27). He therefore appointed for that service a man, whose name intimates that he was an Ethiopian, and perhaps a slave: he was, however, cordially attached to the interests of David. Joab afterwards permitted Ahimaaz to go also.

V. 28—32. Probably, one motive which induced Ahimaaz so earnestly to desire to carry David the first news of the victory, was, that he might gradually prepare his

before the king, and said, [l] Blessed *be* the LORD thy God, which hath [*] delivered up the men, that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

29 And the king said, [†] Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, [m] I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*.

30 And the king said *unto him*, Turn aside, *and* stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, Cushi came: and Cushi said, [‡] Tidings my lord the king: for [n] the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe? and Cushi answered, [o] The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that* young man *is*.

33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, [p] O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! [q] Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

l xxii. 47. Gen. xiv. 20. xxiv. 27. 2 Chr. xx. 26. Ps. cxv. 1. cxliv. 1, 2. Rev. xix. 1—3.

* Heb. *shut up.* 1 Sam. xxiv. 18. xxvi. 8. Ps. xxxi. 8.

† Heb. *Is there peace to, &c.?*

m 19. 20. 22.

‡ Heb. *Tidings is brought.*

n 19. 28. xxii. 48, 49. Deut. xxxii. 35, 36. Ps. lviii. 10. xciv. 1—4.

o Judg. v. 31. Ps. lxviii. 1, 2. Dan. iv. 19.

p xix. 4.

q xii. 10—23. Ps. ciii. 13. Prov. x. 1. xvii. 25. Jam. v. 17.

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mind for the intelligence of Absalom's death: for, though he rejoiced in David's deliverance, he sympathized with him in his grief; and for this purpose he evaded the king's question, which Cushi soon after indirectly, but more plainly, replied to.—The piety of the language both of Ahimaaz and Cushi on this occasion are worthy of notice and imitation.

V. 33. David's grief was doubtless excessive, and very imprudent and criminal. He ought to have been thankful for his own deliverance and for that of Israel; and to have submitted with silent patience to the righteous judgment of God upon his son. (*Notes, Lev.* x. 3. 1 *Sam.* iii. 16—18. *Ps.* xxxix. 9, 10.) But he was a man of warm passions: he had inordinately loved a very unworthy object, who was cut off in the midst of his crimes: he could not but think of the state of his immortal soul; and vainly hoped, that if he had been preserved, he might have repented: he was conscious that, when his own forfeited life was spared, after his adultery and murder, this burden had been laid upon his family: he considered himself, by his transgression, example, and the chastisement of God, as accessary to the dire catastrophe; and in the vehemency of his grief he wished, that he had died himself rather than his son, probably, as being better prepared for the eternal world; while the agitation of his mind prevented him from adverting to the fatal effects of such an event to his kingdom, and to that cause which in his calmer hours was nearest to his heart.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

The peculiar exercises of religion ought to *precede*, but not to *exclude*, the use of every prudent means of securing success in lawful undertakings: and those who would engage others in arduous and perilous attempts, must be willing to take a full share of the hardship and danger. But in some cases the life of an individual is of such importance to the publick welfare, that thousands are authorized to require it of him, as a duty, to take the utmost care of himself. It is well when affection and fidelity of this kind subsist between princes and their subjects; and when they are mutually willing to venture, or to suffer, for each other's benefit. Thus Jesus loved his people, and laid down his life for them: and thus they consider his cause as dearer to them than every personal interest, and are prepared to lay down their lives for his sake.—True courage and firmness of mind are very different from rashness and obstinacy; and wise men are always most ready to listen to prudent counsel, even from their inferiors.—The extremes of our most amiable propensities are often of fatal consequence: and it is merciful for God to deny us those things which we greatly desire, when he sees they would prove our temptation or affliction.—Multitudes suffer *through* the wickedness of one, but *for* their own crimes: and rebellion against good and lawful governors is generally and justly punished with the ruin of those concerned in it. Yet the seducers into the ways of sin must be answerable to God for the consequences; and who can number the murders, for which many ambitious usurpers will stand indicted before his righteous tribunal! —At all times "evil pursueth sinners:" and when in the appointed hour it overtakes them, they cannot possibly escape; but those things on which they have most depended, and of which they have been most proud, often prove the occasion or instruments of their destruction.—Let young people look on Absalom, suspended upon the tree, accursed and forsaken of Heaven and earth; and there read the Lord's abhorrence of rebellion against parents: let them consider the agony of his death and the ignominy of his burial, and learn how empty are all external embellishments; and how vain the flattery of man, (*Note*, xiv. 25—27,) and all that care, which is employed in rendering themselves admired and renowned. After all, "the memory of the wicked shall rot;" and nothing can preserve us from misery and contempt, but heavenly grace and wisdom.—They who are greedy of gain, often work falsehood against their own lives or souls; and many will rejoice in the effects of wickedness, who will be the first to inform against those who have committed it, in order to exculpate themselves: but our safety lies in obeying the Lord and the lawful commands of our rulers.—The removal of one ring-leader in daring crimes proves a publick benefit, and makes way for the exercise of clemency to numbers: but that will not authorize every individual to take away the life of the most notorious offender; for it is not enough that the thing ought to be done, but we are to consider whether it be a service allotted to us by our great Master.

CHAP. XIX.

The people being greatly disappointed and discouraged by David's conduct, Joab, by rude expostulations, induces him to restrain his grief and come forth to them, 1—8. The men of Israel dispute about bringing back David; who sends to the priests to incite the men of Judah to take the lead in this; and they readily comply, 9—15. Shimei submitting is not punished, 16—23. Mephibosheth meets David; complains that Ziba had deceived and slandered him; and has half his land restored, 24—30. Barzillai attends David over Jordan, and his son is taken into the king's family, 31—40. The Israelites expostulate with the men of Judah, for bringing back the king without them, 41—43.

a xviii. 5. 12. 14. 20. 33. AND [a] it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.

* Heb. *salvation*, or, *deliverance*. b Prov. xvi. 15. xix. 12. 2 And the * victory that day was [b] *turned* into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day, how the king was grieved for his son.

c 32. xvii. 24. d Gen. xxxi. 27. 3 And the people gat them by stealth that day [c] into the city, as people being ashamed [d] steal away when they flee in battle.

e *See on* xv. 30. f xviii. 33. 4 But the king [e] covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, [f] O my son, Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!

5 And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have [g] saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons, and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines;

g Neh. ix. 27. Ps. iii. 8. xviii. 47, 48.

6 † In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends: for thou hast declared this day, that ‡ thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, [h] then it had pleased thee well.

† Heb. *By loving, &c.* ‡ Heb. *princes or servants* are *not to thee.*

h iii. 24, 25. Job xxxiv. 18. Prov. xix. 9, 10. Acts xxiii. 5.

7 Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak [i] comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, [j] there will not tarry one with thee this night; and that will be worse unto thee, than [j] all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now.

i Heb. *to the heart of.* Gen. xxxiv. 3. Is. xl. 1. Hos. ii. 14. *marg.* j Prov. xiv. 28. Ps. lxxi. 4—6. 9—11. 18—20. cxxix. 1, 2.

8 Then the king arose, and [k] sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king; [l] for Israel had fled every man to his tent.

k xviii. 4. 24. l 3. xviii. 7. 1 Kings xxii. 36. 2 Kings xiv. 12.

9 ¶ And all the people were at [m] strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, [n] The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he de-

m Gen. iii. 12, 13. Ex. xxxii. 24. Jam. iii. 14—16. n viii. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 50. xviii. 5—7. 25. xix. 5.

V. 19—33.

Every deliverance should be received with praise and thanksgiving: and *good men* delight in bearing glad tidings to those whom they love. May all, who proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to sinners, be men of holy lives, and unblemished reputation; and may numbers more be sent forth with this joyful message!—All other good tidings have so much alloy, that our joy on account of them must be mingled with weeping, or with trembling: and alas! we are more disposed to complain of the trouble which alloys our mercies, than to be thankful for the mercies themselves. But while we learn from the example before us, to watch and pray against partial and inordinate attachments, the indulgence or neglect of our children, and the unadvised language and passionate wishes of excessive grief; while we learn to bow down to the righteous appointments of God in our sharpest trials, to adore his unmerited mercy in our comforts and deliverances, and to prefer the publick welfare to any personal or private affections; we may in David perceive a shadow of the Saviour's love, who wept, prayed, and suffered death in all its bitterness, for us rebels and enemies, without even excepting those, who persecuted and crucified him; and hence learn "not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome "evil with good."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1—8. (*Note*, xviii. 33.) David's conduct on this occasion was exeeedingly impolitick, and tended to weaken the attachment and damp the zeal of his adherents; who would interpret his excessive grief, so passionately expressed, into an indifference about their interests, and dissatisfaction with their services. For instead of being led to celebrate their important success with joyful exultations, and meeting the animating hearty commendations of their prince, whom they had bravely and faithfully served; they were sent away grieved and ashamed. Joab had therefore good reason to interpose, and would have been justifiable in a very plain remonstrance with David on the impropriety of his conduct: but the asperity, the reproaches, and the threat, confirmed with an oath, of a general defection, which his language plainly implied, must be ascribed to his pride and insolence; for he seems to have gloried in disobeying and being rude to his prince. (*Note*, iii. 24, 25. xviii. 14. xx. 8—13.) David, however, being conscious that Joab had truth and reason on his side, smothered his resentment, and very prudently obviated the disgust of the people.

V. 9—15. David would not appear to reign by force of arms: and therefore he waited till he was publickly invited to resume the reins of government. From the time that

livered us out of the hand of the Philistines, and now [o] he is fled out of the land for Absalom.

10 And Absalom, [p] whom we anointed over us, [q] is dead in battle: now therefore why [*] speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?

11 And king David [r] sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, [s] Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, [t] Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, *even* to his house.

12 Ye *are* my brethren, ye *are* [u] my bones and my flesh; wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?

13 And say ye to [x] Amasa, *Art* thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? [y] God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the [z] room of Joab.

14 And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, [a] even as *the heart of* one man; so that they sent *this word* unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants.

15 So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to [b] Gilgal to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

16 ¶ And [c] Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which *was* of Bahurim, [d] hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David.

17 And *there were* a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and [e] Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king.

18 And there went over a ferry-boat to carry over the king's household, and to do [†] what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera [f] fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan;

19 And [g] said unto the king, [h] Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou [i] remember that which thy servant [k] did perversely, the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should [l] take it to his heart.

20 For thy servant doth know that I have sinned; therefore, behold, [m] I am come the first this day of all the house of [n] Joseph, to go down to meet my lord the king.

21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, [o] Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he [p] cursed the LORD's anointed?

22 And David said, [q] What have I

[o] xv. 14.
[p] xv. 12, 18. Hos. viii. 4.
[q] xviii. 14.
[*] Heb. are ye silent? Judg. xviii. 9.
[r] xv. 29. 35, 36. 1 Kings ii. 25, 26. 35.
[s] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[t] Matt. v. 16. 2 Thes. iii. 9.
[u] v. 1. Gen. ii. 23. Judg. ix. 2. Eph. v. 30.
[x] xvii. 25. 1 Chr. ii. 16, 17. xii. 18.
[y] Ruth i. 17. 1 Kings xix. 2.
[z] 5—7. iii. 29, 30. viii. 16. xviii. 11.
[a] Judg. xx. 1. Ps. cx. 2, 3. Acts iv. 32.
[b] Josh. v. 9. 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15.
[c] xvi. 5—13. 1 Kings ii. 8. 36—46.
[d] Job ii. 4. Prov. vi. 4, 5. Matt. v. 25.
[e] 26, 27. ix. 2. 10. xvi. 1—4.
[†] Heb. *the good in his eyes.*
[f] Ps. lxvi. 3. lxxxi. 15. Rev. iii. 9.
[g] Ex. x. 4.
[h] 1 Sam. xxii. 15. Ps. xxxii. 2. Rom. iv. 6. 8. 2 Cor. v. 19.
[i] Ps. lxxix. 8. Is. xliii. 25. Jer. xxxi. 34.
[k] xvi. 5—9. 13. Ex. x. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xxvi. 21. Matt. xxvii. 4.
[l] xiii. 20. 33. 1 Sam. xxv. 25.
[m] Ps. lxxviii. 34—37. Jer. xxii. 23. Hos. v. 15.
[n] 9. xvi. 5. Gen. xlviii. 14. 20. 1 Kings xii. 20. 25. Hos. iv. 15—17. v. 3.
[o] Ex. xxii. 28. 1 Kings xxi. 10, 11.
[p] xvi. 5. 7. 13. 1 Sam. xxiv. 6. xxvi. 9.
[q] iii. 39. xvi. 10. 1 Sam. xxvi. 8. Matt. viii. 29.

he began to reign in Hebron over the tribe of Judah only, the distinction between Judah and Israel began to be observed. (*Notes*, ii. 4. v. 1—3.) The men of Israel were first disposed to return to their allegiance, and they spoke honourably of David's former services; but either fear, or shame, or want of unanimity, deterred them from publickly inviting him to return: and they seem also to have disputed to whom the blame of the late rebellion belonged; each endeavouring to excuse himself.—When therefore the report of these things reached the king, he probably thought it would be dishonourable to his own tribe, if they were the last in this service; or perhaps they were so deeply involved in Absalom's rebellion, that they feared David's resentment, when reinstated in his authority. He therefore employed Zadok and Abiathar to assure the principal persons of his affection, and to excite them to appear in this business; by which means they took the lead in such a manner, as induced the men of Israel to conclude, that they meant to engross the credit of recalling David, and exclusively to secure his favour. (*Note*, 40—43.) But it would have been more prudent, if they had consulted with their brethren, that all of them might act in concert; as this would have prevented many bad consequences.—David also was very uneasy under Joab's haughtiness, and was exceedingly displeased with him for slaying Absalom, and for his subsequent rudeness; and he wished to lay him aside. (*Note*, 1—8.) He supposed likewise, that if Amasa were assured of pardon and preferment, he would draw over all that party into his interests: (*Note*, xvii. 25:) and doubtless his influence was very great, especially in Judah. But Amasa, having headed so daring a rebellion, was not a proper person to supplant Joab, whose influence with the army and with David's best friends, was too firmly established to be thus shaken; and he was sure not to submit quietly to such a disgrace. David therefore does not seem to have acted with prudence on this emergency.

Anointed. (10) It is not recorded, that Absalom was anointed: but perhaps he was; and if not, he was obeyed, as if he had been the anointed king.

V. 16, 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) Perhaps Shimei had been captain of a thousand men of Benjamin, who now attended him, to request that he might be pardoned.

V. 18. *Ferry-boat.*] This is the only place, in which a *boat* for passing over a river is mentioned. Bridges are not once mentioned in scripture. Rivers were generally *forded* at this time.

V. 19—23. Next to the tribe of Judah, the descendants of Joseph had the pre-eminence; and Israel, as distin-

to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? [r] shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I *am* this day king over Israel?

23 Therefore the king said unto Shimei, [s] Thou shalt not die: and the king [t] sware unto him.

24 ¶ And [u] Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; and had neither [x] dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came *again* in peace.

25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, [y] Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?

26 And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, [z] I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because [a] thy servant *is* lame.

27 And he hath [b] slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king *is* [c] as an angel of God: do therefore *what is* good in thine eyes.

28 For all *of* my father's house [d] were but [*] dead men before my lord the king; yet [e] didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table: what right therefore have I yet [f] to cry any more unto the king?

29 And the king said unto him; [g] Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, [h] Thou and Ziba divide the land.

30 And Mephibosheth said unto the king, [i] Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.

31 ¶ And [j] Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan.

32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, *even* [k] fourscore years old: and he had [l] provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; [m] for he *was* a very great man.

33 And the king said unto Barzillai, [n] Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem.

34 And Barzillai said unto the king, [†] How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem?

35 I *am* this day fourscore years old: *and* [o] can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant [p] taste what I eat or what I drink? [q] can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a [r] burden unto my lord the king?

r 1 Sam. xi. 13. Is. xvi. 5. Luke ix. 54—56.
s 1 Kings ii. 8, 9. 37, 46.
t 1 Sam. xxviii. 10. xxx. 15. Heb. vi. 16.
u ix. 6. xvi. 3.
x xv. 30. Is. xv. 2. Jer. xli. 5. Matt. vi. 16. Rom. xii. 15. Heb. xiii. 3.
y xvi. 17.
z xvi. 2, 3.
a iv. 4
b xvi. 8. Ex. xx. 16. Ps. xv. 3. ci. 5. Jer. ix. 4.
c xiv. 17. 20. 1 Sam. xxix. 9.
d Gen. xxxii. 10.
* Heb. *men of death.* 1 Sam. xxvi. 16.
e ix. 7, 8. 10. 13.
f 2 Kings viii. 3.
g Job xix. 16, 17. Prov. xviii. 13. Acts xviii. 15.
h Deut. xix. 17—19. Ps. lxxxii. 2. ci. 5.
i i. 26. Acts xx. 24. Phil. i. 20.
j 1 Kings ii. 7. Ezra ii. 61. Neh. vii. 63.
k Gen. v. 27. ix. 29. xxv. 7. xlvii. 28. l. 26. Deut. xxxiv. 7. Ps. xc. 3—10.
l xvii. 27.
m 1 Sam. xxv. 2. Job i. 3.
n ix. 11. Matt. xxv. 34—40. Luke xxii. 28—30. 2 Thes. i. 7.
† Heb. *How many days are the years of my life?* Gen. xlvii. 9. Job xiv. 14. Ps. xxxix. 5. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 29. Jam. iv. 14.
o Job vi. 30. xii. 11. Heb. v. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 3.
p Ec. xii. 1—5.
q Ezra ii. 65. Neh. vii. 67. Ec. ii. 8. xii. 4.
r xiii. 25. xv. 33.

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guished from Judah, was named from them. Shimei, therefore, though a Benjamite, ranked himself among the sons of Joseph, or the Israelites; and intimated, that none except the men of Judah had come to David so soon as he had. Perhaps he meant, that he had come before any of the house of Joseph.—Shimei confessed his crime, and seemed penitent: and David granted him a pardon, and swore to him that he should not die, *at that time*, or *for that offence*. (*Notes*, xvi. 5—14. 1 *Kings* ii. 8, 9. 36—46.) Abishai, however, would have had him made an example of, as indeed he well deserved: but David intimated, that he and Joab were always instigating him to acts of severity; but it would be injurious to his interests, as well as contrary to his inclinations, to sully his restoration with the execution of a single criminal; and that there was no occasion, for all were disposed peaceably to submit to him.

V. 24—30. Mephibosheth did not come to David till his return to Jerusalem, probably, because he could not procure an ass prepared for him to ride on; having been deserted by Ziba, and all his attendants. From the time of the king's departure, he had utterly neglected the care of his person, and shewn every token of excessive sorrow. To David's enquiry, why he had not accompanied him, he answered by a simple narration of facts, united with the most respectful, affectionate, thankful, and submissive language. He owed all he possessed to David's clemency and bounty; he did not complain of the grant made to Ziba; and he was confident that the king would do nothing but what was consistent with wisdom and justice.—But whether David did not fully credit him; or whether he was ashamed of his credulity, and wished not to have it further noticed; he suffered Ziba to escape merited punishment, and to enjoy part of the fruits of his slander: or at least he contented himself with restoring matters to their former settlement, as some understand it. (*Note*, ix. 9—11.) Mephibosheth, however, so greatly rejoiced in David's safety and success, that he generously treated the affair concerning his own estate, as a matter of indifference. (*Notes*, *Phil.* i. 15—20.)

V. 31—39. The narrative of the conversation which passed between David and Barzillai, and their affectionate parting, is exceedingly pleasing and instructive: but it requires little comment. Barzillai had merely done his duty; he required no recompence; and he was too old, either to enjoy the pleasures of the court, or to be of any further use to his king. (*Note*, *Ec.* xii. 2—7.) He only

36 Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward?

37 Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that [s] I may die in mine own city, *and be buried* [t] by the grave of my father and of my mother. But, behold, thy servant [u] Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.

38 And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt [*] require of me, *that* will I do for thee.

39 And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king [v] kissed Barzillai, and [x] blessed him; and [y] he returned unto his own place.

40 Then the king went on to Gilgal, and [†] Chimham went on with him: and all [z] the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.

41 And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, [a] Why have our brethren the men of Judah [b] stolen thee away, and have brought the king, and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan?

42 And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, [c] Because the king *is* near of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king's *cost?* or hath he given us any gift?

43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, [d] We have [e] ten parts in the king, and we have also more *right* in David than ye: why then did ye [‡] despise us, that [f] our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And [g] the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

[s] Gen. xlviii. 21. Josh. xxiii. 14. Luke ii. 29, 30. 2 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 14.
[t] Gen. xlvii. 30. xlix. 29—31. l. 13. 1 Kings xiii. 22.
[u] 40. 1 Kings ii 7. Jer. xli. 17.
[*] Heb. *choose.*
[v] Gen. xxxi. 55. xlv. 15. Ruth i. 14. 1 Kings xix. 20. Acts xx. 37.
[x] vi. 18. 20. xiii. 25. Gen. xiv. 19. xxviii. 3. xlvii. 7. 10. Luke ii. 34.
[y] Gen. xxxi. 55. Num. xxiv. 25. 1 Sam. xxiv. 22.
[†] Heb. *Chimham.*
[z] 11—15. Gen. xlix. 10. Matt. xxi. 9.
[a] Judg. viii. 1. xii. 1. John vii. 5, 6.
[b] 3. Gen. xxxi. 26, 27.
[c] 12. v. 1. 1 Chr. ii. 3—17.
[d] xx. 1. 6. 1 Kings xii. 16.
[e] v. 1. Prov. xiii. 10.
[‡] Heb. *set us at light.*
[f] 9. 14. Gal. v. 20. 26. Phil. ii. 3.
[g] Judg. ix. 23. xii. 1—6. Prov. xv. 1. xvii. 14. xviii. 19. Rom. xii. 21. Gal. v. 15. 20. Jam. i. 20. iii. 14—16. iv. 1—5.

desired to go home to prepare for death: but the case might be different in respect of his son.—It is probable that David settled part of his patrimony at Bethlehem on Chimham. (*Note, Jer.* xli. 16—18.)

V. 40—43. By the time that David had passed over Jordan, part of the elders of Israel came to bring him back, and were disgusted at finding that they came too late; and that David's reinstatement in the kingdom had been decided on, though their advice had not been asked. They thought themselves despised, and that the men of Judah took too much upon them: while the plea of relationship to David, urged by the men of Judah, tended only to increase suspicions and envy; and the *fiercer* words, which they returned to the angry remonstrance of their brethren, produced very bad effects. (*Notes, Judg.* viii. 1—3. xii. 1—7. *Prov.* xiii. 10. xvii. 14. xviii. 19. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4—7. *Gal.* v. 13—15. *Phil.* ii. 1—4. *Jam.* iii. 13—18.) Whatever value or respect the men of Israel at this time professed for their king, they would not have quarrelled so fiercely about their own credit and interest in recalling him, if they had been truly sorry for their former rebellion. David freely forgave them all their gross injuries against him; but they could not endure the least affront from each other. (*Note,* xx. 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—15.

The excessive indulgence of any passion, (grief by no means excepted,) not only offends God, but betrays men into great imprudence even in their temporal concerns.—Those who have faithfully served us expect that we should appear pleased with them, and thankful for their services: and many will do more for a smile and a kind word from their superiors, than for a more substantial recompence; and be much grieved and disheartened, if they think themselves frowned on.—Upon important emergencies, plain truths may properly be spoken to the greatest and best of men, and they may be closely reasoned and expostulated with; but indecent roughness, and an assuming demeanour in an inferior, will render the most prudent, seasonable, and honest counsel unacceptable, and perhaps ineffectual. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxv. 23—33. *Prov.* xxv. 11, 12. xxvii. 9.) A wise man, however, will endeavour to overlook the impropriety, and benefit by the sound reason, of well-intended remonstrances: and timely concessions will commonly prevent the ill effects of mistaken measures.—Men are often betrayed, by their discontents and fickleness, into such actions as their sober judgment disapproves, and of which experience will constrain them to be weary: but they do not so readily condemn themselves for the most evident treachery or ingratitude.—Many allow that such and such things should be done, and wonder that others do not set about them: and yet they themselves are equally dilatory, through indolence, pride, or covetousness.—Ministers should at all times be examples of fidelity to magistrates and rulers; and may very properly exhort others to do their *plain and evident duty,* in that as well as in other respects: but, this case excepted, it is generally best for them not to intermeddle in publick affairs.—Convincing arguments, urged in mildness and love, are very forcible, and produce great effects upon the minds of men in all temporal concerns: but the grace of God alone can bow our hearts into submission to his humbling truth and holy will.—In acts of clemency to those who have been open offenders, care should be taken not to disgus such as have deserved better of us, though in some respects they have

CHAP. XX.

Sheba draws the men of Israel into a revolt, 1, 2. David shuts up his ten concubines, 3. Amasa, being sent to call together the men of Judah, is murdered by Joab, who resumes the command and pursues Sheba, 4—13. He besieges Abel, whither Sheba had fled, 14, 15. Through the interposition of a wise woman, Sheba's head is thrown over the wall, and the revolt is terminated, 16—22. David's officers, 23—26.

AND [a] there happened to be there [b] a man of Belial, whose name *was*

[a] xix. 41—43. Ps. xxxiv. 19.
[b] xxiii. 6. Deut. xiii. 13. Judg. xix. 22. 1 Sam. ii. 12. xxx. 22. Ps. xvii. 13. Prov. xxvi. 21. Hab. i. 12, 13.

failed of their duty: and that which exposes a man to envy or rivalship, however splendid and valuable, will probably be injurious to him. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 6—11. *Prov.* xxvii. 4.)—Self-preference and contempt of others should always be guarded against; and every thing avoided which may be thought to spring from these evils: while equity, mutual respect, and harmony should be studied, and many interests and supposed points of honour receded from, that strife and contention may be excluded.

V. 16—30.

Many seem to be sorry for those crimes, which expose them to present punishment; and the language and semblance of repentance are easily imitated: but it is safest for us to judge favourably of others; if we do err, to err on the side of candour and clemency; and to leave it to the heart-searching God, to determine between the upright and the hypocritical.—Peculiar mercies from God should dispose us to be the more merciful to others: and our best friends must be considered as adversaries, when they would persuade us to act contrary to our conscience and our duty. (*Note*, *Matt.* xvi. 21—23.)—Perseverance in well doing will at length refute slanderous accusations: true affection for our friends, and sympathy with them in their afflictions, will create an indifference to the pleasures of sense and external decorations: and when they are beloved for the Lord's sake, as well as for personal obligations, the effect will be much greater, and more permanent. But this sorrow shall be turned into joy, on account of their present success, or in the prospect of their future happiness, and our own in fellowship with them: and these hopes and comforts tend to wean the soul more and more from the trifling interests of this world.—Credulity in believing slanders often leads pious persons into difficulties, and covers them with shame: and no offenders are so seldom treated with proper severity as back-biters.

V. 31—43.

When God gives largeness of heart, as well as great wealth, he qualifies a man to be a publick blessing: and doing good liberally is the proper pleasure and advantage of wealth. For the little pleasure of outward enjoyments quickly grows insipid; old age destroys the relish for them; and death must soon separate a man from his riches, and then he must give an account to God of his stewardship.—It becomes us therefore, as we advance in life, to relinquish worldly pursuits before we be torn from them; and leaving to our juniors those scenes of business, or of pleasure, where reflection is too often dissipated, and the voice of conscience stunned, to prefer retirement and privacy, where we may best prepare for the closing hour. Even the cities where the truths of God are most professed, and his ordinances are best administered; and those courts, where the prince encourages and sets an example of true piety; are ensnaring places, through the multitudes of another character which frequent them. And, though allowances should be made to youth, in matters *inexpedient* to old age; yet the sooner and the more entirely young people devote themselves to God, the safer and happier they will be.—It is our duty to recompense to the children, the kindness shewn us by their parents, and to pray for them that they may have grace properly to use their temporal good things.—Envy and anger often interrupt the most promising appearances, and in quarrels generally both parties are culpable. A supposed neglect excites displeasure; an angry expression provokes a retort; words grow warmer, and fiercer. Thus the best designs are disconcerted, and much evil is committed; when it might be otherwise, if men would watch against their own pride, and be careful not to affront that of others; remembering, that a "soft answer turneth away wrath." (*Notes*, *Prov.* xv. 1. xxvi. 4, 5.)—But here again, some glimpses may be discerned of the glorious character and kingdom of David's Son and David's Lord. Being anointed by the Father to be his King upon his holy hill of Zion, he reigns over a willing people, who deem it their privilege to be his subjects. Once indeed they were rebels, and numbers of their associates perished in rebellion: but when they became sensible of their danger, they were fearful or reluctant to submit unto him; till his ministers, by representing his tender love, and his promises of pardon and preferment, through the concurring influences of his Spirit, bowed their hearts to a humble willingness that he should reign over them: then he readily pardoned and accepted them, and upon no accusation will he cast out, or cut off, the greatest offender who cries for his mercy. His friends sincerely mourn when his cause is run down, and rejoice when it prospers, whether they prosper in the world or not. He will recompense those, who from love to him feed his servants; he will assign them a place in his holy city, the new Jerusalem; he will feast them upon the provisions of his house, and will bless their children after them. Alas! that it must be added, that while the King himself is so plenteous in mercy; many of his professed subjects are envious, and contentious with each other, and quarrel about the most trivial concerns; which prevents much good, does immense mischief, and occasions lamentable scandals. May he at length teach all who are called by his name, to follow the example of his humility and meekness; and to rejoice in seeing the common cause promoted, let who will have the credit of being the instrument: and may all "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of "peace!" (*Note*, *Eph.* iv. 1—6.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. The disputants at first professed to vie with each other in loyal affection for their prince; (*Note*, xix. 40—43;) yet most of them were really actu-

Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and [c] he blew a trumpet, and said, [d] We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel.

2 So [e] every man of Israel went up from after David, *and* followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but [f] the men of Judah clave unto their king, [g] from Jordan even to Jerusalem.

3 And David came to his house at Jerusalem: and the king took the [h] ten women *his* concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in [*] ward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were [†] shut up unto the day of their death, [‡] living in widowhood.

4 Then said the king to [i] Amasa, [§] Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present.

5 So Amasa went to assemble *the men of* Judah: but he [k] tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.

6 And David said to [l] Abishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri [m] do us more harm than *did* Absalom: take thou [n] thy lord's servants and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities and [‖] escape us.

7 And there went out after him [o] Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

8 When they *were* at the great stone which *is* [p] in Gibeon, [q] Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle *with* a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.

9 And Joab said to Amasa, [r] *Art* thou in health, my brother? and Joab took Amasa by the beard with [*] the right hand [s] to kiss him.

10 But Amasa took no heed to the sword that *was* [t] in Joab's hand: so [u] he smote him therewith in the fifth *rib*, [x] and shed out his bowels to the ground, and [*] struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.

c xv. 10. Judg. iii. 27. Prov. xxiv. 21, 22. xxv. 8.
d xix. 43. 1 Kings xii. 16. 2 Chr. x. 16. Luke xix. 14. 27.
e xix. 41. Ps. lxii. 9. cxviii. 8—10. Prov. xvii. 14.
f John vi. 66—68. Acts xi. 23.
g xix. 15. 40, 41.
h xv. 16. xvi. 21, 22.
* Heb. a *house of ward.* Gen. xl. 3.
† Heb. *bound.*
‡ Heb. *in widowhood of life.*
i xvii. 25. xix. 13. 1 Chr. ii. 17.
§ Heb. *Call.*
k 1 Sam. xiii. 8
l ii. 18. iii. 30. x. 9, 10. 14. xviii. 2. 12. xxi. 17. xxiii. 18. 1 Sam. xxvi. 6. 1 Chr. xi. 20. xviii. 12.
m xix. 7.
n xi. 11. 1 Kings i. 33.
‖ Heb. *delivers himself from our eyes.*
o 23. viii. 16. 18. xv. 18. xxiii. 22, 23. 1 Kings i. 38. 44.
p ii. 13. iii 30.
q 4, 5.
r Ps. lv. 21. Prov xxvi. 24—26. Mic. vii. 2.
s Matt. xxvi. 48, 49. Luke xxii. 47, &c.
t 9. Judg. iii. 21 1 Chr. xii. 2.
u ii. 23. iii. 27 Gen. iv. 8 1 Kings ii. 5, 6. 31—34.
x Acts i. 18, 19.
* Heb. *doubled not his stroke* 1 Sam. xxvi. 8.

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ated by ambition of pre-eminence: one party confiding in nearness of relation to David, the other in numbers. At length therefore the men of Israel, who had boasted that they had *ten parts* in David, were so irritated, that they would have *no part* in him, but preferred a man of Belial before him: intimating, that they had no share in his regard, which was engrossed by the men of Judah; and therefore they would have nothing more to do with him. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xii. 16.)—Sheba, it is probable, had been a commander under Amasa in Absalom's revolt, and possessed great influence among the men of Israel; so that, when he blew a trumpet, and gave the signal, instead of returning home, they generally followed him as the leader of another rebellion. "But the men of Judah clave unto "their king:" and probably a few of the men of Israel; some from fear, and others from attachment.—Shimei did not join this rebellion, or he would have been punished.

V. 3. The confinement and retired maintenance of these women was the only measure, which could be adopted, in justice or prudence; unless they had been found deserving of severer punishment. The less they were seen or heard of, the better; and perhaps their seclusion might be a benefit to their souls.

V. 4, 5. Amasa's appointment to be commander of the army, in the place of Joab, must have been very unpopular with all those, who had fought and conquered under that commander: and as Amasa had not been successful for Absalom, perhaps his own party did not entirely confide in him. This might occasion some unexpected delay in raising an army: but the men of Judah seem to have been more eager to dispute about their king, than to engage in battle for him.

V. 6, 7. *Thy lord's servants.*] That is, *Joab's soldiers*, or a body of men which had been more immediately commanded by him. (*Marg. Ref.* n, o.) David would not employ Joab upon this occasion, because he intended to remove him from his service: but, by assigning the service to his brother Abishai, he effectually made way for Joab's resuming the command, in defiance of him.

V. 8—10. Amasa, at length arriving with the troops which he had collected, took upon him the command of the army: and Joab seemed very cheerfully to submit; following the army as a private person, and professing zeal for the cause of David, whilst he was meditating revenge and murder! He had contrived, that his sword should fall from its scabbard, as if by chance, when he approached Amasa, that without suspicion he might have it drawn in his hand, when he saluted him: and thus, pretending brotherly love, (for he was a near relation,) and in the very expression of endeared friendship, he basely murdered him at one blow. Amasa could not but know Joab's daring and revengeful character, and his vexation at being superseded by the commander of that very rebellion which he had crushed; yet he did not suspect his intention, or attempt to avoid the fatal blow! perhaps not apprehending danger from the sword, because Joab held it in his *left*

11 And one of Joab's men stood by
y 6, 7. 13. 21 him, and said, [y] He that favoureth
z 4. 2 Kings ix. 32. Joab, and he that *is* [z] for David, *let him go* after Joab.

a xvii. 25. Ps. ix. 16. lv. 23. Prov. xxiv. 21, 22 12 And [a] Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.

13 When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

14 ¶ And he went through all the
b 1 Kings xv. 20. 2 Kings xv. 29. 2 Chr xvi. 4. tribes of Israel unto [b] Abel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the [c] Berites:
c Josh. xviii. 25. *Beeroth.* and they were gathered together, and went also after him.

d 2 Kings xix. 32. Jer. xxxii. 24. xxxiii. 4. Luke xix. 43. 15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they [d] cast up a bank against the city,
* Or, *it stood against the outmost wall.* and [*] it stood in the trench: and all the people that *were* with Joab [†] battered the wall to throw it down.

† Heb. *marred to throw down.*

16 Then cried [e] a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.

e xiv. 2. 1 Sam. xxv. 3. 32, 33. Ec. ix. 14—18.

17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, *Art* thou Joab? and he answered, I *am he.* Then she said unto him, [f] Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear.

f xiv. 12. 1 Sam. xxv. 24.

‡ Or, *They plainly spake in the beginning, saying, Surely they will ask of Abel, and so make an end.* Deut. xx. 10, 11.

18 Then she spake, saying, [‡] They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask *counsel* at
g Gen. xviii. 23. Rom. xiii. 3, 4. 1 Tim. ii. 2.
h Judg. v. 7. Ez. xvi. 45—49. Abel: and so they ended *the matter.*

19 I *am one of them that are* [g] peaceable *and* faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and [h] a mother in Israel: why wilt thou [i] swallow up [k] the inheritance of the LORD?

i xvii. 16. Num. xvi. 32. xxvi. 10. Ps. cxxiv. 3. Jer. li. 34. 44. Lam. ii. 2. 5. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 54. 2 Cor. v. 4.
k xxi. 3. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. xxxii. 9. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.

20 And Joab answered and said,
l xxiii. 17. Job xxi. 16. xxii. 18.
m 10. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. xvii. 9. Luke x. 29.
[l] Far be it, far be it from me, [m] that I should swallow up or destroy.

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hand. But it was the Lord's righteous will, that Amasa should thus suffer the punishment due to his former treason. (*Notes*, iii. 26, 27. xviii. 14. *Judg.* ix. 50—57.)—Joab, confiding in the favour of the army, by this conduct set both the king and publick justice at defiance, and declared his resolution to keep his place in contempt of all opposition. (*Notes*, iii. 38, 39. 1 *Kings* ii. 5, 6. 28—34.) Having therefore given Amasa a mortal wound, he left him in the agonies of death, resumed the command of the troops, and marched against the common enemy, without concern or delay!

V. 11—13. By the artifice of representing the cause of Joab as united with that of David, the people in general were left in suspense, whether Joab acted by the king's orders, or against them: but when the body of Amasa was removed and covered, they followed their old commander without further hesitation.

He that favoureth Joab. (11) "Delighteth (יחפץ) in "Joab, and in David." Joab is placed first. Probably many who had highly favoured Joab, felt indignant on this occasion.

V. 14, 15. Sheba endeavoured to raise forces, through the several tribes of Israel: but it is probable, that the elders who at first had followed him, upon recollection, and from dread of another civil war, had generally withdrawn from him; and therefore he had little success. So that with only a few followers, chiefly from Beeroth a city of Benjamin, he at length shut himself up in Abel-beth-maachah, in the tribe of Naphthali, as some of the citizens seem at first to have been favourable to his cause: but when Joab had so far pushed the siege, as to fill up the trench, and to fix his engines close to the wall to batter it; it may be supposed, that they began to dread the consequences.

V. 16—19. Joab seems to have taken it for granted, that the citizens in general were firmly attached to Sheba; and so did not propose terms of peace, or require them to deliver him up: and they appear to have concluded, that there was no safety except in resistance. But the fatal effects of this misunderstanding were prevented by the timely interposition of a woman of noted wisdom and prudence. In her argument with Joab, she seems to have referred to the law which required, that before siege was laid even to a foreign city, peace should be offered if the citizens would submit; and much more to a city, which had hitherto been "peaceful and faithful, and a mother in Israel," as protecting the adjacent villages. (*Note, Deut.* xx. 10—18.) And she tacitly intimated that Joab, by neglecting this previous measure, was about to destroy the city, to the publick injury of the nation, and so to "swallow up the inherit-"ance of the LORD." This seems the proper interpretation of her expostulation: and it accords with the marginal reading: though she expressed herself rather obscurely, perhaps for fear of giving offence. 'As if she had said, 'When the people saw thee lay siege to the city, they said, 'Surely they will ask us, if we will have peace, and then 'we shall soon come to an agreement, and have an end.' *Bp. Patrick.* Some adhering to the translation in the text suppose, that this city had long been noted, as the residence of wise men, who had settled differences by prudent and equitable accommodation; so that it was become proverbial, 'that the way to terminate matters in litigation, 'was to ask counsel at Abel:' and therefore that city ought not rashly to be destroyed.

V. 20—22. Joab, though guilty of private revenge and murder, and setting his king at defiance, was, in other respects, attentive to the publick interest, and very willing to settle the dispute: if the citizens therefore would de-

21 The matter *is* not so: but [a] a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri [*] by name, hath [o] lifted up his hand against the king, *even* against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, [p] his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

22 Then the woman went unto all the people [q] in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast *it* out to Joab: and [r] he blew a trumpet, and they [†] retired from the city, every man to his tent. [s] And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

23 ¶ Now [t] Joab *was* over all the host of Israel: [u] and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites, and over the Pelethites:

24 And [v] Adoram *was* over the tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of [‡] Ahilud [x] *was* [‡] recorder:

25 And [y] Sheva *was* scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests:

26 And [z] Ira also the [a] Jairite was [§] a chief ruler about David.

a 1. Judg. ii. 9. vii. 24. 2 Kings v. 22. Jer. iv. 15. l. 19.
* Heb. *by his name.*
o xxiii. 16. 1 Sam. xxiv. 6. xxvi. 9.
p xvii. 2, 3. 2 Kings x. 7. John xviii. 4—6.
q Ec. vii. 19. ix. 14—18.
r 1. ii. 28. xviii. 16.
† Heb. *were scattered.*
s iii. 28—39. xi. 6—21. Ec. viii. 11.
t viii. 16—18. 1 Chr. xviii. 15—17.
u *See on* 7.
v 1 Kings iv. 6. xii. 18.
x 1 Kings iv. 3.
‡ Or, *remembrancer.*
y viii. 17. 1 Kings iv. 4. 1 Chr. xviii. 16. *Shavsha.*
z xxiii. 38. 1 Chr. xi. 40. *Ithrite.*
a Judg. x. 4, 5.
§ Or, *a prince.* viii. 18. Gen. xli. 43. Ex. ii. 14.

liver up the traitor, he would not injure them. Thus Sheba's head purchased the safety of the city, and terminated the rebellion: (*Notes, Prov.* xvii. 11. *Ec.* ix. 13—18:) and Joab without fear or shame, (apparently glorying as much in revenging himself, as in serving the publick,) returned to David as though nothing had happened: and he was now become too powerful to be removed, or called to account, or punished, without endangering another rebellion.

V. 23—26. *Note,* viii. 15—18.—*Tribute.* (24) This office is not before mentioned. Perhaps, at first, the contributions of the nation had been but small; in a measure voluntary, and placed under the management of the other officers: but now regular taxes were paid; and the tribute from the conquered nations especially tended to render this new office requisite. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* iv. 4—6. xii. 18.)—Abiathar was the high priest: Ahimelech his son is not mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

We must expect one trial after another, for our salutary chastisement, till we reach the place where sin and sorrow are for ever excluded.—Angry disputants commonly misunderstand, or misinterpret, one another's words: proud men will either manage every thing their own way, or entirely refuse their concurrence; and when greatly enraged, they are apt to avenge themselves on the innocent, and on persons whom they profess to love, instead of those who have affronted them.—The favour of *the many* is no more to be depended on, than that of *the great:* and what indeed have men a right to expect, when "Hosanna to the "Son of David," was so soon by the multitude changed into "Crucify him, crucify him?" All appearance, however, of *partiality,* in our conduct towards those who are equally related to us, or have an equal claim upon us, ought to be avoided: for it often excites discord in families, churches, and kingdoms.—Many a vehement quarrel would spend its fury in angry words, and then die away, if some "man of Belial" were not present, to sound the trumpet of publick contention. Satan, if permitted, will be sure to excite such ringleaders of dissension: and God, in wise and holy sovereignty, is pleased often to permit it, that he may execute vengeance, or inflict correction, according to his righteous purposes. Hence nations are visited with war and bloodshed, especially the dire scourge of civil wars; and the church with pestilent divisions, and virulent controversies.—When immoderate and inexpedient provision is made for sensual gratification, it will surely terminate in grief and shame: and obscure retirement best suits those who are become infamous by sin.—The most powerful cannot effect all that they wish, or all that they see to be right; nay, they cannot attempt it without danger: for at last they can only do, what *the many* can be prevailed with to concur in.—Consequences should be well weighed before important measures are adopted; for resentment and disgust are dangerous counsellors.—Our inbred lusts, like able wicked men, cannot be brought under, without great difficulties, when they have acquired a habit of domineering: the beginning of evil should therefore in every thing be decisively resisted.—By degrees men grow more and more bold and unfeeling in the commission of crimes of every kind; until they vindicate and glory in their villanies: and when such daring offenders are actuated by ambition or revenge, they will not be restrained by the ties of relationship, or friendship; nay, they will employ the guise and language of love, to obtain the opportunity of perpetrating the most atrocious murders: but the more of contrivance, or of dissimulation, is connected with malice, the deeper is its malignity.—The murderer may conceal his crimes, or prosper in his ways for a season, and elude or outbrave the justice of man: but let him not expect to escape the vengeance of God.—Vain are earthly distinctions and preferments, which excite so much envy and enmity, without affording any additional security to man's uncertain life: may we then be ambitious "of that honour which cometh from God only!"—Great abilities, strong attachment to the interests of the publick, and eminent services, performed with firmness, prudence, and clemency, constitute a *great,* but not always a *good* man: and a person thus peculiarly distinguished, being the slave of one imperious lust, may violate every moral obligation in order to its indulgence; though such treachery, cruelty, and injustice seem to "be far from "him," in other parts of his conduct.

V. 14—26.

Wisdom is not restricted to rank or sex: and it does not consist in extensive knowledge or ingenious speculations; but in understanding how to act as circumstances arise, in

CHAP. XXI.

A famine prevails for three years; as a judgment on the land, for Saul's cruelty to the Gibeonites, who being asked, require seven of his descendants, and hang them up before the Lord, 1—9. Rizpah watches their bodies: David buries their bones, with those of Saul and Jonathan, in the sepulchre of Kish; and the famine ceases, 10—14. In several battles with the Philistines, four of David's mighty men slay four giants, 15—22.

THEN there was [a] a famine in the days of David, three years, year after year: and David * enquired [b] of the LORD. And the LORD answered, [c] *It is* for [d] Saul, and for *his* bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.

2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them: (now [e] the Gibeonites *were* not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them, [f] in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)

3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and [g] wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may [h] bless the inheritance of the LORD?

4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, † We will have [i] no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, *that* will I do for you.

5 And they answered the king, [k] The man that consumed us, and that ‡ devised against us, *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,

6 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will [l] hang them up unto the LORD [m] in Gibeah of Saul, § *whom* the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give *them*.

7 But the king spared [n] Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, [o] because of the LORD's oath that *was* between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

a Gen. xii. 10. xxvi. 1. xli. 57. xlii. 1. xliii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 19, 20. 26. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 2. 2 Kings vi. 25. viii. 1. Jer. xiv. 1, &c.
* Heb. *sought the face.*
b v. 19. 23. Num. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2. 4. 11. Job v. 8—10. x. 2. Ps. i. 15. xci. 15.
c Josh vii. 1. 11, 12.
d 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19.
e Josh. ix. 3. 15—21.
f Deut. vii. 16. 1 Sam. xiv. 44. xv. 8, 9. 2 Kings x. 16. 31. Luke ix. 54, 55. John xvi. 2. Rom. x. 2. Gal. iv. 17.
g Ex. xxxii. 30. Lev. i. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 25. Mic. vi. 6, 7. Heb. ix. 22. x. 4—12.
h xx. 19.
† Or, *It is not silver nor gold that we have to do with Saul, or his house; neither pertains it to us to kill, &c.*
i Ps. xlix. 7, 8. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
k 1. Esth. ix. 24, 25. Matt. vii. 2.
‡ Or, *cut us off.* Dan. ix. 26.
l xvii. 23. xviii. 10. Gen. xl. 19. 22. Num. xxv. 4, 5. Deut. xxi. 22. Josh. viii. 29 x. 26. Ezra vi. 11. Esth. ix. 10. 13, 14. Matt. xxvii. 5.
m 1 Sam. x. 26. xi. 4.
§ Or, *the chosen of the LORD.* 1 Sam. ix. 16, 17. x. 1. 24.
n iv. 4. ix. 10. xvi. 4. xix. 25.
o 1 Sam. xviii. 3. xx. 8. 15. 17. 42. xxiii. 18.

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order that calamities may be averted, and benefits secured, personal, relative, and publick.—Contending parties would often be reconciled if they properly understood each other; hence the benefit of a prudent and impartial mediation: and the just punishment of one atrocious criminal is frequently mercy to great numbers.—Thus the sinner persists in his rebellion, till, through the Saviour's mediation, he perceives that his offended Lord does not seek *his* destruction, but that of his sins: then he becomes willing that they should be crucified, especially, the strongest and most domineering of them; and receiving pardon and grace from God, he becomes peaceable, faithful, and useful in Israel.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1—3. It is not certain, whether this famine occurred in the order of time in which it is related, or earlier in the reign of David.—It does not seem to have been very grievous, and the scarcity of the first and second year occasioned no great alarm: but when it continued the third year also, David understood that it was a national judgment, and enquired of God, for what particular sin he thus contended with his people; perhaps thinking of his own crimes in the matter of Uriah.—The history of Saul gives no account of the transaction, which was declared to be the cause of this calamity: but it seems that Saul, in order to promote the supposed interests of Israel and Judah, attempted to extirpate the Gibeonites, who were of the ancient inhabitants of Canaan: though they had submitted to Israel, and had quietly served them for ages; and were protected by the publick faith, and a solemn oath ratifying a covenant of peace with them. (*Notes, Josh.* ix.) Yet he did not attempt to extirpate the Amalekites, Philistines, and other hostile nations, whom God commanded him to destroy! These were able and determined to resist, and could not be subdued without *apparent* danger and difficulty; while the inoffensive Gibeonites might be oppressed with ease, and *apparent* safety. Perhaps he disliked them the more, for being peculiarly devoted to the service of the priests and the sanctuary; and attempted to destroy them when he slew the priests: (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 9—19:) but it does not appear, that many of them dwelt at Nob; and neither they, nor the Levites are mentioned in that transaction. Nor could it have been said, had the slaughter been made by Doeg on that occasion, that "Saul sought to slay them in his zeal "for the children of Israel and Judah." It seems that Saul's relations also were disposed to cruelty, and concurred in this bloodshed; and that many Israelites had willingly assisted in the persecution.—The violation of the oath of God, the treachery of Israel towards the Gibeonites, and the murder of them, formed an enormous load of national guilt, which had never been expiated by the punishment of the guilty: and it pleased God in this manner, and so long after, to proceed against the nation for it; to shew them his abhorrence of such crimes; to teach rulers to keep at a distance from similar offences themselves, and to punish them in others; and to intimate that the chief punishment of sin is after the death of the offender. And God informed David of the cause of the visitation; that he might take proper measures for expiating the national guilt. (*Notes, Num.* xxxv. 31—34. *Deut.* xxi. 1—9.)

V. 4—7. As God accepted the expiation here demanded, we must suppose, that both the enquiry of David, and the

8 But the king took the two sons of
o iii. 7 [p] Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom
she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Me-
* Or, *Michal's sister.* 1 Sam. xviii. 19. phibosheth: and the five sons of [*] Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she
† Heb. *bare to.* [†] brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they
q *See on* 6.—vi. 21. Ex. xx. 5. Num. xxxv. 31—34. Deut. xxi. 1—9. 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4. hanged them in the hill [q] before the LORD: and they fell *all* seven together,
r Ruth i. 22. and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first *days*, [r] in the beginning of barley-harvest.

s 8. iii. 7. 10 And [s] Rizpah the daughter of
t 1 Kings xxi. 27. Joel i. 13. Aiah [t] took sackcloth, and spread it for
u *See on* 9. her upon the rock, [u] from the beginning
x Deut. xi. 14. 1 Kings xviii. 41—45. Jer. v. 24, 25. xiv. 22. Hos. vi. 3. Joel ii. 23. Zech. x. 1. of harvest [x] until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered nei-
y Gen. xl. 19. Ez. xxxix. 4. ther [y] the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

z ii. 4. Ruth ii. 11, 12. 11 And it was [z] told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

12 And David went and took [a] the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, which had stolen them from
b Josh. xvii. 11. *Bethshean.* 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. the street of [b] Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul [c] in Gilboa.
c i. 6. 21. 1 Sam. xxviii. 4. xxxi. 1. 1 Chr. x. 1. 8. 13 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered
d iii. 32. iv. 12. the bones of them that were hanged.
e Josh. xviii. 28. 1 Sam. x. 2. *Zelzah.* 14 And the bones of Saul and Jona-
f xxiv. 25. Ex. xxxii. 27—29. Num. xxv. 13. Josh. vii. 26. 1 Kings xviii. 40, 41. Jer. xiv. 1—7. Joel ii. 18, 19. Am. vii. 1—6. Jon. i. 15. Zech. vi. 8. than his son [d] buried they in the country of Benjamin in [e] Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that [f] God was intreated
g v. 17. 22. 1 Chr. xx. 4. for the land.

h Josh. xiv. 10, 11. Ps. lxxi. 9. 18. lxxiii. 26. Ec. xii. 3. Is. xl. 28—30. Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Pet. i. 24, 25. 15 ¶ Moreover, [g] the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him,
i Gen. vi. 4. Num. xiii. 32, 33. Deut. i. 28. ii. 10. 21. iii. 11. ix. 2 1 Sam. xvii. 4, 5. and fought against the Philistines: [h] and David waxed faint.

‡ Or, *Rapha.* 18. 20. *marg.* v. 18. Gen. xiv. 5. 16 And Ishbi-benob, which *was* [i] of the sons of [‡] the giant, (the weight of

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answer of the Gibeonites, were directed by some open or secret intimation from him. They did not demand their own liberty, or any accession of wealth, or the death of any other Israelite: but that, in the character of the avengers of the blood of their brethren, they might be permitted to put to death seven of Saul's descendants; whom they would "hang up unto the LORD," as a sacri-"fice to his justice, and an example to others not to injure or oppress them. They were willing to undertake the trouble and to bear the odium of the execution; and would do it in Saul's own city, for a warning to those who had witnessed or assisted in the oppression.—As David consented to this measure in obedience to God, and for the publick welfare, and not out of private resentment; he did not violate his oath to Saul: (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 16—22:) but as he could spare one at least of Saul's descendants, his covenant, and his oath of *sacred friendship* with Jonathan, required the preservation of his son in preference to all the rest.

V. 8. "The five sons of Michal," here mentioned, seem to have been the children of her sister Merab, whom Michal had adopted, and brought up as her own. (1 *Sam.* xviii. 19.)—This Barzillai is called "the Meholathite;" to distinguish him from Barzillai the Gileadite before spoken of. (xix. 31. *Judg.* vii. 22. 1 *Kings* iv. 12. xix. 16.)

V. 9—14. As these persons were hung up by the express appointment of God, for an anathema, an accursed thing, a national atonement to divine justice; they were left on the tree or gibbet, till some tokens of the Lord's reconciliation were afforded by seasonable rains. (*Note*, *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23.) They were not considered to be within the meaning of the law, against the bodies of malefactors being left on a tree all night: for that statute meant, that those, who were put to death for *breaking human laws*, should not be treated as "accursed of God." Indeed he may *command* that, in a particular case, which he *prohibits* in general: provided it be not intrinsically unjust. He ordered the children to be put to death for the parents' crimes, though magistrates in general were forbidden to do it: and in like manner he might require this treatment of these dead bodies, though, *in some respects*, contrary to the general rule.—Rizpah improperly fed and indulged her grief by a useless attention to the dead bodies: yet her case was truly pitiable, and her patient, self-denying natural affection extraordinary. David doubtless sympathized with the bereaved and aged parent; and gladly embraced the opportunity, as soon as it was proper, of relieving her from her melancholy charge, by decently interring them, together with the bones of Saul and his other sons: and by this he avowed that he had not acted out of disrespect to Saul or his family. (*Notes*, ii. 5—7. 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 11—13.)—The first rain was a token of reconciliation: but after the expiation was finished, the scarcity was removed in answer to prayer; and doubtless the Gibeonites joined, in seeking "this blessing for the inheritance of "the LORD" (3).

V. 15—22. (*Marg. Ref.*) All these events seem to have occurred, in the order here related, and towards the latter end of David's reign. The Philistines, though frequently vanquished, were not totally subjugated: and the remains of the Anakims, of enormous size and strength, gave David and his servants, not only an opportunity of signalizing their courage, but repeated proofs of the Lord's truth and goodness.—David himself was on one occasion,

* Heb. *the staff,* or *the head.* * whose spear *weighed* three hundred *shekels* of brass in weight,) he, being
k 1 Sam. xvii. 45—51. girded with a new *sword,* [k] thought to have slain David.
l *See on* xx. 6—10. 17 But [l] Abishai the son of Zeruiah
m xxii. 19. Ps. xlvi. 1. cxliv. 10. [m] succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying,
n xviii. 3. [n] Thou shalt go no more out with us
o xiv. 7. 1 Kings xi. 36. xv. 4. Ps. cxxxii. 17. John i. 8, 9. v. 35. to battle, that thou [o] quench not the † light of Israel.
† Heb. *candle,* or *lamp.* 18 And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philis-
p 1 Chr. xi. 29. xx. 4. tines at Gob: then [p] Sibbechai the Hu-
‡ Or, *Sippai.* 1 Chr. xx. 4. shathite slew ‡ Saph, which *was* of the
§ Or, *Rapha.* 16. 20. *marg.* sons of § the giant.
19 And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where [q] Elhanan the son of [‖] Jaare-oregim, a Bethlehemite, slew *the brother of* [r] Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.
q 1 Chr. xi. 26.
‖ Or, *Jair.* 1 Chr. xx. 5.
r 1 Sam. xvii. 4, &c.
20 And there was [s] yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of *great* stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to * the giant.
s 1 Chr. xx. 6.
21 And when he † defied Israel, [t] Jonathan the son of [u] Shimeah the brother of David slew him.
22 These [x] four were born to the giant in Gath, and [y] fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.
* Or, *Rapha.* 16. 18. *marg.*
† Or, *reproached.* 1 Sam. xvii. 10. 26. 36. 2 Kings xix. 23.
t 1 Chr. xxvii. 32.
u 1 Sam. xvi. 9. xvii. 13. *Shammah.* 1 Chr. ii. 13. *Shimma.*
x 1 Chr. xx. 8.
y Josh. xiv. 12. Ps. lx. 12. cviii. 13. cxviii. 15. Ec. ix. 11. Jer. ix. 23. Rom. viii. 31. 37.

in imminent danger of death, by the hands of Ishbi-benob, who seems to have been Goliath's son, (as indeed do the others here mentioned,) and probably aimed to revenge his father's death: and David's life was deemed too valuable to Israel to be any more exposed, now that his strength and activity began to fail him. For, as king, prophet, and psalmist, he was the "light of Israel," and a type of "the Light of the world." (*Notes,* xviii. 3. xxiii. 3, 4.)

Six fingers, &c. (20) Other instances of this peculiarity are recorded by historians; and the author has been informed, by most indisputable testimony, of one such who is now living.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Every affliction arises from sin, and should excite us to repentance: but some troubles loudly proclaim that they were especially sent to "bring sin to remembrance." (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xvii. 18.) In this case, we prolong our sufferings by neglecting self-examination, and prayer to the Lord to shew us in what we have offended, if the cause be not already plain to our consciences: and, however reluctant, we must submit to this, before we can expect relief from his mercy.—While the grand outlines of the Lord's government are evidently righteous, some of his judgments are far too deep for us: but faith believes those appointments to be just, which assume a different appearance, and waits for the more complete display of the glory of God in them.—By the punishment of children for the sins of their parents, and of subjects for those of their princes, even after their death, he marks his abhorrence of destructive crimes, gives a check to enormous wickedness, and teaches us to pray for our rulers, and to deny our passions out of love to our offspring: and he will so arrange the whole, that no individual shall in the event have cause to complain of injustice.—That our guilty land should experience successive years of plenty, calls for admiring gratitude; and we need not wonder, if our misused abundance should be punished with as great a scarcity. Yet when a scarce season occurs, how few are disposed to enquire of the Lord, concerning the *sinful cause;* while the ingenuity of numbers is employed in discovering the *second causes,* by which he is pleased to work; and the impatience and malignity of multitudes are expressed by outrages against those who are, generally without cause, charged with being the authors of the calamity! —The Lord will plead for those who cannot or will not avenge themselves; and the prayers of the poor, either for or against us, are of very great efficacy. The blood of nobles is not an adequate, though the only required and accepted atonement, to expiate the guilt of the murder of the meanest person, in order that the wrath of God may be averted from the land: and violated oaths and covenants will be severely punished, either in this world or the next, let the criminal be ever so highly exalted among his fellow-creatures.—Our zeal, either for the publick good or the supposed cause of religion, is *naturally* exercised in a perverse manner, and as if in contempt of God's commandments: but an apparently easy and safe exertion, which consists with our self-indulgence, and flatters our pride and lusts, is the temptation which prevails against us, unless the grace of God teach us a better way.—Little do we know what may befall our children, or what anguish they may occasion us: but if we educate them in the fear of God, and commit them to his keeping, he will either exempt us from heavy trials about them, or else support us under them. In every case resignation to the will of God is our duty and interest; and whatever cherishes inordinate grief, is sinful, rebellious, and tormenting, however specious its appearance.—All personal respects must yield to the command of God: yet, in subordination to it, a tribute of gratitude is due to the memory of our friends, and of respect to our civil governors.—While we are able, we ought to venture and labour for the publick welfare; but we cannot exceed our appointed measure of service: and when bodily vigour fails, some are so useful by their counsels, prayers, and examples, that their lives should be taken care of as a publick blessing.—Strength and courage often increase men's pride; but far more frequently hasten, than retard, the stroke of death; the unexpected approach of which miserably causes all their vain thoughts to perish. —The valour and affection of friends should be acknowledged; and the strongest need the assistance of the more feeble: but the glory of every thing belongs to God.—

CHAP. XXII.

The introduction to David's psalm of thanksgiving, 1. He professes his confidence and joy in God, 2, 3. He states his trials and dangers, and celebrates the praises of God for surprising deliverances, 4—20. He avows his integrity, and shews the method of the Lord's dealings with men, 21—28. He ascribes to God all the glory of his victories, 29—36. He exults, with grateful praises, in the destruction or subjection of all his enemies, 37—44. He anticipates the submission of the nations, and glories in the salvation of God, and his mercies to him and to his Seed for ever, 45—51.

AND [a] David spake unto the LORD [b] the words of this song, [c] in the day *that* the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and [d] out of the hand of Saul:

2 And he said, [e] The LORD *is* my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer;

3 The God of my rock, [f] in him will I trust; *he is* my [g] Shield, and [h] the Horn of my salvation, [i] my high Tower, and [k] my Refuge, [l] my Saviour; [m] thou savest me from violence.

4 I [n] will call on the LORD, *who is* [o] worthy to be praised: [p] so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

5 When the * waves of death compassed me, [q] the floods of † ungodly men made me afraid;

6 [r] The ‡ sorrows of hell compassed me about; the [s] snares of death prevented me;

a Ps. l. 14. ciii. 1—6. cxvi. 1, &c.
b Ex. xv 1. Judg. v. 1.
c 49. Ps. xviii. *title.* xxxiv. 19. Is. xii. 1, &c. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 18. Rev. vii. 9—17.
d 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. xxiv. 15. xxv. 29. xxvi. 24. xxvii. 1.
e Deut. xxxii. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Ps. xviii. 2. xxxi. 3. xlii. 9. lxxi. 3. Matt. xvi. 18.
f Heb. ii. 13.
g Gen. xv. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 29. Ps. iii. 3. v. 12. xxviii. 7. lxxxiv. 9. 11. cxv. 9—11. Prov. xxx. 5.
h 1 Sam. ii. 1. Luke i. 69.
i 51. Ps. lxi. 3. cxliv. 2. Prov. xviii. 10.
k Ps. ix. 9. xviii. 2. xxvii. 5. xxxii. 7. xlvi. 1. 7. 11. lxxi. 7. cxlii. 4. Is. xxxii. 2. Jer. xvi. 19.
l Is. xii. 2 xlv. 21. Luke i. 47. 71. Tit. iii. 4. 6.
m 49. Ps. lv. 9. lxxii. 14. lxxxvi. 14. cxl. 1. 4. 11.
n Ps. cxvi. 2. 4. 13. 17.
o Neh. ix. 5. Ps. xviii. 3. lxvi. 2. cvi. 2. cxlviii. 1—4. Rev. iv. 11. v. 12.
p Ps. xxxiv. 6. l. 15. lv. 16. lvi. 9. lvii. 1—3. Rom. x. 13. * Or, *pangs.* 1 Thes. v. 3.
q Ps. xviii. 4. lxix. 14, 15. xcii. 3, 4. Is. lix. 19. Jer. xlvi. 7, 8. Rev. xii. 15, 16. xvii. 1, 15. † Heb. *Belial.*
r Ps. xviii. 5. cxvi. 3. Jon. ii. 2. Acts ii. 24. ‡ Or, *corda.* Job xxxvi. 8. Ps. cxl. 5. Prov. v. 22.
s Prov. xiii. 14. xiv. 27.

Through the atonement of Jesus who performed all that was commanded, and through his intercession, the Lord is willingly intreated for sinners: and the believer, having peace with God, needs not fear the stoutest foe who defies Israel; for though sometimes he be in apparent danger, he will at length be made "more than conqueror, through "him who loved" and died for sinners.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. It is probable, that this song of praise was composed early in the reign of David, and soon after he was finally delivered from the persecuting rage of Saul. Perhaps it stands in this place, as it was found among those compositions, which David used in his private devotions: and in the book of Psalms, as it was corrected and delivered to the chief singer, to be sung in the publick service of the sanctuary, from time to time, on occasions of recent deliverances, as well as in remembrance of former mercies. (*Ps.* xviii. *title.*) The variations are immaterial; though the Jewish writers enumerate no less than seventy-four. Few of them, however, need be here particularly noted. (*Note, Ps.* xviii. 1.)—The first verse, of this chapter, forms the title of the eighteenth psalm, with some alterations; the most remarkable of which is, the insertion of the words, "The servant of the LORD," in which it seems, the Psalmist deemed himself more honoured, than in being a renowned conqueror, and a very prosperous king.—He had had many enemies, both among his own people and the surrounding nations: but Saul especially is mentioned, as having been more formidable, malicious, and unwearied than any of them.—In the whole of this sacred hymn, David seems immediately to celebrate providential deliverances: yet he uses language, which may fairly be accommodated to spiritual blessings. He appears also primarily to speak of the Lord's dealings with himself: yet he was led by the prophetick Spirit to utter many things, which may with great propriety be applied to the Redeemer's sufferings and victories, of whom David was an evident and remarkable type. (*Notes, Ps.* ii. xxii. 1. xl. 1—5. lxix. 1—3. lxxxviii. 1, 2.)

V. 2, 3. The eighteenth psalm abruptly begins, "I "will love thee, O LORD, my Strength;" perhaps these words were added, when it was made publick, as an expression of David's exulting gratitude, in order to kindle the devotions of the people. (*Note, Ps.* xviii. 1.)—The accumulation of metaphors here used, as descriptive of David's expectations from God, which had been fully answered, denotes, that those energetick figures of speech, which commonly exceed the bounds of exact truth, are too feeble to express what God is to his believing people, and what he does for them. (*Note, 2 Cor.* iv. 13—18.) He is a *Rock*, on which securely to build their confidence; a *Refuge*, in which to shelter themselves from every foe, and in every trouble: a *Fortress* and *a strong Tower*, which are formed by human art and labour, to supply the want of the natural fortifications of rocks and mountains, or to increase the security which they afford: a *Shield* to ward off every hostile assault; and a *Horn* with which to push and prostrate every assailant. (*Notes, Ex.* xvii. 5, 6. *Deut.* xxxii. 4. 15, 30, 31. 1 *Sam.* ii. 1, 2.) For the LORD is a *Deliverer*, a *Saviour*, and *Salvation*, from every evil and danger, to which the believer is exposed, who cannot but be safe and comfortable, when exercising faith in him.—Several expressions, as "The God of my rock," and "the "Horn of my salvation," seem to refer to the person of the Redeemer, "God manifested in the flesh," become the Salvation of his people, and in human nature displaying divine power and authority in the redemption of believers, and the destruction of their enemies. (*Notes, Ps.* xxvii. 1—3. *Is.* xii. 2. xlv. 15—17. *Matt.* i. 20, 21. *Luke* ii. 25—32. *Tit.* ii. 13. iii. 4—7.)

V. 4. 'The *πανοπλια*' (whole armour) 'of a soldier does 'him no service, except he put it on to defend himself, 'and offend his enemy; so, no protection or help from 'God is to be expected,...unless we apply ourselves to 'him by prayer.' *Strigelius in Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Ps.* cxvi. 2.)

V. 5, 6. These verses contain a figurative and poetical description of the violence of David's enemies, and the imminent danger to which he was exposed. Death seemed

7 In [t] my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he [u] did hear my voice [v] out of his temple, and [x] my cry *did enter* into his ears.

8 Then [y] the earth shook and trembled; [z] the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

9 There [a] went up a smoke [*] out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: [b] coals were kindled by it.

10 He [c] bowed the heavens also, and came down; and [d] darkness *was* under his feet.

11 And he rode upon [e] a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen [f] upon the wings of the wind.

12 And he made darkness [g] pavilions round about him, [†] dark waters, *and* thick cloud of the skies.

13 Through the brightness before him were [h] coals of fire kindled.

14 The LORD [i] thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice.

15 And he sent out [j] arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

16 And [k] the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the [l] rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the breath of his [‡] nostrils.

17 He [m] sent from above; he took me; [n] he drew me out of [§] many waters;

18 He [o] delivered me from my strong enemy, *and* from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.

19 They [p] prevented me in the day of my calamity; but [q] the LORD was my stay.

t Ps. cxvi. 4. cxx. 1. Matt. xxvi. 38, 39 Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7.
u Ex. iii. 7. Ps. xxxiv. 6. 15—17.
v 1 Kings viii. 28—30. Ps. xviii. 6. xxvii. 4. Jon. ii. 4. 7. Hab. ii. 20.
x Jam. v. 4.
y Judg. v. 4. Ps. xviii. 7. lxxvii. 18. xcvii. 4. Hab. iii. 6—11. Matt. xxvii. 51. xxviii. 2. Acts iv. 31.
z Job xxvi. 11. Nah. i. 5, 6.
a 16. Ex. xv. 7, 8. xix. 18. xxiv. 17. Deut. xxxii. 22. Job iv. 9. xli. 20, 21. Ps. xviii. 8. 15. xcvii. 3—5. Is. xxx. 27. 33. Jer. v. 14. xv. 14. Heb. xii. 29.
* Heb. *by his, &c.*
b Hab. iii. 5.
c Ps. cxliv. 5. Is. lxiv. 1—3.
d Ex. xx. 21. Deut. iv. 11. 1 Kings viii. 12. Ps. xcvii. 2. civ. 3. Matt. xxvii. 45. Luke xxiii. 44, 45. 10. lxviii. 17. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1. Ez. ix. 3. x. 2—14. Heb. i. 14.
e Gen. iii. 24. Ex. xxv. 19. 1 Sam. iv. 4. Ps. xviii. 9, 10.
f Ps. civ. 3. cxxxix.
g Ps. xviii. 11, 12. xxvii. 5.
† Heb. *binding of waters.*
h 9.
i Ex. xix. 16. Judg. v. 20. 1 Sam. ii. 10. vii. 10. xii. 17, 18. Job xxxvii. 2—5. xl. 9. Ps. xxix. 3—9. lxxvii. 16—19. Is. xxx. 30. Ez. x. 5. Rev. xi. 19.
j Deut. xxxii. 23. Josh. x. 10. Ps. vii. 12, 13. xviii. 14. xlv. 5. cxliv. 6, 7. Hab. iii. 11.
k Ex. xiv. 21—27. xv. 8—10. Ps. xviii. 15—17. cxiv. 3—7.
l Ex. xv. 8. Job xxxviii. 11. Ps. cvi. 9. Nah. i. 4 Hab. iii. 8—15 Matt. viii. 26, 27.
‡ Or, *anger.* 9. Ps. lxxiv. 1.
m Ps. xviii. 16, 17. cxliv. 7.
n Ps. xxxii. 6. lix. 1, 2. xciii. 3, 4 cxxiv. 4, 5. cxxx. 1. Is. xliii. 2 Lam. iii. 54 Rev. xvii. 15.
§ Or, *great.*
o 1. Ps. iii. 7. lvi. 9. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17.
p xv. 10—18. 1 Sam. xix. 11—17. xxiii. 26, 27. Ps. xviii. 18, 19. cxviii. 10—13. Matt. xxvii. 39—44.
q Ps. lxxi. 20, 21. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. l. 10.

ready to swallow him up, as the waves of the sea overwhelm those who are cast into them, and encompassed by them. (*Notes, Jon.* ii. 1—7.) Multitudes of wicked men, pressed upon him with incumbent force, like the rising floods from which there appears no deliverance: nay, the temptations of Satan, and the consciousness of his sins, filled him with fears of wrath, and dreadful apprehensions of future consequences: and he felt like a malefactor bound for execution, whose fetters prevent him from attempting an escape, for whose body the grave has certainly opened her mouth, and who is horribly alarmed lest the pit of hell should swallow up his soul. In short, he was like the helpless bird caught in the fowler's snare, and doomed to inevitable death. (*Marg. Ref.*)—In this he was a type of Christ our King, when agonizing in the garden; when he endured the severest tortures, the pangs of death, the temptations of Satan, yea, the wrath of God against our sins; and was at the same time surrounded by the insulting scribes, priests, and people. (*Notes, Ps.* xviii. 4, 5. xl. 1—5.)

V. 7—16. When every other hope failed, the Psalmist simply and earnestly sought help from God; whose manifested presence, in the sanctuary above the mercy-seat, represented his tabernacling in human nature, as "God "our Saviour;" and our access to him on a throne of grace; (*Note, Ex.* xxv. 10—21;) as well as his exalted display of his glorious presence in his holy temple in heaven. Thither the prayers of David ascended, and thence they were answered in a most effectual manner.—As we are not informed, that the Lord delivered David, with the *external* displays of his power here mentioned; it is supposed that he adorned his sacred poem with sublime images, taken from the history of Israel in Egypt, at the Red Sea, at mount Sinai, in the wilderness, and in the conquest of Canaan; and thus intimated, that the deliverances vouchsafed to him were as honourable to God, as those which of old he had wrought for his people, though effected in a different manner. The *earthquake*, and the shaking of the foundations of the heavens, the *smoke*, the *fire*, and the *darkness*, into which the Lord came down, and in which he majestically dwelt, with several other expressions, lead our thoughts to mount Sinai. (*Notes, Ex.* xix. 16—20. xx. 18—20.) His "riding upon a cherub," and "his flying "on the wings of the wind," denote the ministration of angels, and the speed with which he effected the deliverance of his servant. (*Notes, Gen.* iii. 22—24. *Ps.* civ. 4. *Ez.* i. 4—25. x. 1—22. xi. 22—25.) "The coals of fire "kindled" at his presence, may indicate, that the wrath of God arms all creatures against his enemies, or that it will consume them as fuel is consumed by the fire. Other circumstances recall to our remembrance the dividing of the Red Sea, and of the river Jordan; the destruction of the Canaanites, when the hailstones destroyed more than the sword of Israel; and that of the Philistines, when the Lord thundered upon them and discomfited them. And the whole declared, that the indignation of the Lord, against the enemies of his servant, equalled his displeasure against those adversaries of his people; and that their consternation and destruction were no less, than that of the others had been.—Here David was eminently the type of Christ; and the figurative language, used by him, was in many respects exactly accomplished in the preternatural convulsions attending our Lord's death and resurrection. (*Notes, Ps.* xviii. 6—15. *Matt.* xxvii. 51—53. xxviii. 1—8.)

V. 17, 18. The providential interposition of God, in delivering David from his strongest enemy, when he was ready to devour him, was like sending from heaven on purpose to take him out of great waters, into which he must otherwise have sunk and perished. (*Notes, Ps.* cxxiv. 4—8. *Lam.* iii. 52—57.) For his enemies were too strong for him, and therefore his preservation was evidently the work of God.—Goliath and Saul, and other enemies were perhaps intended by the Psalmist: but the victory of Christ over "death and him that has the power of death," was prefigured.

V. 19. When David had framed any plan, for secreting

20 He [r] brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he [s] delighted in me.

21 The LORD [t] rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the [u] cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

22 For [x] I have kept [y] the ways of the LORD, and [z] have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 For [a] all his [b] judgments *were* before me: and *as for* his statutes, [c] I did not depart from them.

24 I was also [d] upright * before him, and have [e] kept myself from mine iniquity.

25 Therefore the LORD hath [f] recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness [†] in his eye-sight.

26 With [g] the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, *and* with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

27 With [h] the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with [i] the froward thou wilt [‡] shew thyself unsavoury.

28 And [k] the afflicted people thou wilt save: [l] but thine eyes *are* upon the haughty, *that* thou mayest bring *them* down.

r Gen. xxvi. 22. 1 Chr. iv. 10. Ps. xxxi. 8. cxviii. 5. Hos. iv. 16.
s xv. 26. Ps. xxii. 8. cxlvii. 11. cxlix. 4. Is. xlii. 1. Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5. xxvii. 43. Acts ii. 32—36.
t 25. 1 Sam. xxvi. 23. 1 Kings viii. 32. Ps. vii. 3, 4. 8. xviii. 20—25. xix. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 58.
u Job xvii. 9. Ps. xxiv. 4. Jam. iv. 8.
x Num. xvi. 15. 1 Sam. xii. 3. Job xxiii. 10—12. 2 Cor. i. 12.
y Gen. xviii. 19. Ps. cxix. 1—3. cxxviii. 1. Prov. viii. 32.
z Ps. xxxvi. 3. cxxv. 5. Zeph. i. 6. John xv. 10. Heb. x. 38, 39.
a Ps. cxix. 6. 86. 128. Luke i. 6. John xv. 14.
b Deut. vi. 1, 2. vii. 12. Ps. xix. 8, 9. cxix. 15. 30. 102.
c Deut. viii. 11.
d Gen. vi. 9. xvii. 1. Job i. 1. Ps. li. 6. lxxxiv. 11. John i. 47. 2 Cor. v. 11.
* Heb. *to him.*
e Prov. iv. 23. Heb. xii. 1.
f 21. Is. iii. 10. Rom. ii. 7, 8. 2 Cor. v. 10.
† Heb. *before his eyes.* Prov. v. 21.
g Matt. v. 7. Jam. ii. 13.
h Matt. v. 8
i Lev. xxvi. 23—28. Deut. xxviii. 58—61. Ps. cxxv. 5.
‡ Or, *wrestle.* Ex. xviii. 11. Ps. xviii. 26. Is. xlv. 9.
k Ex. iii. 7, 8. Ps. xii. 5. lxxii. 12, 13. cxl. 12. Is. lxi. 1—3. lxiii. 9. Matt. v. 3.
l Ex. ix. 14—17. x. 3. xviii. 11. Job xl. 11, 12. Ps. cxxxviii. 6. Prov. xxi. 4. Is. ii. 11. xxxvii. 23, 28, 29. Dan. iv. 37. Jam. iv. 6, 7. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

or securing himself "in the day of his calamity," his enemies employed every method of treachery and malice to prevent his success. Thus the men of Keilah were ready to deliver him to Saul, and the Ziphites repeatedly informed of him: (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 9—13. 19—28. xxvi. 1, 2:) and therefore, notwithstanding his own prudence and activity, he must have been cut off, if the Lord himself had not protected him, by his own immediate and extraordinary interposition.

V. 20. David had been straitened in dens and caves, as in a prison, and was afraid to go abroad in the open air: but now, through the divine goodness, he might walk at liberty, according to his own inclination. The words may also refer to the extent of his dominions, and the greatness of his prosperity, compared with his former difficulties. (*Notes*, *Ps.* xxxi. 7, 8. cxviii. 5. cxlii. *title*. 6, 7.) All this the Lord had done for him, "because he delighted in "him," as the object of his special love, and a partaker of his sanctifying grace; and as, in the general tenour of his conduct, "a man after his own heart." (*Note*, *Ps.* xxii. 7, 8.)

V. 21—28. David's character had been grievously aspersed, and many heinous things laid to his charge: but his conduct had been upright and conscientious in an uncommon degree. In all his persecutions by Saul, he would not in any way, or on any account, injure him or his party; nay he embraced every occasion to serve the cause of Israel, though rewarded by envy, treachery, and ingratitude: and in his other calamities, he was hated without a cause, and was ever ready to overcome evil with good. Under every trial he stedfastly adhered to the worship of the Lord: and from fear and love of his name, he continued to act with equity, candour, and kindness to man; unreservedly and uprightly making the commandments of God his rule, and the glory of God his aim, in the habitual course of his conduct. In these respects he could "rejoice in the testimony of his conscience;" and confidently appeal to the Searcher of all hearts: and every providential deliverance was both a gracious recompence, and a divine attestation to his innocence, from those crimes of which his enemies accused him; and a declaration that his cause was more righteous than their's.—He mentioned particularly, "That he had kept himself from his own iniquity;" from those sins, to which he was most strongly tempted; especially, he would by no means be induced to injure Saul, to which his circumstances powerfully tempted him.—He had indeed committed many sins, and some of them were very grievous; and he was conscious of manifold imperfections, (which the review of the book of Psalms will sufficiently demonstrate;) but he neither denied, excused, nor persisted in them: on the contrary, he had been deeply humbled for them; and he was in that respect also conscious of his uprightness. This profession, therefore, did not relate to David's "justification in "the sight of God;" nor was it intended as a vindication of every part of his conduct, as not needing forgiveness. (*Notes*, *Ps.* cxxx. 3, 4. cxliii. 2.) But it was the same consciousness of general integrity, which every true believer possesses, and may on some occasions avow, as an answer to unmerited reproach, consistently with the deepest humility, and the most entire dependence on the mercy and grace of God through Jesus Christ. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* i. 12—14. 1 *Thes.* ii. 9—12. 1 *John* iii. 18—24.) And the gracious recompence, of which David spoke, may be generally expected by those, who act conscientiously in the sight of God, from right motives. This accords to his method of dealing with mankind, and especially with his professed worshippers. If he sees them humble, sincere, teachable, watchful, loving, pure, and obedient in their general conduct; he will be merciful and kind to them, and will fulfil his promises, and communicate his holy consolations, to them: but if he sees them dissembling or perverse, "he "will wrestle with them." He will likewise save those who are poor in spirit, and suffer persecution for his sake; but with his wrath he will frown upon proud oppressors to bring them down. (*Marg. Ref.* k, l.)—It should be remembered, that David, in these things, was a type of Christ, to whom many of the expressions here used are applicable in the fullest sense, and to him alone.

Wilt shew thyself unsavoury. (27) תִּתַּפָּל: "wilt wrestle." (*Marg.*) The rendering in the text is as if the word were formed from תָּפֵל, *insulsum, insipidum.* But no verb is formed from that root in any other part of the Bible.—In the parallel passage, (*Ps.* xviii. 26 or 27,) the word is תִּתְפַּתָּל; (from פתל *pervertere, luctari;*) and it is generally supposed that the same is intended, though rather differently modified.

29 For thou *art* my * Lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will [m] lighten my darkness.

30 For by thee I have † run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.

31 *As for* God, [n] his way *is* perfect; [o] the word of the LORD *is* ‡ tried: he *is* [p] a Buckler to all them that trust in him.

32 For [q] who *is* God, save the LORD? and who *is* [r] a rock, save our God?

33 God *is* my [s] Strength *and* Power: and he [t] maketh [t] my way [u] perfect.

34 He [l] maketh my feet [v] like hinds' *feet;* and [x] setteth me upon my high places.

35 He [y] teacheth my hands * to war; so that [z] a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

36 Thou hast also given me [a] the shield of thy salvation: and thy [b] gentleness hath † made me great.

37 Thou hast [c] enlarged my steps under me; so that [d] my ‡ feet did not slip.

38 I have [e] pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them.

39 And I have [f] consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet.

40 For thou hast [g] girded me with strength to battle: [h] them that rose up against me hast thou [i] subdued under me.

41 Thou hast also given me the [j] necks of mine enemies, that [k] I might destroy them that hate me.

42 They looked, but *there was* none to save; *even* [l] unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

43 Then did I beat them [m] as small as the dust of the earth: I did stamp them [n] as the mire of the street, *and* [o] did spread them abroad.

44 Thou also hast [p] delivered me

43. Acts iv. 25—28. v. 30, 31.

* Or, *Candle.* Job xxix. 3. Ps. xxvii. 1. lxxxiv. 11. John viii. 12. Rev. xxi. 23.
m Ps. iv. 6. xviii. 28. xcvii. 11. cxii. 4. Is. l. 10. lx. 19, 20. Mic. vii. 9. Mal. iv. 2. John xii. 46.
† Or, *broken a troop.* Ps. xviii. 29. cxviii. 10—12. Rom. viii. 37. Phil. iv. 13.
n Deut. xxxii. 4. Dan. iv. 37. Matt. v. 48. Rev. xv. 3.
o Ps. xii. 6. xviii. 30. cxix. 140. Prov. xxx. 5.
‡ Or, *refined.*
p 3. Ps. xxxv. 2. xci. 4. Prov. ii. 7.
q Deut. xxxii. 31. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. xlii. 8. xliv. 6. 8. xlv. 5, 6. 21. Jer. x. 6, 7. 16
r 2, 3.
s Ex. xv. 2. Ps. xviii. 32. xxvii. 1. xxviii. 7, 8. xxxi. 4. xlvi. 1. Is. xii. 10. Zech. x. 12. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Eph. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13.
† Heb. *riddeth* or *looseth.*
t Heb. xiii. 21.
u Deut. xviii. 13. Job xxii. 3. Ps. ci. 2. 6. cxix. 1.
l Heb. *equalleth to.* v ii. 18. Deut. xxxiii. 25. Hab. iii. 19. x Deut. xxxii. 13. Is. xxxiii. 16. lviii. 14. y Ps. xviii. 33, 34. cxliv. 1. * Heb. *for the war.* z Ps. xlvi. 9. Ez. xxxix. 3. 9, 10. a Gen. xv. 1. Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Eph. vi. 16. b Ps. xviii. 35. † Heb. *multiplied me.* Gen. xii. 2. xxii. 17. Ps. cxv. 14.
c Ps. iv. 1. xviii. 36. Prov. iv. 12.
d 1 Sam. ii 9. Ps. xvii. 5. xciv. 18. cxix. 117. cxxi. 3.
‡ Heb. *ankles.*
e v. 18—25. viii. 1, 2. 13, 14. x. 14. Ps. xxi. 8. 9. Rom. viii. 37.
f Ps. xviii. 37, 38. cx. 1. 5, 6. cxviii. 10—12. Mal. iv. 1. 3.
g 1 Sam. xvii. 49—51. xxiii. 5. Ps. xviii. 32. 39. Is. xlv. 5. Col. i. 11.
h Ps. xliv. 5. cxliv. 2.
i Heb. *caused to bow.* Is. lx. 14. Rev. iii. 9.
j Gen. xlix. 8. Ex. xxiii. 27. Josh. x. 24. Ps. xviii. 40, 41.
k Ps. xxi. 8, 9. Luke xix. 14. 27. 2 Thes. i. 8, 9.
l 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. Job xxvii. 9. Prov. i. 28. Is. i. 15. Ez. xx. 3. Mic. iii. 4. Matt. vii. 22, 23. Luke xiii. 25, 26.
m 2 Kings xiii. 7. Ps. xviii. 42. xxxv. 5. Dan. ii. 35. Mal. iv. 3.
n Ps. xviii. 42. Is. x. 6. Mic. vii. 10. Zech. x. 5.
o Deut. xxxii. 26. Is. xxvi. 15. Zech. ii. 6. Luke xxi. 24.
p iii. 1. v. 1. xviii. 6—8. xix. 9. 14. xx. 1, 2. 22. Ps. ii. 1—6. xviii.

Indeed the translation in this place gives no intelligible meaning.—Μὴ ῥᾳδιὰ ῥᾳδιωθήσῃ. *Sept.*

V. 29, 30. David's way had been intricate, dangerous, and gloomy; but the presence and favour of the Lord was a Lamp unto him, marking out his path, and cheering him as he walked in it. (*Notes, Ps.* xxvii. 1—3. lxxxiv. 11, 12. *John* viii. 12.) By his help also he had singly broken through whole armies of his enemies, and leaped over every wall which obstructed his escape or success. (*Notes, Ps.* xviii. 28, 29.) Many of the verbs, in different parts of the Psalm, are future in the original: probably, as expressing David's previous believing expectations, to which the subsequent events corresponded; and thus turned the language of hope into that of thanksgiving.

V. 31—33. From experience the Psalmist could testify, that the word of God was in every case a sufficient security: as all the methods of providence and grace towards him had been ordered in perfect wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. None else could be in any degree depended on, for JEHOVAH is God alone. (*Notes, 2, 3. Deut.* xxxii. 4.) They who trusted and served him were perfectly safe: and whatever stedfastness and integrity David had before spoken of, as marked in his own conduct, all the glory belonged unto God, by whose strength he had been upheld and preserved from falling.

V. 34, 35. As hinds climb the craggy rocks, and stand firm upon the slippery summit of the precipice; so David had been upheld in the most dangerous and slippery paths, and advanced to his present exalted station, by the providence and grace of God: (*Notes, Deut.* xxxiii. 24, 25. *Hab.* iii. 17—19:) and his extraordinary skill and strength in war must be ascribed to the same cause.—The word (נְחוּשָׁה) rendered *steel,* generally signifies *copper,* or *brass,* of which the ancients frequently made arms: though bows, requiring elasticity, could not well be made of it.

V. 36. *Gentleness,* &c.] The rebukes, corrections, and instructions, which the Lord intermixed with his merciful forgiveness, encouragements, and deliverances, like the gentle tuition of a kind parent, tended to prepare David for prosperity and authority, and to advance him to them.

V. 37—42. The meaning of these verses, as applied to David, wants no other explanation than the preceding history, implying his believing anticipations, fully verified by the event. But they are peculiarly descriptive of the Redeemer's conflicts and victories, and especially of the inevitable destruction which came upon the Jews, and the disgraceful dispersion of the degraded remnant of that nation, for crucifying the Lord of glory, and rejecting the gospel. They cried and still cry to the Lord to save them; but refusing to obey his beloved Son, he vouchsafes them no answer.—Thus David's enemies, in their extreme distress, are represented as crying to the Lord for deliverance from impending ruin; but, as they did it not in repentance, faith, and integrity, it was in vain. Thus Saul enquired of the Lord, and he answered him not. (*Notes, 1 Sam.* xxviii. 6. *1 Chr.* x. 13, 14.)

V. 43—51. This conclusion may be explained of David's victories over his rebellious countrymen, and the surrounding nations; and of the desolations made among them. These he might consider as the earnest of still more decisive advantages; till the spirits of all his adversaries should fail, and their strength decay: and the strongest of them should tremble even in their fastnesses and fortified cities, and surrender themselves to him to be his ser-

from the strivings of my people, thou hast kept me *to be* [q] Head of the heathen: [r] a people *which* I knew not shall serve me.

45 [*] Strangers shall [†] submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.

46 Strangers shall [‡] fade away, and they shall be afraid [t] out of their close places.

47 The [u] LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my Rock; and exalted be the God of [x] the rock of my salvation.

48 It *is* God that [‡] avengeth me, and [y] that bringeth down the people under me,

49 And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: [z] thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from [a] the violent man.

50 Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, [b] among the heathen, and [c] I will sing praises unto thy name.

51 *He is* [d] the Tower of salvation for his king; and sheweth mercy to [e] his anointed, unto David, and to his [f] Seed for evermore.

[q] vii. 1—14. Deut. xxviii. 13. Ps. ii. 8. lx. 8, 9. lxxii. 8, 9. cx. 6. Is. lx. 12. Dan. vii. 14. Rom. xv. 12. Rev. xi. 15.
[r] Is. lv. 5. lxv. 1. Hos. ii. 23. Rom. ix. 25, 26.
[*] Heb. *Sons of the stranger.* Is. lvi. 3, 6.
[†] Or, *yield feigned obedience.* Heb. *lie.* Deut. xxxiii. 29. Ps. xviii. 44, 45. lxvi. 3. lxxxi. 15. Acts viii. 13. 21—23.
[‡] Ps. i. 3. Is. lxiv. 6. Jam. i. 11.
[t] Is. ii. 19. 21. Am. ix. 3. Mic. vii. 17.
[u] Deut. xxxii. 39, 40. Joa. xix. 28.
[x] Ps. xviii. 46. lxxxix. 26. xcv. 1. Luke i. 47.
[‡] Heb. *giveth avengement for me.* xviii. 19. 31. 1 Sam. xxv. 39. Ps. xviii. 47. xxxv. 1. xciv. 1.
[y] Ps. cx. 1. cxliv 2. 1 Cor. xv. 25.
[z] v. 12. vii. 8, 9. Num. xxiv. 7. 17—19. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. xviii. 48.
[a] Ps. cxl. 1.
[b] Rom. xv. 9.
[c] Ps. xviii. 49. ciii. 1. cxxxviii. 1. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 1, 2. Is. xii. 1—6.
[d] 2. Ps. iii. 3. xxi. 1. xlviii. 3. lxxxix. 26. xci. 2. cxliv. 10.
[e] Ps. xviii. 50. lxxxix. 20. Acts iv. 27.
[f] vii. 12, 13. Ps. xviii. 50. lxxxix. 29. Jer. xxx. 9. Luke i. 31—33. Rev. xi. 15.

vants upon the first summons. (*Marg. Ref.*)—But here the Spirit of inspiration seems especially to have carried his mind forward to the glorious kingdom of the Redeemer, the destruction of all his enemies, and the prevalency of his cause on earth. And while he concluded with the high praises of God, and exulting joy in him; he looked forward to his posterity, and rejoiced in the prospect of the blessings reserved for them, not only as kings of Judah for many successive generations; but also in Christ, the anointed King of the church and of the world for evermore, yea, even for ever and ever. (*Note, Ps.* xviii. 49.)

Submit themselves. (45) Or, *yield feigned obedience.* Heb. *lie.* (*Marg.*) May not this expression, which occurs in many Psalms prophetical of the Messiah's kingdom, be considered as a prediction of that influx of hypocrites into the church, especially in and after the days of Constantine, in consequence of the astonishing external displays of the Redeemer's power, in the first ages? From this time formal Christians, who *lie* in their profession, have been exceedingly multiplied. (*Note, Ps.* lxvi. 1—3.)—*The God of the Rock of my salvation.* (47) This remarkable expression may well call to mind, what may be considered as 'the style of the New Testament,' "The God and Father "of our Lord Jesus Christ." (*Note, 2 Cor.* i. 1—7. *v.* 3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20.

When we have received mercies from God, we ought, without delay, to render him our tribute of praise and gratitude; every recent favour should be acknowledged with thankful remembrance of former deliverances; and signal interpositions of the Lord in our behalf ought to be publickly celebrated, with the best endowments which we possess.—They who know the Lord in his glorious perfections, and the various relations in which he stands to his rational creatures, and especially as "a God of salvation;" and who thus learn to fear, trust, love, and serve him, choosing him as their Portion, and waiting for his mercy unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ, and according to the covenant which he mediated, may expect from him every conceivable blessing. Nay, words can never express, nor the creation itself afford objects sufficient to represent, all that the Lord is and will be unto them, through time and to eternity. The more they expect and ask from him in humble faith, the larger blessings shall they receive; while past experiences will encourage and dictate further supplications. But while this felicity belongs to all true believers; yet frequently both the events of Providence, and their inward experience, seem to indicate the contrary. They are assailed by powerful enemies, and exposed to manifold troubles and dangers, from without; they are often disquieted by distressing fears and terrors of conscience, from within; while Satan pours in his horrible suggestions to aggravate their distress, and to urge them to despair. Thus they feel, as it were, the very "pains of "hell," and are so bound in the snares of death, that they are ready to give up their lives and souls for lost. But in their extreme distress they cry unto the Lord with the greatest earnestness, and he supports them, and appears for their relief: so that all their sorrows and fears shall terminate in the more conspicuous display of the glory of God's perfections, and in the evidence of his special love to them; all shall exercise and increase their grace, prepare the way for future comforts, and become the subject of triumphant praise and thanksgiving; and however painful their feelings are at present, the retrospect shall hereafter be delightful.—When therefore temptations and tribulations abound, and our prayers are mingled with groans and fears, with dismay and anguish of spirit; let us not despond, but be of good courage: for we shall certainly bless God for them ere long, as many before us have done for similar or severer trials. Without a renewal of the miraculous displays, with which Israel of old was favoured, the true believer, comparing his dangers, fears, prayers, and deliverances, may be as firmly assured, that the Lord has wrought for him, as that he wrought for that favoured people: and that he has not only made his angels, and other creatures, the ministers of good to him; but that his own hand has effected the surprising change which he has experienced, in his condition, character, hopes, and prospects.—Nor are the judgments of God less terrible now on the enemies of his people, than they were, when the earth swallowed them up, the depths of the sea overwhelmed them, or the fire of the Lord consumed them: though they are less noticed, because more spiritual, and chiefly executed in the eternal world. For still the whole creation fights against his enemies, yea, his own almighty arm is

CHAP. XXIII.

David's last words, 1—7. The names and exploits of his chief warriors, 8—39.

[a] Gen. xlix. 1, 2 Deut. xxxiii. 1, &c. Josh. xxiii, xxiv. Ps. lxxii. 20. 2 Pet. i. 13—15.

NOW these *be* [a] the last words of David: David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who was* [b] raised up on high, [c] the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the [d] sweet Psalmist of Israel, said,

2 The [e] Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue.

[b] v. 1—3 vii. 8, 9. Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71. lxxxix. 27.
[c] 1 Sam. ii. 10. xvi. 12, 13. Ps. ii. 6. lxxxix. 20.
[d] 1 Chr. xvi. 4, 5, 7. 9. Am. vi. 5. Luke xx. 42. Eph. v. 19, 20. Col. iii. 16. Jam. v. 13. iii. 7, 8. 2 Pet. i. 21.
[e] Matt. xxii. 43. Mark xii. 36. Acts ii. 25—31. Heb.

lifted up to destroy *them*, as well as to deliver those who trust in him.

V. 21—33.

Under reproaches and persecutions, the testimony of our conscience, to our integrity and sincerity in our religious profession, "not of fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of "God," will prove a singular support: and it perfectly consists with the deepest humility and the most simple dependence upon the Saviour. Nor can we without it expect the witness of the comforting Spirit of God. We should therefore "exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of "offence towards God and man:" and, earnestly seeking supporting and sanctifying grace, we should steadily persevere in the path of duty, rejecting every temptation to seek relief by forsaking it.—We must keep *all* God's statutes and judgments before our eyes, without one exception, that we may regulate our conduct and conversation by them; and we must watch and pray especially against those sins which, by constitution, custom, or circumstances, may be called "our own iniquity." If this be our aim and practice, the Lord will plead our cause, and clear up our characters in due season. For he will deal with us, according as we walk before him in humility and sincerity, or the contrary; both with respect to the dispensations of his providence, and the consolations of his Spirit.—In the darkest seasons the Lord will guide and comfort those who trust in and follow him: and of the very many millions, who have tried his word, none ever complained that he was unfaithful; but all have been so assisted, that they have at length wondered at what the Lord had enabled them to do, as well as what he had done for them. Without him all other helpers are vain; and with him they are needless, except as he pleases to work by them as his instruments of good to us.

V. 34—51.

All our talents and abilities are from God, and all our improvement of them: whatever services we have performed, or however consistent our walk has been, the will and the power have been from him: "He is our "Strength, who maketh our way perfect." Ability and success in our spiritual warfare, liberty from sin and Satan, enlargement of heart in the service of our God, and preservation in the slippery paths of this ensnaring world, are causes for thankfulness, and not for glorying in ourselves. His gentle rebukes and corrections tend to real advancement, as much as our comforts and prosperity do. (*Note, Heb.* xii. 9—11.) Armed with the shield of salvation and "the sword of the Spirit," the Christian soldier, being "strong in the LORD," will pursue his victories, till he has trodden upon the necks of all his enemies, and received the conqueror's crown. (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 35—39. *Eph.* vi. 10—17.) For "the LORD liveth," as the God of strength and salvation, and will never leave us nor forsake us, till he has brought us forth from all our enemies, and lifted us up on high, above all that rose up against us. In the prospect of that complete salvation, let us joyfully praise him on the field of battle, surrounded with our enemies, and in the midst of our conflicts: and ere long we shall adore him, and sing praises to his name in more exalted strains, surrounded with millions of the redeemed, and innumerable multitudes of holy angels, who will triumph in our victories, and rejoice in our felicity.—But we may here likewise meditate upon the Redeemer's sufferings, and the glory which was to follow, and which has followed, and shall still far more be displayed: for our sins he was encompassed with the waves of death, the floods of ungodly men, and the very sorrows of hell, in the garden and on the cross. In his distress he called upon the Lord, and was heard, and raised from the dead, and exalted to the throne of glory: while his death was attended by the most stupendous displays of the divine indignation, against those who perpetrated that most atrocious crime. In him the Father delighted: his righteousness was perfect, yea, divine: he was justified from the blasphemies of his enemies by his resurrection and ascension. All power in heaven and earth are in his hands: all enemies shall be put under his feet, and he will destroy all who hate him. He has been "delivered from the striv-"ings of the people, and made the Head of the heathen:" he continually receives the submissions of those who hear of him, and willingly obey him; while many who have no love for him, profess submission to him from fear of his power: but all opposition shall at length melt away before him, and all nations shall do him service. For he is the anointed King, whom the Father has exalted, and his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him: (*Dan.* vii. 27. *Note, Rev.* xi. 15—18.) May we then accept of his salvation, and submit to his authority; may we now follow him bearing our cross; that, when he shall appear to judgment, we also may "receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. Many things, after this, are recorded concerning the words and actions of David; so that it is not agreed in what sense these were his "last "words." Some suppose them to have been the *last words* which he spoke by inspiration, and, as it were, an appendix to the Psalms which he composed: but perhaps he repeated them in his dying moments, as the expression of his faith and hope, and the source of his consolation. (*Notes, Ps.* lxxii. 17—20.)—The last words of eminent persons have often been much attended to, and long remembered: and these of David were peculiarly worthy of consideration, as they shewed that this venerable servant of God, when dying, was more than ever assured of the reality and excellency of true religion; decided in his judgment concerning it, and his choice of its blessings; and animated with humble gratitude, and joyful expectation o.

3 The [f] God of Israel said, [g] the Rock of Israel spake to me, [*] He that ruleth over men [h] *must be* just, [i] ruling in the fear of God.

4 And *he shall be* [k] as the light of [l] the morning, *when* the sun riseth, *even* a morning without clouds; *as* [m] the tender grass *springing* out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

5 Although [n] my house *be* not so with God; yet [o] he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, [p] and sure: for *this is* [q] all my salvation, and all *my* [r] desire, although he make *it* not to [s] grow.

f Gen. xxxiii. 20. Ex. iii. 15. xix. 5, 6. xx. 2.
g See on xxii. 2. 32. Deut. xxxii. 4. 30, 31. Ps. xlii. 9.
* Or, *Be thou ruler over men, &c.* Ps. cx. 2.
h Ex. xxiii. 6—8 Deut. xvi. 18—20. Ps. lxxxii. 3, 4. Is. xi. 4, 5. xxxii. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5. Zech. ix. 9. Heb. i. 8. i Ex. xviii. 21. 2 Chr. xix. 7—9. Neh. v. 15. k Judg. v. 31. Ps. lxxxix. 36. cx. 3. Prov. iv. 18. Is. lx. 1. 3. 18—20. Hos. vi. 5. Mal. iv. 2. Luke i. 78, 79. John i. 7. l Hos. vi. 3. m Deut. xxxii. 2. Ps. lxxii. 6. Is. iv. 2. Mic. v. 7.
n vii. 18, 19. xii. 10. xiii. 14, 15. 28. xviii. 14, 15. 1 Kings i. 5, 6. ii. 24, 25. xi. 6—8. xii. 14, 15. vii. 15, 16. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14. Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4. 28, 29. Is. ix. 6, 7. lv. 3. lxi. 8. Jer. xxxii. 40. xxxiii. 25, 26. Ez. xxxvii. 26. Heb. xiii. 20.
o 1 Sam. ii. 35. xxv. 28. 1 Kings xi. 38. Acts xiii. 34. Heb. vi. 19. p Ps. xxvii. 4. lxiii. 1—3. lxxiii. 25, 26. 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. q Ps. lxii. 2. cxix. 81. s Is. v. 2. vii. 14. ix. 6, 7. xi. 1. xxvii. 6. Am. ix. 11.

his approaching felicity.—In the introduction, he mentioned his lowly birth, obscure station, and unexpected exaltation, with thankfulness. God had raised him to a throne, and made him very successful and prosperous: but the most valuable circumstance of his advancement was, that he was the *anointed* of God, to rule over his own people Jacob, and to be the type of the Messiah. Nor was he less thankful for being made "the sweet Psalmist of "Israel;" for being employed and enabled to compose hymns of praise and sacred poems, for the use of his people, and of the church of God, in all future ages; and to set them to musick, and provide for the publick performance of this delightful part of God's worship. And no wonder that the work was done in so complete a manner; "for "the Spirit of the LORD spake by him, and his word was "in his tongue." This he declared with his dying lips, that Israel, and that we through successive generations, might learn how to estimate that part of holy Scripture; not so much as the words of David, as of the holy Spirit, which spake by him. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Mark* xii. 35—37.)

V. 3, 4. "The Spirit of the LORD spake," *by* David, yea, "the God of Israel spake *to him;*" and he recorded his words with his own meditations on them.—These verses, explained of David, taught the duties incumbent on him, as king of Israel; how he ought to instruct his son and successor Solomon; and the general character of good and pious magistrates, who are blessings to the people.—"He that ruleth over men" should treat them as reasonable creatures of the same nature with himself: and therefore he "must be just;" oppressing and injuring none, and by an equal administration of justice, restraining them from defrauding or doing wrong to one another; and by his example and influence promoting general equity: "ruling in the fear of God," as accountable to him for the authority deputed to him, and the use which he makes of it, and teaching others to fear God. Rulers of this character may reasonably expect that the Lord will prosper them, and afford them blessings and comforts, like the exhilarating light of the unclouded morning-sun: while their salutary regulations, discountenancing every species of evil, and protecting and advancing every good thing, diffuse the most important advantages, temporal and spiritual, around them; as the rising sun dispels the fogs and damps, and brightens and cheers the face of nature; or as his clear shining, after refreshing showers, rapidly promotes vegetation, and renders the earth luxuriantly fruitful. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Many expositors, however, interpret the words almost exclusively of Christ; the anointed King of Israel, and the Ruler over the sons of Adam in general. He is indeed just and righteous: he is the *Righteousness* and *Sanctification* of his subjects; and both requires and teaches, inclines and enables, them to fear God, and work righteousness. His light, and grace, and consolations, render them fruitful and happy; and the blessings of his kingdom are inexpressible, and shall be eternal. (*Notes, Ps.* xlv. 6, 7. lxxii. 1—14. *Is.* xi. 1—9. xxxii. 1—8. *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. *Zech.* ix. 9, 10. *Tit.* ii. 11, 12. *Heb.* vii. 1—3. *Rev.* xix. 11—16.)

V. 5. This verse is supposed to be peculiarly difficult, and is variously interpreted, generally as relating to the covenant made with David concerning the kingdom.—But, he seems here to have turned his reflections from the kingdom of his posterity, and especially that of the Messiah, to his own personal concerns, and those of his family and immediate descendants; and he could not but regret, that "his house was not so with God," as the preceding statement implied. By his own misconduct, as well as that of others concerned, his family was much less religious and prosperous, than it might have been expected; and both he and Israel had suffered many things in consequence. Several grievous and scandalous events had occurred: matters were not yet as he could wish; and he seems to have had his fears concerning his descendants who should succeed him in the kingdom. Perhaps, by prophetical monition, he foresaw, that they would neither be happy themselves, nor blessings to Israel, nor instruments of glorifying God, in that measure which he desired, and had hoped. He however comforted himself, that "the LORD "had made with him an everlasting covenant." God had indeed covenanted to David that his family should succeed him in the kingdom; (*Notes*, vii. 8—16. *Ps.* lxxxix. 19—37;) yet this was not "all his salvation and "all his desire:" and it could give him comparatively but little consolation in his dying moments, (for these are part of his last words,) except as it referred to the promised Seed, who was to descend from him. By "the everlasting "covenant" therefore, David no doubt principally intended the covenant of mercy and peace, which the Lord had made with him, as one who believed in the promised Saviour, and had yielded up himself to be his redeemed servant, and had been made partaker of his sanctifying grace as the seal and pledge of it. (*Notes, Is.* lv. 1—3. *Jer.* xxxii. 39—41. *Ez.* xxxvii. 25, 26. *Heb.* xiii. 20, 21.) This covenant was "from everlasting" in the purposes of God, and shall be "to everlasting" in the blessed effects of it. From age to age sinners, when they accede to it by true faith, are admitted to share its benefits, which believers shall for ever enjoy; and God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, shall for ever be glorified through it, in their salvation. It is made with the Surety, in behalf of those for whom he engaged; all the blessings of it

t xx. 1. Deut. xiii. 13. 1 Sam. ii. 12.
u Gen. iii. 18. Cant. ii. 2. Is. xxxiii. 12. Ez. ii. 6.
* Heb. *filled.*
x xxii. 8—10. Is. xxvii. 4. Matt. iii. 10—12. xiii. 42. Luke xix. 14. 27. John xv. 6. 2 Thes. i. 8. ii. 8. Heb. vi. 8.

6 But t *the sons* of Belial *shall be* all of them as u thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:
7 But the man *that* shall touch them must be * fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and x they shall be utterly burned with fire in the *same* place.

8 ¶ These *be* the names of the mighty men whom David had: † The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same *was* Adino the Eznite; *he lift up his spear* against eight hundred, ‡ whom he slew at one time.

† Or, *Josheb-basebet, the Tachmonite, head of the three.* 1 Chr. xi. 11, 12. xxvii. 32.
‡ Heb. *slain.*

were obtained and secured by his atoning blood, and are freely bestowed upon all who believe in his name; and it secures to them pardon, righteousness, grace, and "eternal "life, as the gift of God through Jesus Christ." It is "ordered in all things:" for in the Person, undertaking, and mediation of the Saviour, effectual provision is made for the manifestation of the holiness, the satisfaction of the justice, and the honour of the law of God, and the discovery of the evil and desert of sin. While his mercy abounds in the forgiveness and salvation of the chief of sinners; there is an infinite fulness of grace, and of all blessings, treasured up in Christ, for the supply of those who seek for this salvation; a way opened to the mercy-seat of God, in which they may come in humble confidence; ordinances appointed, through which these blessings are communicated; invitations to draw near, and "exceedingly "great and precious promises" to plead with God. All those things, which in one respect are commanded, in another are promised; and while we pray for the performance of the promise, we are enabled to obey the command, to repent, to forsake sin, to turn unto God, and to walk in newness of life. This covenant is also "sure" or preserved (שְׁמֻרָה). It is preserved by the continual intercession of Christ, and the promises, and securities grounded on it. (*Notes, Luke* xxii. 31—34. *Rom.* v. 7—10. viii. 32—34. *Col.* iii. 1—4. 1 *Pet.* i. 3—5. 2 *Pet.* i. 10, 11. *Jude* 1, 2.)—Provision is made for the recovery of those, who have walked inconsistently with it, in the most disgraceful manner: and yet not the least encouragement is given to commit sin, but the most effectual methods are used to deter men from it, and constrain them to all holy obedience. (*Note,* 1 *John* ii. 1—3.) So that it is "ordered in "all things," in such a manner, that no believer can want wisdom, grace, or strength sufficient for him, whatever his conflicts, temptations, or difficulties may be: and he shall either persevere in a uniform course of holy obedience, or be brought to deep and evident repentance of his misconduct, and shall infallibly at length inherit eternal life.—This covenant was "all David's salvation;" for he was so well acquainted with the holy character and law of God, the evil of sin, and his own sinfulness in every thing, that he knew he could not escape condemnation, according to the covenant of works: and he perceived that all things suited to his case, and sufficient for his salvation, were engaged for by it to every believer; and that it was framed in perfect wisdom, so as to honour God, to humble and encourage the sinner, to inspire love and gratitude, to bring him to a holy and happy disposition of mind, and to prepare him for that state of complete felicity, in which all the powers of the human soul shall be eternally satisfied. It was also "all his desire," or *delight,* as the word is generally rendered: in comparison with it, all earthly objects lost their attractions; he was willing to renounce them, as far as required, for the sake of the blessings of the covenant; his comfort while he possessed them, was derived from it, not from them; and he was willing to die and leave all else, that he might enjoy its full felicity. This he was conscious of: and yet he complained, that matters were not with his soul, any more than with his house, as he could wish; for this seems the meaning of the words, "although he make it not to grow." The grace of the covenant he had received, but it had not been made to increase and flourish, in that measure which he desired. Still the prevalence of sinful propensities, and the weakness of his faith, hope, and love, were his grief and burden. The Lord had not "made them to grow." David did not mean to impeach the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, who had good reasons for what he withheld, as well as for what he gave; and doubtless David would have allowed that his own inattention and negligence were the criminal cause, why his grace had not more been made to grow. But the hope, that it would ere long be perfected in glory, animated and encouraged him in his dying moments.—Referring this also to the Redeemer, it may be observed, that the kingdom of David's family was not so with God in any other period, as under him: and foreseen by faith, he, as the Surety of the everlasting covenant, was all David's Salvation and Desire; though his coming was distant, and though his cause of truth and righteousness did not prosper in Israel, nor even in the prophet's own heart, as he most earnestly desired that it might. (*Notes, Deut.* xxix. 4. 1 *Cor.* iii. 4—9.)

V. 6, 7. Those who opposed the authority of David, and afterwards of his descendants, were generally worthless and troublesome characters, and would be certainly rejected and destroyed, as useless thorns are cast into the fire. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xii. 16.) And those sons of Belial, who will not bear the yoke of Christ, or "have him to reign "over them," are injurious to his people; but they bring upon themselves certain destruction. They cannot indeed be "taken with hands," or dealt with by those who are unarmed and unprotected. But in every government, there must be persons, who possess power to apprehend, confine, and punish the disobedient and rebellious; in the same manner, as a man fenced, *or completely armed,* (*marg.*) "with iron and the staff of a spear," can thrust the thorns into the fire: and so Christ is able to destroy out of his kingdom all his enemies, and will "make them as a fiery "oven in the day of his wrath;" for he can deal with those who, to all others, are utterly unmanageable. (*Notes, Ps.* xxi. 8—12. *Nah.* i. 9, 10.) As the willing subjects of David prospered, but his opposers were crushed; so shall it be with those who submit to the authority of the Redeemer, and those who reject him. (*Notes, Matt.* iii. 11, 12. xiii. 36—43. 2 *Thes.* i. 5—10.)

V. 8. Under Joab, the chief captain, the persons mentioned in this chapter, were the principal officers in David's army: and as only thirty-six are named, Joab must be

9 And after him *was* [y] Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, *one* of the three mighty men with David, when they [z] defied the Philistines *that* were there gathered together to battle, and [a] the men of Israel were gone away.

10 He arose and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and [b] the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and [c] the people returned after him only to spoil.

11 And after him *was* [d] Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And [e] the Philistines were gathered together [*] into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles; and the people fled from the Philistines.

12 But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and [f] the LORD wrought a great victory.

13 And [†] three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest-time, unto [g] the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in [h] the valley of Rephaim.

14 And David *was* then in [i] an hold, and the [k] garrison of the Philistines, *was* then in Beth-lehem.

15 And David [l] longed, and said, Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which *is* by the gate!

16 And [m] the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but [n] poured it out unto the LORD.

17 And he said, [o] Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: *is not this* [p] the blood of the men that went in [q] jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

18 And [r] Abishai, the brother of

y 1 Chr. xi. 12—14. xxvii. 4. *Dodai.*
z Num. xxiii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xvii. 10. 26. 36. 45, 46.
a Is. lxiii. 3. 5. Mark xiv. 50.
b Josh. x. 10. 42. xi. 8. Judg. xv. 14. 18. 1 Sam. xi. 13. xiv. 6. 23. xix. 5. 2 Kings v. 1. Ps. cviii. 13. cxliv. 10 Rom. xv. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 5. Eph. vi. 10—18.
c Ps. lxviii. 12. Is. liii. 12.
d 1 Chr. xi. 27. *Shammoth the Harorite.*
e 1 Chr. xi. 13, 14.
* Or, *for foraging.*
f *See* on b. 10.—Ps. iii. 8. xliv. 2. Prov. xxi. 31.
† Or, *the three captains over the thirty.* 1 Chr. xi. 15—19.
g Josh. xii. 15. xv. 35. 1 Sam. xxii. 1. Mic. i. 15.
h v. 18. 22. 1 Chr. xi. 15. xiv. 9. Is. xvii. 5.
i 1 Sam. xxii. 4, 5. xxiv. 22. 1 Chr. xii. 16.
k 1 Sam. x. 5. xiii. 4. 23. xiv. 1. 6.
l Num. xi. 4, 5. Ps. xlii. 1, 2. lxiii. 1. cxix. 81. Is. xii. 17, 18. xliv. 3. John iv. 10. 14. vii. 37, 38.
m 2 Sam. xix. 5. Acts xx. 24. Rom. v. 7. 2 Cor. v. 14.
n Num. xxviii. 7. 1 Sam. vii. 6. Lam. ii. 19. Phil. ii. 17. *marg.*
o xx. 20. Gen. xliv. 17. 1 Sam. ii. 30. xxvi. 11. 1 Kings xxi. 3. 1 Chr. xi. 19.
p Gen. ix. 4. Ps. lxxii. 14. Matt. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. John vi. 52—54.
q Judg. v. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 30.
r ii. 18. iii. 30. x. 10. 14. xviii. 2. xx. 10. 1 Sam. xxvi. 6—8. 1 Chr. ii. 16. xi. 20, 21.

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added to complete the number thirty-seven (39). There were two triumvirates; and under them thirty officers, who commanded subdivisions of the troops. Of several of them, and of their exploits, we read nothing elsewhere: so that David's reign and actions were far more splendid, than they appear in the history.—Adino the *Tachmonite*, is called Jashobeam the *Hachmonite*. (1 *Chr.* xi. 11.) It is supposed that he had his title from his *wisdom*, and that he ordinarily presided in councils of war. (חַכְמֹנִי, from חָכַם *wise*.)—It is here said that he slew eight hundred men, in Chronicles only three hundred are mentioned: perhaps three hundred were left dead on the spot, and the rest died afterwards; or two different actions are meant, or some trivial mistake has been made. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9, 10. (*Marg. Ref.*) When the most of David's army had retired or fled, for fear of the Philistines; he and three of his officers defied them, as Goliath had done the army of Saul: and Eleazar greatly distinguished himself on the occasion; fighting till his hand was weary and clave to his sword. Thus "the LORD wrought a great "victory that day," principally by him: and when the people that had fled saw what was done, they rallied again, and shared the spoil of their vanquished enemies.—The divine interposition seems to have been miraculous, in answer to the expectation of faith; as in the case of Jonathan and his armour-bearer. (*Notes, Josh.* x. 9, 10. 1 *Sam.* xiv. 6—10. 45, 46.)

V. 11, 12. In Chronicles this victory seems ascribed to Eleazar, who perhaps was the chief commander, though Shammah most distinguished himself.—The field also is said to have been "full of barley:" perhaps part of it was sown with lentiles, and part with barley. (1 *Chr.* xi. 12—14.)—The annexed titles seem to have been generally derived from the place of the birth, or abode, of the persons spoken of. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13—17. It is probable, that during the harvest, the Philistines invaded the land of Israel; in order to carry off or destroy the crop, and that David and his men opposed them: and the three captains, of the thirty afterwards mentioned, having come to him in the cave of Adullam, (probably when persecuted by Saul,) assisted him. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 1, 2. *Ps.* cxlii. *title.*) A garrison also of Philistines, at the same time, occupied the outer gate of Bethlehem the city of David.—Some expositors think that David, by wishing for the water of the well of Beth-lehem, meant to stir up his whole band to attempt dispossessing the garrison, and not that his officers alone should attack them. It is more probable, however, that being very thirsty in hot weather, he eagerly desired, and inconsiderately wished, to quench his thirst at that well, the water being remarkably good: and that these brave men, to express their peculiar attachment to him, broke, sword in hand, through the Philistines, and returned to him with some of the water. David however was, on recollection, ashamed of his inordinate desire and rash wish; and, being unwilling to encourage such desperate attempts, he refused to drink of it, but poured it out as a drink-offering unto the Lord. For as it had been procured at the hazard of the lives of these brave officers, he would no more drink of it, than he would drink their blood: "Far be it from me," said he, or "My God forbid it me." (*Notes, Ps.* lxxii. 14. cxvi. 15.)—"Beth-lehem" signifies *the house of bread;* and the place was likewise noted for excellent water. There Christ was born, who is the Bread of Life, and who also gives us the Water of Life. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18—24. (*Marg. Ref.*) We are not told on what

Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, * *and* slew *them*, and had the name among three.

19 Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit [s] he attained not unto the *first* three.

20 And [t] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of [u] Kabzeel, [†] who had done many acts, he slew two [‡] lion-like men of Moab: he went down also and [x] slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow;

21 And he slew an Egyptian, [§] a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and [y] slew him with his own spear.

22 These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men.

23 He was [‖] more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the *first* three. And David set him * over his guard.

24 [z] Asahel the brother of Joab *was* one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,

25 [a] Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite,

26 Helez the [b] Paltite, [c] Ira the son of Ikkesh the [d] Tekoite,

27 [e] Abiezer the Anethothite, [f] Mebunnai the Hushathite,

28 Zalmon the Ahohite, [g] Maharai the Netophathite,

29 [h] Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, [i] Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin,

30 [k] Benaiah the [l] Pirathonite, [m] Hiddai of the [†] brooks of Gaash,

31 [n] Abi-albon the Arbatnite, Azmaveth the [o] Barhumite,

32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite, of the sons of [p] Jashen, Jonathan,

33 [q] Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of [r] Sharar the Hararite,

34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, [s] Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

35 [t] Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,

36 [u] Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,

37 [x] Zelek the Ammonite, [y] Naharai the Beerothite, armour-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah,

38 [z] Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite,

39 [a] Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.

s 9. 13. 15. 1 Chr. xi. 25. Matt. xiii. 8. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 41.
t viii. 18. xx. 23. 1 Kings i. 8. 26. 38. ii. 29—35. 46. 1 Chr. xviii. 17. xxvii. 5, 6.
u Josh. xv. 21.
† Heb. *great of acts.*
‡ Heb. *lions of God.* i. 23. 1 Chr. xi. 22—24. xii. 8.
x Judg. xiv. 5, 6. 1 Sam. xvii. 34—37.
§ Heb. *a man of countenance, or sight,* called, 1 Chr. xi. 23, *a man of great stature.*
y 1 Sam. xvii. 51. Col. ii. 15.
‖ Or, *honourable among the thirty.* 1 Chr. xxvii. 6.
* Or, *over his council.* Heb. *at his command.* xx. 23. 1 Sam. xxii. 14.
z ii. 18. 1 Chr. xi. 26. xxvii. 7.
a 1 Chr. xi. 27, 28. *Shammoth. Harorite.*
b 1 Chr. xi. 27. xxvii. 10. *Pelonite.*
c 1 Chr. xi. 28. xxvii. 9.
d *See on* xiv. 2
e 1 Chr. xi. 28. *Antothite.* xxvii. 12. *Anetothite.*
f 1 Chr. xi. 29. *Sibbecai.*
g 1 Chr. xi. 30. xxvii. 13.
h 1 Chr. xi. 30. *Heled.* xxvii. 15. *Heldai.*
i 1 Chr. xi. 31. *Ithai.*
k 1 Chr. xi. 31. xxvii. 14.
l Judg. xii. 15.
m 1 Chr. xi. 32. *Hurai.*
† Or, *valleys.* Deut. i. 24. Judg. ii. 9.
n 1 Chr. xi. 32. *Abiel.*
o 1 Chr. xi. 33. *Baharumite.*
p 1 Chr. xi. 34. *Hashem, the Gizonite.*
q 1 Chr. xi. 27.
r 1 Chr. xi. 35. *Sacar.*
s xi. 3. xv. 31. xvii. 23. 1 Chr. xxvii. 33, 34.
t 1 Chr. xi. 37. *Hezro.*
u 1 Chr. xi. 38. *Joel.*
x 1 Chr. xi. 39.
y 1 Chr. xi. 37.
z xx. 26. 1 Chr. ii. 53. xi. 40.
a xi. 3. 6. xii. 9. 1 Kings xv. 5. 1 Chr. xi. 41. Matt. i. 6.

occasions these exploits were performed: but they were done in faith, by the Lord's extraordinary assistance, and for the publick good. Asahel seems to have been the third captain in the second triumvirate, though mentioned as one of the thirty, over whom perhaps he presided as captain: for there are thirty names besides his; and only two of the three are named, if he was not the third. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, ii. 18—23.)

V. 25—39. The names of the captains here enumerated are not exactly the same in Chronicles, but the same persons must be meant. In some instances a trivial variation is made in the spelling; in others, they might be known by more names than one.—The list closes with Uriah, who met with a base reward of his services! Others also are added in Chronicles; but they were not so renowned as these. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, 1 *Chr.* xi. 10—47.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

It has been observed by those who intimately converse with persons of genuine piety, that they are uniformly most sensible of the reality and importance of heavenly things, when they consider themselves as very nearly approaching to the eternal world. If discouraged respecting their own interest in the invisible blessings, their assured belief excites the most earnest and distressing anxiety, lest they should come short of them: but when their hope abounds, they exult and triumph, though parting with all below, though oppressed with pain and sickness, and in the very agonies of death! So that many have gone from their dying beds more convinced of the truth and excellency of the gospel by their "last words" and behaviour, than by all the arguments which have conclusively been adduced in proof of it.—When we approach this closing scene, it will be useful and pleasant to consider what we originally were, and to enquire what the Lord has done for us, in his providence, and by his grace. The more we have been conformed to the Saviour, as bearing his image, and copying his example; and the more we have been treated by the world as he was; the more clearly it will appear that we belong to him. When our endowments have been employed in the service of the church; and our words and works have been such, as evince, that we were "led by the Spirit," and brought forth "the fruits of the "Spirit," the review will be comfortable to us, and we shall give the glory to God.—They who stir up and assist their brethren in the exercises of devotion, are peculiarly useful: and the sweet work of praise and thanksgiving,

CHAP. XXIV.

David requires Joab to number the people, who very reluctantly complies, 1—8. Joab delivers in the number to the king, 9. He repents; and being warned by Gad the prophet, and obliged to choose one plague, out of three proposed to him, he fixes on three days' pestilence, 10—14. After seventy thousand had died in Israel, the angel is stayed from destroying Jerusalem, in answer to David's prayer, 15—17. David directed by God, purchases Araunah's threshing-floor, builds an altar, and sacrifices; and the plague is stayed, 18—25.

AND [a] again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and [*] he

[a] xxi. 1, &c. [*] *Satan.* 1 Chr. xxi. 1. Jam. i. 13, 14.

when conducted with solemnity, as springing from lively affections, is an anticipation of heavenly joy, a solace of earthly sorrows, a preparation for every service, most honourable to God, and calculated to give religion an attractive aspect. When *by us* the Lord excites others to their duty, he speaks *to us* likewise concerning our own; that we may exemplify by our conduct, in our proper station of life, the rules that we propose to others.—"Those "who rule over men" must be reminded on every occasion which occurs, and ought themselves continually to remember, that they are the *subjects of God:* and in all things responsible to him for their conduct, especially in the exercise of their delegated authority; and are under the most powerful obligations to imitate his equity, maintain his cause, and seek his glory, in all their plans and undertakings. Then will they be happy themselves, and blessings to multitudes, who will praise God for them. The sons of Belial indeed will be the more enraged against their equitable administration, and will create disturbance and vexation: but they should endeavour, and will in some measure be able, to crush and keep them under; though they cannot quite extirpate them.—The best of men, however, reviewing their past conduct, and comparing it impartially with the rule of duty, will see great cause to be humbled, and to mourn over their sins. Neither their hearts nor their houses will be found what they ought to be: but it will be their earnest desire, aim, and prayer, that their families may be the accepted servants of God, without which no outward prosperity will satisfy their minds: and if, through their own negligence, or occasional misconduct, they are otherwise; they will be the more earnest in supplication for them, that they may not perish with the sons of Belial.—Yet in all their troubles, true believers, being conscious that they "have fled "for refuge to the hope set before them" in the gospel, and having experienced the power of renewing grace, may rejoice that the Lord "hath made with them an everlasting "covenant;" and may meditate with comfort on the rich provisions and firm security of it: and seeing all their salvation there treasured up, and there finding all their desires centre, they may cheerfully bear up under all they feel or fear, and look forward with joyful hope of complete deliverance.—Such, as are in reality partakers of divine grace, will long for more holiness: and those who, in this imperfect state, are satisfied with their present attainments, have no good ground to consider themselves as true Christians.

V. 8—39.

The Lord dispenses all his gifts as he pleases, and there are various degrees of eminence and usefulness among able and serviceable men. Whether our talents therefore be more or fewer, the honour of them belongs to God, and we ought to improve them for the benefit of the Church, and of the world, without envying or despising others.—In a good cause we should willingly venture, and endure hardship, even when deserted by those who ought to help us; for the Lord will be our Helper: and we should allow others sometimes to share the advantages, who would not expose themselves with us for the publick good.—The habit of *wishing* and hankering after those things which Providence withholds, though natural to us, and often given way to by godly men in an unguarded hour, is indeed a degree of rebellion against the Lord; and it shews the remaining sensuality and selfishness of the heart, and leads to many snares and evils. Upon recollection and experience, a wise man will be ashamed of this folly; and will abstain, not only from unlawful indulgences, but from those also which are inexpedient, and might expose his brethren to temptation and danger.—Were we but as much attached to the person and cause of "the Captain of our "salvation," and as much pleased to shew our love and gratitude to him, by doing his will and promoting his honour, as some soldiers have been to a beloved prince or commander; how self-denying, and ready for every service and suffering should we be, and how glad to spend or to lay down our lives for his sake! Yet surely, never ruler or captain was of so excellent a character as ours; his commands are all righteous and beneficial, his authority is an inexpressible blessing. The obligations that he has conferred on his soldiers and servants, the love he bears to them, and the honours that he has prepared for the meanest of them, are beyond all computation or conception. The blessings, which he freely bestows, were dearly purchased by him; and for them when rebels and enemies! "Precious in his sight is the death of his saints:" he will expose them to no danger or loss, but for their good; he will comfort them under every suffering; and finally deliver them, and present them and all their services, as an oblation to the glory of God. Under his command, and refreshed by the waters of life which he bestows, we may venture to engage, yea defy, all our adversaries at the greatest disadvantage, and shall be able to turn their own arms upon them. Though not numbered with apostles and prophets, our names and services will be recorded in the book of life; and not a cup of cold water, given for his sake, shall be unrewarded: yea, the willing mind to suffer for him, shall be accepted, as if we had actually laid down our lives in his cause. But, as he has shed his blood for sinners, let all beware of neglecting so great salvation: for the sons of Belial, especially those who reject or pervert his truth, and persecute his people, will be thrust away as thorns into the everlasting fire of hell.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1, 2. The Israelites had offended God, by their ungrateful and repeated rebellions against David; by not duly profiting under the means employed for the revival of religion; and probably by that pride,

[a] xii. 11. xvi. 10. Gen. xlv. 5. 1. 20. Ex. vii. 3. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 1 Kings xxii. 20—23. Ez. xiv. 9. xx. 25. Acts iv. 28. 2 Thes. ii. 11.
[b] moved David against them to say, [c] Go, number Israel and Judah.

2 For the king said to [d] Joab the captain of the host, which *was* with him, * Go now through all the tribes of Israel, [e] from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, [f] that I may know the number of the people.

3 And Joab said unto the king, [g] Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundred-fold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see *it:* but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?

[h] 1 Chr. xxi. 4. Ec. viii. 4.
4 Notwithstanding, [h] the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host [i] went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.

[i] Ex. i. 17. Acts v. 29.
5 And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in [j] Aroer, on the right side of the city that *lieth* in the midst of the [†] river of Gad, and towards [k] Jazer:

[j] Deut. ii. 36. Josh. xiii. 9. 16. 1 Sam. xxx. 28. Is. xvii. 2.
[†] Or, *valley.*
[k] Num. xxxii. 1. 3. 35. Is. xvi. 8, 9.

6 Then they came to [l] Gilead, and to the [‡] land of Tahtim-hodshi; and they came to [m] Dan-jaan, and about to [n] Zidon,

[l] Gen. xxxi. 21. 47, 48. Num. xxxii. 1. 39.
[‡] Or, *nether land newly inhabited.*
[m] Josh. xix. 47. Judg. xviii. 29.
[n] Gen. x. 15. Josh. xi. 8. xix. 28. Judg. xviii. 28.

7 And came to the strong hold of [o] Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, *even* [p] to Beer-sheba.

[o] Josh. xix. 29.
[p] 2. Gen. xxi. 31—33.
8 So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem

luxury, and ungodliness, which generally spring from great prosperity. They had before, in a famine which lasted three years, experienced the effects of the divine displeasure; and it is likely they had not been amended by the correction: (*Notes*, xxi. 1—14:) but some think, that the sin immediately intended, was their setting up Absalom for king, and rebelling against David. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* viii. 6—9. *Hos.* viii. 2—4.) This David had cordially forgiven: but it was a national defection from God, which he did not judge it proper to leave unpunished. So that "again the "anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel:" and he permitted Satan to tempt and prevail against David, that in *chastising* him, he might *punish* them. David's thought and purpose of numbering the people, sprang from his remaining depravity, excited by Satan's suggestions: and as this "was of the LORD," (in the same manner, that it was of him that the Canaanites should be hardened, and that Ahab should be deceived,) he withdrew every internal or external restraint, and left him to follow his own counsels. (*Marg. Ref.* b.) Thus, by a manner of expression common in Scripture, the Lord is said to have "moved "David against Israel;" for certainly this is the most natural construction of the words. (*Marg.—Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxi. 1.) But other passages prove, that the sinful disposition and resolution could not be from God, though he both *permitted* them, and over-ruled them to accomplish his own wise and righteous purposes: and this example throws light upon the doctrine of God's providential government of the world, and suggests many practical instructions. (*Notes*, xii. 11, 12. *Gen.* l. 20. 1 *Kings* xxii. 19—23.)—But what constituted David's sin in numbering the people? Some expositors think it was a contempt of the promise that they should be innumerable; and that they ought not to have been numbered without express command, as in the days of Moses: and others suppose, that David neglected to collect the half shekel a piece for the use of the sanctuary, which should have attended the numbering of them. (*Notes, Gen.* xiii. 16. *Ex.* xxx. 11—16.) It however seems evident, that *pride* both induced David to this measure, and rendered it so very displeasing to the Lord. Elated with the prosperity and extent of his dominions he wished to know, and that others might know, the number of his subjects who were capable of bearing arms. This originated from an ambitious curiosity, and an ostentatious vanity; and probably it was accompanied with a secret complacency in his own good conduct, under whose government Israel had attained this prosperity, and with an improper dependence on the number and valour of his forces. As he was far advanced in life, he probably indulged the idea of having it said, how populous and flourishing a kingdom he had left to his posterity. It is likewise evident, that the chastisement was especially levelled against his pride and ambition. These evils had before been secretly indulged: but the Lord would have restrained them, had he not seen it best to permit them to break forth, both for the people's punishment, and David's deeper humiliation: as a physician permits some disorders to come forward to a crisis, that the cure may be radical; which is more salutary than merely for a time to suspend their effects. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xx. 12—19. 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 24—33. 2 *Cor.* xii. 1—6.)

V. 3, 4. Joab readily perceived, that David's purpose arose from ambition, and was inconsistent with his character and interest; and that if he persevered to "delight "in," or require, "such a thing, it would be a cause of "trespass," *i. e.* of guilt and punishment, "to Israel." (1 *Chr.* xxi. 3.) On this occasion he spoke with great reason and temper; expressed much affection both for his prince and country; and even assumed an appearance of piety: and David would have shewn his wisdom, had he yielded to his remonstrances. Yet the king's word prevailed, but "it was abominable to Joab;" (1 *Chr.* xxi. 6:) and as he and the captains set about it reluctantly, we may suppose that they did not perform it very exactly. 'It is some-'thing strange, that Joab should see the danger of this, 'and David not think of it; no, not when it was so plainly 'represented to him. But the best of men are sometimes 'very drowsy, and apprehend not those things, which 'plainly appear to those who are not so good.' *Bp. Patrick.* A considerable degree of self-will and precipitation was manifested in David's conduct, respecting this measure.

V. 5—8. Joab and his assistants began, by numbering

at the end of nine months and twenty days.

9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel [q] eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah *were* five hundred thousand men.

10 ¶ And [r] David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, [s] I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now I beseech thee, O LORD, [t] take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very [u] foolishly.

11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet [x] Gad, David's [y] seer, saying,

12 Go, and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, [z] I offer thee three *things*; choose thee one of them, [a] that I may do *it* unto thee.

13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall [b] seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou [c] flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be [d] three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

14 And David said unto Gad, [e] I am in a great strait: let us fall now into

q 1 Chr. xxi. 5, 6. xxvii. 23, 24.

r 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. John viii. 9. 1 John iii. 20, 21.

s xii. 13. 1 Chr. xxi. 8. 2 Chr. xxxii. 26. Job xxxiii. 27, 28. Ps. xxxii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 13. Mic. vii. 8, 9. 1 John i. 9.

t Job vii. 21. Hos. xiv. 2. John i. 29.

u x ii. 18. Deut. xxxii. 6. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. xxvi. 21. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Mark vii. 22. Tit. iii. 3.

x 1 Sam. xxii. 5. 1 Chr. xxi. 9. xxix 29.

y 1 Sam. ix. 9.

z 1 Chr. xxi. 10, 11.

a xii. 9, 10. 14. Lev. xxvi. 41. Job v. 17, 18. Prov. iii. 12. Heb. xii. 6—10. Rev. iii. 19.

b xxi. 1. Lev. xxvi. 20. 26. 1 Kings xvii. 1, &c. 1 Chr. xxi. 12. Ez. xiv. 13. 21. Luke iv. 25.

c Lev. xxvi. 17. 36, 37. Deut. xxviii. 25. 52.

d Lev. xxvi. 16. 25. Deut. xxviii. 22. 27. 35. Ps. xci. 6. Ez xiv. 19—21.

e 1 Sam. xiii. 6. 2 Kings vi. 15. John xii. 27. Phil. i. 23.

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the inhabitants of the country, to the east of Jordan; thence they proceeded to the northern part of the land in the borders of Zidon and Tyre; and, passing through the regions to the west of Jordan, they numbered all the men capable of bearing arms, (except the Levites and Benjamites;) having spent almost ten months in accomplishing it! (*Marg. Ref.*—1 *Chr.* xxi. 6.)

Land of Tahtim-hodshi. (6) "Nether land newly inhabited." (*Marg.*)—It is not known what region is meant; as the name occurs only in this place: probably, it was a tract of low land, which had lately been taken possession of by the Gileadites, in the northern part of the country.

V. 9. The numbers, as stated in Chronicles, are very different from those here given: and in order to reconcile them, it is thought that the regular troops, serving in rotation every month, and amounting to two hundred and eighty-eight thousand, (besides their officers, as it is supposed,) are included in the one account, but not in the other. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxvii. 1—15.) If these are added to the men of Israel as here numbered, and a due proportion taken from the men of Judah for their part of this militia, the round numbers will amount to nearly the same in both places.—This is, however, uncertain: and as Levi and Benjamin were not numbered, we may suppose that in other respects the accounts were inaccurate: and it might please God thus to order it, that David at last "might not know the number of the people." (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxi. 2—6. xxvii. 23, 24.)—It is remarkable that the Israelites had not multiplied when possessed of Canaan, in any proportion to what they had done during their bondage in Egypt. (*Note, Ex.* i. 7.)

V. 10. David was not convinced of the evil of his conduct, until he received an account of the numbers which had been rated, and then "his heart smote him;" he became sensible that he had displeased the Lord, and earnestly intreated God to forgive him. (*Notes, Ez.* xi. 17—20. 1 *John* iii. 18—24.)—'When he ordered it, he was 'possessed with other thoughts; and did not seriously re-'flect upon what he had done, till God touched his heart 'with a sense of his guilt after the sin was committed.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11. Literally: "And David arose in the morning; and the word of the LORD was unto the prophet Gad." It is probable, that David had become in some measure sensible of his sin, and had offered his humble confession and supplication to God over night, or in the night; before Gad delivered his message to him in the morning.—Gad was called David's *seer*, for he had long been employed as the messenger of God to him, and David had paid great regard to his admonitions; (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* ix. 6—10. xxii. 5;) and he also compiled, in part at least, the annals of David's last years. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxix. 29, 30.)—Had David's history been written in the manner of modern *memoirs*, by friends of the deceased; how many things would have been concealed, or thrown into the back-ground! how much palliated! and what eulogiums would have been paid to his excellent and honourable actions. Thus David's character would have appeared more faultless: but his history would have been, in exact proportion, so much the less instructive.

V. 12—14. Though the Lord intended to forgive the sin of his repenting servant, as to his personal concern; yet as it was a *publick offence*, he would *correct* it in a publick manner, by destroying his subjects before his eyes. (*Notes*, 1, 2. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 26, 27. xxiv. 3, 4. 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 12—17.) This would be extremely distressing to him, both because of his affection for them, and because they suffered in consequence of his pride and vain-glorious confidence.—Only *three years* of famine are proposed in Chronicles: (1 *Chr.* xxi. 12:) but such variations frequently occur, and are probably owing to some trivial errors of transcribers in so long a course of years; especially as *the numbers* were often distinguished by *marks* which might the more easily be mistaken.—In this distressing difficulty, David preferred a calamity, which came immediately from God, whose mercies he knew to be very great, to those in which men were concerned; who would have triumphed in the miseries of Israel, and thus have been hardened in their idolatry. He seems also to have chosen the pestilence in preference to the famine, not only because the land had already been visited with one famine of three years' continuance, from which perhaps it was scarcely recovered; and because he and his family would be as much exposed to the pestilence, as the poorest Israelite: but especially

the hand of the LORD; [f] for his mercies *are* [*] great: and [g] let me not fall into the hand of man.

15 So [h] the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people [i] from Dan even to Beer-sheba [k] seventy thousand men.

16 And when [l] the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD [m] repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, [n] It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing-place of [o] Araunah [p] the Jebusite.

17 And David [q] spake unto the LORD, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, [r] Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but [s] these sheep, what have they done? [t] let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

18 ¶ And [u] Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD, in the threshing-floor of [†] Araunah the Jebusite.

19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up [x] as the LORD commanded.

20 And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and [y] bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.

21 And Araunah said, [z] Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? and David said, [a] To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that [b] the plague may be stayed from the people.

22 And Araunah said unto David, [c] Let my lord the king take and offer up what *seemeth* good unto him: behold *here be* [d] oxen for burnt-sacrifice, and threshing-instruments, and *other* instruments of the oxen for wood.

23 All these *things* did Araunah, [e] *as* a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, [f] The LORD thy God accept thee.

24 And the king said unto Araunah, [g] Nay; but I will surely buy *it* of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD my God, of that which doth cost me nothing. [h] So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

25 And David [i] built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. [k] So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

[f] Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxi. 13. Ps. ii. 1. lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8. 13, 14. cxix. 156. cxlv. 9. Is. lv. 7. Jon. iv. 2. Mic. vii. 18.
[*] Or, *many*.
[g] 2 Kings xiii. 3—7. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5—9. Prov. xii. 10. Is. xlvii. 6. Zech. i. 15.
[h] Num. xvi. 46—49. xxv. 9. 1 Sam. vi. 19. 1 Chr. xxi. 14. xxvii. 24. Matt. xxiv. 7. Rev. vi. 8.
[i] *See on* 2.
[k] Is. xxxvii. 36.
[l] Ex. xii. 23. 2 Kings xix. 35. 1 Chr. xxi. 15, 16. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21. Ps. xxxv. 6. Acts xii. 23.
[m] Gen. vi. 6. 1 Sam. xv. 11. Ps. lxxviii. 38. Jer. xviii. 7—10. Joel ii. 13, 14. Am. vii. 3, 6. Heb. iii. 2.
[n] Ex. ix. 28. 1 Kings xix. 4. Is. xl. 1, 2. Mark xiv. 41. 2 Cor. ii. 6.
[o] 1 Chr. xxi. 15. 2 Chr. iii. 1. *Ornan*.
[p] v. 8. Gen. x. 16. Josh. xv. 63. Judg. i. 21. xix. 11. Zech. ix. 7.
[q] 1 Chr. xxi. 16, 17.
[r] 10. Job vii. 20. xlii. 6. Ps. li. 2—5. Is. vi. 5.
[s] 1 Kings xxii. 17. Ps. xliv. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 2—6. 23, 24. Zech. xiii. 7
[t] Gen. xliv. 33. John x. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 24, 25.
[u] 11. 1 Chr. xxi. 18.
[†] Heb. *Araniah*. *See on* o, p, 16.
[x] Gen. vi. 22. 1 Chr. xxi. 19. 2 Chr. xx. 20. xxxvi. 16. Neh. ix. 26. Heb. xi. 8.
[y] ix. 8 Gen. xviii. 2. Ruth ii. 10. 1 Chr. xxi. 20, 21.
[z] 3. 18.
[a] Gen. xxiii. 8—16. 1 Chr. xxi. 22. Jer. xxxii. 6—14.
[b] xxi. 3—14. Num. xvi. 47—50. xxv. 8. Ps. cvi. 30.
[c] Gen. xxiii. 11. 1 Chr. xxi. 23.
[d] 1 Sam. vi. 14. 1 Kings xix. 21.
[e] Is. xxxii. 8.
[f] Job xlii. 8. Ps. xx. 3, 4. Is. lx. 7. Ez. xx. 40, 41. Hos. viii. 13. Rom. xv. 30, 31. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. 1 Pet. ii. 5.
[g] Gen. xxiii. 13. 1 Chr. xxi. 24. Mal. i. 12—14. Rom. xii. 17.
[h] 1 Chr. xxi. 25. xxii. 1.
[i] Gen. viii. 20. xxii. 9. 1 Sam. vii. 9. 17.
[k] 14. xxi. 14. 1 Chr. xxi. 26, 27. Lam. iii. 32, 33.

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that he might continue for a shorter time under the divine rebuke, however severe it might be.—'They that fear the 'Lord will prepare their hearts, and humble their souls in 'his sight, saying, We will fall into the hands of the LORD, 'and not into the hands of men: for as his majesty is, so 'is his mercy.' *Ecclesiasticus* ii. 17, 18. (*Heb.* x. 31.)

V. 15, 16. "The time appointed" may mean either, the close of the third day: or, as it is more probable, the appointed hour of the evening-sacrifice on the first day. For "the LORD repented him of the evil," which implies, that he did not proceed to the extent of the judgment denounced. Yet on this supposition seventy thousand died in the different parts of the land, in about as few hours, as Joab had employed months in numbering the people; and this apparently by the ministration of a single angel! (*Notes, Ex.* xii. 29, 30. 2 *Kings* xix. 35. *Heb.* xi. 28.) 'If 'it' (the pestilence) 'had raged three days, and in every 'nine hours had killed so many, above a third part of 'those who had been numbered, would have died by this 'plague: but as Kimchi here observes, by the great 'mercy of God, the time was contracted.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Num.* xvi. 45—50 1 *Cor.* x. 6—10.)

V. 17. Probably, the angel had before been invisible: but at length "David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel "of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, "having a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Je- "rusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were "clothed in sackcloth, fell upon *their faces*." 1 *Chr.* xxi. 16, 17. The "drawn sword" was an emblem of the divine justice about to be executed upon the city. David had before humbled himself in the sight of God, and no doubt, had earnestly interceded for the people; but this sight affected him more than ever: and, while he and the elders prostrated themselves upon the ground, he poured out his soul before God in fervent prayer for his subjects, and especially for Jerusalem. He pleaded, that "it was he "who had commanded the people to be numbered," that "he had sinned, and done evil indeed:" and intreated that, as the whole blame belonged to him, so the indignation might cease in the punishment of him and his family. His guilt indeed *occasioned* the judgment: but the people were far from that innocency which David supposed; for their wickedness was in reality the *cause* of the calamity. (*Note*, 1, 2.) His intercession however prevailed: and it was doubtless in answer to his prayer, that the Lord said to the destroying angel, "It is enough: stay now thine "hand."

V. 18—25. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxi. 18—25. *v.* 20.) Araunah,

or Ornan, though a Jebusite by birth, seems to have been cordially attached to the interests of David and of Israel; and was permitted to possess a threshing-floor, and some contiguous estate, near mount Zion. On that very spot the angel of the Lord appeared, and thence spake to Gad, (16. 1 *Chr.* xxi. 18,) that he should order David to build an altar there; whose ready obedience afforded Araunah an opportunity of shewing his veneration for the king, his affection for Israel, and his liberality in the service of God and for the publick advantage. With a generosity like that of a king, he was ready to give David the oxen, threshing-floor, and all that appertained to it, that he might offer the appointed sacrifices: but David did not think it right to accept of them as a gift: and therefore he gave him fifty shekels of silver for the oxen and the wood, and six hundred shekels of gold for the ground; for this is the most obvious way of reconciling this account with that in Chronicles. (1 *Chr.* xxi. 25.) There the sacrifices were offered, and "the LORD answered by fire from heaven;" (*Notes, Lev.* ix. 24. 1 *Kings* xviii. 38, 39. 1 *Chr.* xxi. 26. 2 *Chr.* vii. 1—3;) and the plague was stayed. On this very spot, bought of a gentile, the temple was soon after built, no doubt, by the express command of God. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* xxii. 1.—2 *Chr.* iii. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

In the righteous government of God, rulers and their subjects have a reciprocal influence on one another. Like the members in the human body, they are interested in each other's conduct and welfare; and cannot sin or suffer without being mutually affected.—When the wickedness of nations provokes God, he leaves princes to adopt pernicious measures, or to commit atrocious crimes, which bring calamities on the people: and when the ruler commits iniquity, he is punished by the diminution of his power, and by witnessing the distresses of his subjects. Instead therefore of mutual recriminations under publick calamities, however occasioned, all parties should be reminded to repent of their own sins, and to practise their own duties. Princes should hence be instructed, even for their own sakes, to repress wickedness, and to promote righteousness in their dominions, as well as to set a good example: and the people, for the publick benefit, should concur in salutary measures, and pray continually for their rulers.—The remains of sin live, and will often revive, in the best of men, as long as they continue in this world: and the wisest are soon induced to do very foolishly, when God leaves them to themselves, and permits Satan to tempt them: and against this there is no security, except humble watchfulness and unceasing prayer.—Pride, in all its varied exercises, is the sin of fallen man, as well as of fallen angels: it is the substance of spiritual wickedness, the rival and enemy of the glory and authority of God, and equally averse to the submissive obedience of the law, and the sovereign grace of the gospel. (*Notes, Dan.* iv. 28—37. *Jam.* iv. 4—6.) Yet this hateful evil mixes with and defiles the best of our services. Even the believer often sacrilegiously assumes to himself the glory which belongs to God; idolatrously confides in himself, or in some creature; ostentatiously courts that admiration and applause, of which the Lord alone is worthy; and becomes vain of those endowments or possessions, which he had no share in procuring, and cannot secure for one hour! Those, who are altogether proud, God will resist and fight against to their destruction: and he will detect and chastise the indulged pride of those who, upon the whole, are humbled before him as mean, sinful creatures, and yet inconsistently value and prefer themselves upon some incidental advantages! (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* xx. 12—15. 2 *Cor.* xii. 1—6.) Through this hateful principle it comes to pass, that we so readily can spy a mote in our brother's eye, and yet remain unconscious of a beam in our own: so that even ungodly men can discern those evil tempers and that unbecoming conduct in eminent believers, to which themselves are insensible! (*Note, Matt.* vii. 3—5.) This should warn Christians to walk circumspectly, lest their mistakes should encourage others in unbelief and ungodliness: and it is sometimes a part of our chastisement to be shamed and rebuked by men of very bad characters. Yet those who have no real piety may, on personal and relative accounts, be sincerely attached to the interests of true Christians; and *in a certain way* have the cause of religion much at heart, as it happens to be connected with that of their party or their friends: but they cannot love the disciple simply because he loves and bears the image of his Master. They sometimes however give good advice supported by solid arguments: they can foresee consequences which the believer does not suspect, and sincerely endeavour to prevent them; and they can mingle their expostulations with affectionate good wishes, and a kind of prayers for their welfare and success. These things do not prove a man to be a partaker of the grace of God; but they entitle him *so far* to the attention of godly persons. It is indeed a shame for us to require and delight in those things, that such men perceive to be wrong: and it is our own fault, if we do not in many ways profit by their advice and cautions.—But when authority prevails against reason and truth, pernicious effects must follow: yet this is so common, that those who possess much power and influence, rarely acquit themselves honourably as professors of godliness.—Men seldom accomplish to good purpose those services, in which they reluctantly engage: and God does not generally allow those whom he loves, the satisfactions which they sinfully covet.

V. 10—25.

Where grace possesses the heart, a man's conscience, on reflection, will reproach him with his transgressions; and he will not only be frighted and distressed, (which the hypocrite may be,) but he will be humbled before God, and with ingenuous confessions and fervent prayers, seek forgiveness from him; sincerely purposing by his grace no more to return to folly: and thus a man's pride will prove an occasion of increasing his humility. (*Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 24—26. 30—33. *v.* 31.)—But when God corrects the transgressions of his people; he makes them by the anguish of their souls, in the great straits to which he reduces them, taste the bitterness of their sins, and perceive his abhorrence of them.—Whatever we idolize, or grow proud of, will generally be taken from us, or converted into a source of distress; and no aggravation or affliction is more painful to generous minds, than the reflection, that others whom they love are suffering on their account. This is a common case in kingdoms and families: and perhaps, while ministers mourn over the state of their congregations;

they may sometimes profitably enquire, whether their own supineness, pride, and desire of applause or popularity; their want of zeal and simplicity; their self-indulgence, or conformity to the world, do not bring a secret blight upon their labours, although more open evils do not bring a blot upon their profession? and whether the people's souls are not suffering for *their* correction; and to bring them to deeper humiliation, greater fervency in prayer, and a more simple, spiritual frame of mind, and devotedness to God? And surely we should choose to be chastened in our own persons, rather than that the blessing should be withheld from our congregations: for, though the Lord is righteous in these dispensations; yet the people have not deserved *at our hands*, that we should occasion this evil to them.—Grace teaches men to condemn themselves rather than others, and to seek the interests of their fellow-creatures in many respects before their own: and earnest prayers offered in this temper of mind, by those who unreservedly cast themselves on the mercies of the Lord, are very prevalent. For "he is slow to anger, and ready to "forgive:" and he never fails of his promises, though he readily recedes from his threatenings in behalf of the humbled sinner.—If the power of angels, as it appears in this chapter, is so terrible, what is that of the Almighty Creator! and as *they* are so obedient to their Maker's word, and so prompt in executing his will; we ought carefully to imitate them, especially in the delightful service of "ministering "to the heirs of salvation."—Death is continually, and in so many forms and so suddenly, destroying all around, that it is madness not to be expecting and preparing for the closing scene.—Through the great sacrifice and intercession of the Saviour, the chief of sinners may approach a reconciled God: and, being justified by faith in his blood, may become his servant and child, and be made meet for his eternal kingdom.—This message, the ministers of God propose to men, that they may "advise, and consider "what answer they will return to him that sent them;" and they affectionately long that sinners would thankfully accept of this great salvation. Though men are required to forsake sin, to renounce the world and its friendship, and to deny themselves, if they would be Christ's disciples: yet surely this need not reduce them to a great strait; for he will supply every want, make up every loss, and give them a hundred-fold more in this present time, for all which they part with for his sake.—Grace will teach men liberality when the honour of God and the good of his people require it: and extraordinary occasions require extraordinary disinterestedness. But we should not encroach on those who are willing to give, or prefer a cheap religion. All we possess and are belongs to God, and we should desire to employ in his immediate service, that measure of our time and substance, which he requires: and while we simply follow his directions, we shall speedily obtain the comfort of his pardoning love, and also be instrumental in averting his wrath from others.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE

KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE THIRD BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THE two following books contain, as their name imports, the history of Judah and Israel, under the government of kings, from the close of David's reign to the Babylonish captivity, during about four hundred and twenty-seven years. They seem originally to have formed but one book; but they were afterwards divided into two, and called "The first "and second books of the Kings;" and in some versions, "The third and fourth books of the Kings;" as the two books of Samuel are, in the Septuagint and in the Vulgate, called "The first and the second books of the Kings."—It is evident, that they contain an abstract of the history, compiled from much more copious records, which seem to have been collected and preserved by contemporary prophets. (xi. 41. xiv. 29. xv. 31. xxii. 39. 45. 2 *Chr.* ix. 29. xii. 15. xiii. 22. xx. 34. xxvi. 22.) Indeed a considerable part, of the transactions of their own times, is recorded in connexion with the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. It is, however, uncertain by whom this compilation was made: but, if Ezra, as it is generally and probably supposed, compiled the books of Chronicles; it is not likely, that, (according to the opinion of some learned men,) he compiled these also: as they form a distinct history of the same times. If, therefore, they were arranged in the present manner, principally by one sacred writer, those, who ascribe them to Jeremiah, seem to have adopted the more probable opinion. Indeed, the second book of the kings and his prophecy end with the narrative of the same events; though, perhaps, both were added after his death by another hand: and it is not unlikely that some other trivial alterations were made in the days of Ezra, to render the narrative more perspicuous to the Jews after the captivity.—They have, however, been constantly received, both by Jews and Christians, as a part of the sacred canon, the holy Scriptures: and the events recorded are frequently referred to in the New Testament. (*Matt.* i. 7—12. vi. 29. xii. 42. *Luke* iv. 25—27. *Acts* ii. 29. vii. 47—50. *Jam.* v. 17, 18.) It is observable also, that our Lord and his apostle James not only speak of them as authentick records, and a part of the sacred oracles as received by the Jews; but especially attest some of the most wonderful miracles recorded in them; and thus affix a direct sanction to them, as given by inspiration of God.—They also contain many prophecies; especially that of Josiah, who was foretold by name three hundred years before his birth: (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xiii. 2:) but none of these predictions, in their most evident literal meaning, refer to events later than the Babylonish captivity.—After the death of David, the sacred historian records the principal transactions of Solomon's long and peaceable reign; which, however, was covered with a dark cloud towards the close: and under his successor, the nation was divided into the two distinct kingdoms of Judah and Israel.—The descendants of Solomon reigned over that of Judah till the captivity, for about three hundred and eighty-seven years. So that from the accession of David, during a course of four hundred and sixty-seven years, the throne was filled by his descendants, in lineal descent, except as the sons of Josiah succeeded one another. During this long term of years there was not a single revolution, or civil war; and but one short interruption, by Athaliah's usurpation. Perhaps it would be difficult to find, in universal history, any thing equal to this permanent internal order and tranquillity. Let the reader recollect how many revolutions, civil wars, murders of reigning kings by rivals and successors, and changes in the succession, are found in the English history, during the same number of years.—Above half the kings of Judah supported true religion, and several of them were eminently pious men: and it is remarkable that their reigns were much longer, than those of the wicked princes; (xi. 42. xv. 10. xxii. 42. 2 *Kings* xv. 2. 33. xviii. 2. xxii. 1;) so that they comprise much above three hundred years of this period; and the greatest part of this time was evidently passed, either in profound peace, or in remarkable prosperity. Let this state of things be compared with the history of Greece or Rome; and the situation of Judah must be allowed to have been exceedingly more desirable, than that of these celebrated heathen nations.—The kingdom of Israel continued about two hundred and fifty-four years, till the Assyrian captivity. The nineteen kings, of several families, who, during this period, reigned in succession, were all idolaters, and most of them monsters of iniquity: yet the Lord by his prophets, especially by Elijah and Elisha, preserved a considerable degree of true religion in the land, till the measure of their national wickedness was full; and then they were finally dispersed among the Gentiles: except as a remnant of them was in various ways, and at different times, incorporated among the Jews.—In these books the history of the two kingdoms is carried on together: and the whole forms an admirable

comment on the prophecies delivered to the nation by Moses and Joshua; (*Notes, Lev.* xxvi. *Deut.* iv. xxviii, xxix. xxx, xxxi, xxxii. *Josh.* xxiii. 15, 16;) and a striking illustration of the proverb, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; "but sin is the reproach of any people."—This first book contains the history of about a hundred and twenty years. Connected with the peace and prosperity of Solomon's reign, and the fame of his wisdom, a full account is given of the temple having been built by him. God had commanded Israel to offer all their sacrifices at one place; Shiloh had for some time been that place; and the ark had been removed to Zion, by David, in order that a temple might there be built, which Solomon his son accomplished. (*Note, Deut.* xii. 5—7.) A large proportion of the subsequent parts of the Old Testament relate to this temple; to the sins of the people in sacrificing elsewhere; to their profanation of the temple; to the judgments of God upon them for these crimes; especially to the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans; and to the rebuilding of it by Zerubbabel: and these things so run through all the subsequent history and prophecies; that if Solomon did not build the temple by the express command of God, it must follow, that God punished the nation with tremendous judgments for violating merely human appointments.—When the Samaritans preferred mount Gerizim, our Lord told the woman of Samaria, that they "knew not what they worshipped, for "salvation was of the Jews:" and this declaration, with his own constant attendance at the ordinances administered at the temple in Jerusalem, sufficiently attest the divine inspiration of those records, in which alone it is expressly declared, that Solomon built the temple by the direction and appointment of God himself.—Solomon's fall into idolatry seems evidently implied in the book of Ecclesiastes: and the history of Rehoboam's imprudence, the division of his kingdom, Jeroboam's idolatry, and the subsequent events to the end of the book, are assumed as undoubted facts in the writings of all the prophets. So entirely does the whole canon of Scripture coincide; while each part confirms, and receives confirmation from, all the rest.

B. C. 1015.

CHAP. I.

Abishag is procured to cherish David, in his old age and sickness, 1—4. Adonijah gains over Joab and Abiathar, and aspires to the throne, 5—10. Nathan counsels Bathsheba, who speaks to David, and is seconded by Nathan, 11—27. David assures Bathsheba, by an oath, that Solomon shall succeed him; and gives orders that he should, that day, be anointed and proclaimed king, 28—37. Zadok, Benaiah, and Nathan, zealously execute these orders, and the people rejoice, 38—40. Jonathan informs Adonijah and his company; and they hastily disperse, 41—49. Adonijah flees to the horns of the altar, and obtains from Solomon a conditional pardon, 50—53.

[a] 2 Sam. v. 4. 1 Chr. xxiii. 1. xxix. 27, 28. Ps xc. 10.
[b] Gen. xviii. 11. xxiv. 1. Luke i. 7.
[*] Heb. *entered into days.* Josh. xxiii. 1, 2. *marg.*
[†] Heb. *Let them seek.*
[‡] Heb. *a damsel, a virgin.*

NOW king David was [a] old [b] *and* [*] stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.

2 Wherefore his servants said unto him, [†] Let there be sought for my lord the king [‡] a young virgin: and let her [d] stand before the king, and let her [e] cherish him, and let her [e] lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may [f] get heat.

3 So [g] they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found [h] Abishag a [i] Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

4 And the damsel *was* very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king [k] knew her not.

5 ¶ Then [l] Adonijah the son of Haggith [m] exalted himself, saying, [n] I will [‖] be king: and [o] he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

6 And his father [p] had not displeased him [*] at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also *was a* [q] very goodly *man;* and *his mother* [r] bare him after Absalom.

B. C. 1015.
[d] Deut. x. 8. 1 Sam. xvi. 21, 22. 2 Chr. xxix. 11.
[e] Heb. *be a cherisher unto him.*
[e] Gen. xvi. 5. Deut. xiii. 6. 2 Sam. xii. 8. Mic. vii. 5.
[f] Ec. iv. 11.
[g] Esth. ii. 2—4.
[h] ii. 17—25.
[i] Josh. xix. 18. 1 Sam. xxviii. 4. 2 Kings iv. 8. 25.
[k] Matt. i. 25.
[l] 2 Sam. iii. 4. 1 Chr. iii. 2.
[m] 11. ii. 24. Ex. ix. 17. Prov. xvi. 18. xviii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14.
[n] Deut. xvii. 15. Judg. ix. 2. 1 Chr. xxii. 5—11. xxviii. 5. xxix. 1.
[‖] Heb. *reign.*
[o] Deut. xvii. 16. 2 Sam. xv. 1. Is. ii. 7.
[p] 1 Sam. iii. 13. Prov. xxiii 16. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15. Heb. xii. 5, 6.
[*] Heb. *from his days.*
[q] 1 Sam. ix. 2. x. 23. 2 Sam. xiv. 25.
[r] 2 Sam. iii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. iii. 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. David was seventy years old when he died, and these events occurred not long before. He seems to have been a healthy man: yet his constitution was entirely worn out; perhaps in some measure through his great exertions in his various wars.—The counsel of his courtiers, or physicians, (if they may be so called,) to excite in him a due degree of animal heat, especially when we advert to the pains bestowed to find out a very fair damsel for the purpose, deserves much censure: though similar advice has been given in other ages and countries. We may suppose, that David acceded to it merely in compliance with their wishes, and in deference to their judgment; but the appearance was not at all becoming his character, and circumstances. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* ii. 15—18.)

V. 5, 6. Adonijah could not be ignorant, that Solomon had been appointed by God himself to succeed David in the kingdom; (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 12—16. 1 *Chr.* xxii. 6—10. xxiii. 1.—xxviii. 5;) and his whole conduct shews, that he considered Solomon only as his rival. After the death of Absalom, Adonijah was David's eldest son: and no doubt he considered the kingdom as his birthright, and confided in the support of the people to seize upon it; without any regard to his father, or to the revealed will of

7 And * he [s] conferred with [t] Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with [u] Abiathar the priest: and they [†] following Adonijah helped *him*.

8 But [v] Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and [x] Nathan the prophet, and [y] Shimei, and Rei, and [z] the mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah.

9 And Adonijah [a] slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which *is* by [‡] En-rogel, and [b] called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants.

10 But [c] Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.

11 ¶ Wherefore [d] Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that [e] Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not?

12 Now therefore come, [f] let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest [g] save thine own life, and [h] the life of thy son Solomon.

13 Go, and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, [i] Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall [j] sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?

14 Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, [k] I also will come in after thee, and [§] confirm thy words.

* Heb. *his words were with.*
s 2 Sam. xv. 12. Ps. ii. 2.
t ii. 28. 2 Sam. viii. 16. xx. 23.
u 1 Sam. xxii. 20—23. 2 Sam. xv. 24—29. 35. xx. 25.
† Heb. *helped after Adonijah.* ii. 22. 26—35.
v ii. 35. 2 Sam. viii. 17, 18. xx. 25. 1 Chr. xxvii. 5, 6. Ez. xliv. 15.
x 2 Sam. vii. 2—4. xii. 1—15.
y iv. 18. Zech. xii. 13.
z 2 Sam. xxiii. 8—39. 1 Chr. xi. 10—47.
a 2 Sam. xv. 12. Prov. xv. 8.
‡ Or, *the well Rogel.* 2 Sam. xvii. 17.
b 2 Sam. xiii. 23—27. xv. 11.
c 8 19.
d 2 Sam. vii. 12—17. xii. 24, 25. 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10. xxviii. 4, 5. xxix. 1.
e *See on* 5.
f Prov. xi. 14. xx. 18. xxvii. 9. Jer. xxxviii. 15.
g 21. Gen. xix. 17. Acts xxvii. 31.
h Judg. ix. 5. 2 Kings xi. 1. 2 Chr. xxi. 4. xxii. 10. Matt. xxi. 38.
i *See on* 11. 17. 30.
j 17. 24. 30. 35. 48. ii. 12. Deut. xvii. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 23. Ps. cxxxii. 11, 12. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 21. Luke i. 32, 33.
k 17—27. 2 Cor. xiii. 1.
§ Heb. *fill up.*

God.—It is remarkable how frequently the first-born were set aside by his express appointment. In the ordinary course of things, it is expedient that the primogeniture should have the precedency; and the *judicial* law of Moses, (as well as the civil laws of most nations,) was formed accordingly. But the examples of Jacob, Judah, the sons of Joseph, David, Solomon, and others, prove that this is not grounded on moral obligation: that it is not divine, or unalterable, or to be put in competition with the welfare of whole nations, and the liberty and rights of all the rest of mankind; according to the sentiments of some authors, who most absurdly ground their doctrine upon the word of God, though it is evidently contradictory to it!—Absalom had been displeased with his father, though most unjustly, because of the disgrace under which he laid him for the murder of Amnon: (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 28, 29:) but David had never given Adonijah the least cause of displeasure; except that, in obedience to God, he intended and appointed Solomon to be his successor. It is probable, that Adonijah was of an imperious disposition; and David very imprudently indulged him, and never restrained or reproved him in any matter. This was David's fault: for he ought to have exerted his authority, and kept him in subjection; but at the same time it aggravated Adonijah's contempt and ingratitude. He seems to have greatly resembled his elder brother Absalom: like him he was too much indulged, and beloved on account of his exterior accomplishments; and like him, he affected royal pomp and magnificence: (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 25—27. xv. 1—6:) and he succeeded to his ambitious projects, though he concealed and deferred them, till his father was, as he supposed, finally incapacitated for business.

V. 7. It seems wonderful that Joab and Abiathar, who were persons of years, experience, and capacity; who had long attended on David, and were highly preferred under him; and who doubtless understood his intentions concerning Solomon, should at last concur in Adonijah's conspiracy! But perhaps Joab, though attached to David, was not favourable to Solomon, and preferred Adonijah as more congenial with his own disposition. Being destitute of piety, he disregarded the divine appointment, and deemed it more politick to place the eldest son upon the throne; and no wrong to David, who, he might think, injured Adonijah in preferring his younger brother. Perhaps he was still afraid of being called to account for his murders; and hoped to secure himself, to continue his preferment, and to increase his influence, by helping Adonijah to the kingdom: and it may be supposed, that he secretly resented David's conduct in attempting to lay him aside, and to put Amasa in his place. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xix. 9—15. xx. 6—10.)—Abiathar, though high priest, seems to have been less regarded by David than Zadok was: (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 24—29:) and perhaps he suspected that Solomon would set his family aside, in favour of the line of Eleazar to which Zadok belonged. But by attaching himself to Adonijah, he hastened that event, and shewed, that David had good reasons for preferring Zadok, who probably was a man of much deeper and more serious religion. (*Notes*, ii. 26, 27. 35. 1 *Sam.* ii. 31—36. *Ez.* xliv. 15, 16.)

V. 8—10. Adonijah knew that it would be in vain and dangerous, to tamper with Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, who were firmly attached to the cause of Solomon, as well as to that of David.—It is highly improbable, that Shimei, the son of Gera, would be much regarded by either party. (*Notes*, ii. 8, 9. 36—46. 2 *Sam.* xvi. 5—14. xix. 19—23.) Solomon afterwards preferred a person of this name: (iv. 18:) and probably he was a man of considerable consequence. (*Note*, *Zech.* xii. 9—14.)—We know nothing further of Rei, but no doubt he also was a person of rank and great influence.—The mighty men were the chieftains before enumerated. (2 *Sam.* xxiii. 8—39.)—It is most likely that Adonijah made a solemn sacrifice, as well as a magnificent feast, on the occasion; and thus he concealed his designs, till ripe for execution. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 7—9.)—En-rogel was in the vicinity of Jerusalem. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—14. Solomon could not be ignorant of Adonijah's intentions, of which he made no secret: but he remained quiet, and left his cause with God. His life and

15 ¶ And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was [l] very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.

16 And Bath-sheba [m] bowed and did obeisance unto the king. [n] And the king said, [*] What wouldest thou?

17 And she said unto him, [o] My lord, [p] thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne.

18 And now behold, [q] Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, [r] thou knowest *it* not.

19 And [s] he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.

20 And thou, my lord, O king, [t] the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee, that [u] thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

21 Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall [v] sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted [†] offenders.

22 ¶ And lo, [x] while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.

23 And they told the king, saying, Behold, Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, [y] he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

24 And Nathan said, My lord, O king, [z] hast thou said, Adonijah shall [a] reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?

25 For he is gone down this day, and hath [b] slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and behold they eat and drink before him, and say, [‡] God save king Adonijah.

26 But me, *even* [c] me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called.

27 Is this thing done by my lord the king, [d] and thou hast not shewed *it* unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

28 ¶ Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came [§] into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

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succession were secured by promise: yet it was proper that Nathan and Bath-sheba should use prudent means for his preservation, and the maintenance of his right. Had Adonijah succeeded, he would, no doubt, have put Solomon and Bath-sheba to death: for the history of the world demonstrates, that when men are aspiring after dominion, they are easily tempted to the most enormous crimes, which seem necessary for their purpose, even when most contrary to their apparent natural disposition. (*Notes, Judg.* ix. 4—6. 2 *Kings*, xi. 1, 2. *Matt.* ii. 3—6. 16—18.)

V. 15—18. It is not recorded, on what occasion David sware to Bath-sheba, that Solomon should succeed him: but it is supposed with probability, that it took place after Absalom's rebellion; and as God himself had settled the succession, he might very properly give her this assurance. —David was aware that Adonijah had taken great state upon him; but he did not know that he had actually advanced a claim to the kingdom: this both enhanced Adonijah's crime, and pleaded David's excuse.

V. 20. The people knew, that "the Spirit of the "LORD spake by David, and his word was in his tongue:" (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1, 2:) and they had great confidence in his wisdom, piety, and affection. They therefore waited to know the will of God from him. David, though anointed to the kingdom, did not assume regal authority at first, without the concurrence of the elders of Judah and Israel: (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* ii. 4. v. 1—5:) and after Absalom's rebellion, he did not return to the exercise of it without their approbation. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xix. 9—15.) He could not therefore claim a right to dispose of the kingdom *by will*, as if it had been his own private property, according to the statement of some writers: but he might very properly inform the people of the Lord's appointment in that behalf: (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* viii. 19—22:) and so far were they from eagerly joining Adonijah, as they had done Absalom; that they remained in suspense, till his determination was notified.

V. 23. *He bowed*, &c.] The exterior indications of civil honour, to persons in authority, were generally rendered by the most eminent servants and prophets of God. The refusal of them *may* arise from an erroneous conscience: but it has the appearance of pride and affected moroseness. (*Acts* xxvi. 25.)

V. 24—27. (*Marg. Ref.*) As the transaction was so publick, and so many eminent persons were concerned, it had the appearance of being countenanced by the king: but after all that had passed, the prophet could not believe that David would have taken such a step without informing him.

29 And the king sware and said, [c] *As* the LORD liveth that [f] hath redeemed my soul out of all distress,

30 Even [g] as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

31 Then Bath-sheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and [h] did reverence to the king, and said, [i] Let my lord king David live for ever.

32 And king David said, Call me [k] Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.

33 The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son [l] to ride upon [*] mine own [m] mule, and bring him down to [n] Gihon.

34 And let [o] Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and [p] blow ye with the trumpet, and say, [q] God save king Solomon.

35 Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and [r] sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and [s] I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, [t] Amen: [u] the LORD God of my lord the king say so *too*.

37 As [x] the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, [y] and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.

38 So [z] Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and [a] the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon [b] king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

39 And Zadok the priest took [c] an horn of oil [d] out of the tabernacle, and [e] anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and [f] all the people said, God save king Solomon.

40 And all the people came up after him; and the people piped with [†] pipes, and [g] rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

41 And Adonijah and all the guests that *were* with him heard *it*, [h] as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, [i] Wherefore *is* this noise of [k] the city being in an uproar?

42 And while he yet spake, behold, [l] Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou *art* [m] a valiant man, and bringest good tidings.

V. 29. *Notes, Gen.* xlviii. 16. *2 Sam.* iv. 9.

V. 31. *Live for ever.*] This common expression of loyalty and affection to princes, as here used, implied that Bath-sheba cordially desired the continuance of David's life, in preference to her son's succession to the throne. (*Notes, Neh.* ii. 3. *Dan.* ii. 4.)

V. 33. *Mine own mule.*] *Notes, 5, 6. Esth.* vi. 6—11.

V. 36, 37. The language of Benaiah, on this occasion, not only expressed the most loyal attachment to Solomon, but also fervent piety; and an earnest desire of the prosperity of Israel, under the government which God had placed over them.—This instance serves to explain the original use and emphasis of the word Amen. (*Notes, Deut.* xxvii. 15—26. *Ps.* lxxii. 17—19. *Matt.* vi. 13.)

V. 38. *Notes, 1 Chr.* xxiii. 1. xxix. 21—25.—*Gihon.*] A fountain near Jerusalem. (33. *2 Chr.* xxxii. 30.) It does not appear, that there was any special reason, why this spot was selected; but, probably, it was a place so much frequented, that it was peculiarly suited to make the transaction speedily known throughout the whole city.

V. 39. *An horn,* &c.] Neither Absalom, nor Adonijah, regarded this expressive ceremony: perhaps presuming on the right of primogeniture; for we do not find that kings, who succeeded as the first born of their predecessors, without any interruption, were anointed. (*Notes,* xix. 15—17. *1 Sam.* x. 1. xvi. 13. *2 Kings* ix. 5—10. xi. 12.) The anointing denoted both their appointment expressly from God, and the qualifications with which he would endow them; and their being types of Christ, the anointed of the Father.—The oil, with which Solomon was anointed, was taken out of the tabernacle; being, as it is probable, the same holy oil with which the priests were anointed. (*Note, Ex.* xxx. 22—33.)

V. 41. Adonijah and his guests seem to have wasted much time upon this magnificent feast, when far more important concerns waited their attention, and when ruin hung over their heads. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Dan.* v. 1—9. *Nah.* i. 9, 10.)

V. 42. (*Note, 2 Sam.* xvii. 17—21.) It is probable, that Jonathan was not invited to the feast, nor concerned in the conspiracy; but he went to warn his father of the danger: though some think he was left in the city to learn what should occur, and to bring an account of it to Adonijah.

43 And Jonathan answered and said
n See on 32—40. to Adonijah, n Verily our lord king
David hath made Solomon king.
44 And the king hath sent with him
Zadok the priest, and Nathan the pro-
phet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada,
and the Cherethites, and the Pele-
thites, and they have caused him to
ride upon the king's mule.
45 And Zadok the priest and Na-
than the prophet have anointed him
king in Gihon: and they are come up
o 40. 1 Sam. iv. 5. Ezra iii. 13. from thence rejoicing, so that o the city
p xiv. 6. 1 Sam. xxviii. 29. Dan. v 26—28. rang again. p This *is* the noise that ye
have heard.
q 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 23. Ps. cxxxii. 11. Hag. ii. 22. 46 And also Solomon q sitteth on
the throne of the kingdom.
r Ex. xii. 32. 2 Sam. viii. 10. xxi. 3. Ezra vi. 10. Ps. xx. 1—4. 47 And moreover, the king's ser-
vants came to r bless our lord king
s See on 37.—Luke xix. 38. David, saying, s God make the name
t Gen. xlvii. 31. Heb. xi. 21. of Solomon better than thy name, and
u Gen. xiv. 20. 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20. Neh. ix. 5. Ps. xxxiv. 1. xli. 13. lxxii. 17—19. ciii. 1, 2. cxlv. 2. Dan. iv. 34. Luke i. 46, 47. 68, 69. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3. make his throne greater than thy
throne: and the king t bowed himself
upon the bed.
48 And also thus said the king,
u Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel,
x which hath given *one* to sit on my
throne this day, y mine eyes even see-
ing *it*.
x iii. 6. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14. 17. Ps. cxxxii. 11. 12. Prov. xvii. 6.
y 2 Sam. xxiv. 3.
49 And z all the guests that *were*
with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up,
and went every man his way.
z Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. xxi. 4, 5. Dan. v. 4—6.
50 And Adonijah feared because of
Solomon, and arose, and went, and
a caught hold on the horns of the altar.
a ii. 28. Ex. xxi. 14.—xxxviii. 2. Ps. cxviii. 27.
51 And it was told Solomon, saying,
Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solo-
mon: for lo, he hath caught hold on
the horns of the altar, saying, Let king
Solomon swear unto me to-day, that
he will not slay his servant with the
sword.
52 And Solomon said, If he will
shew himself a worthy man, b there
b 1 Sam. xiv. 45. 2 Sam. xiv. 11. Matt. x. 30. Luke xxi. 18. Acts xxvii. 34.
shall not an hair of him fall to the
earth; but if c wickedness shall be
c ii. 21—23.
found in him, he shall die.
53 So king Solomon sent, and they
brought him down from the altar. And
he came and d bowed himself to king
d See on 16. 31.—2 Sam. i. 2.
Solomon: and Solomon said unto him,
e ii. 36. 2 Sam. xiv. 24. 28. Prov. xxiv. 21.
e Go to thine house.

V. 43—48. The loud acclamations of the people on this occasion, and the pious and fervent congratulations of David's servants, were especially suited to dismay the conspirators. (*Notes, Matt.* xxi. 6—11.)

V. 49—53. Adonijah had doubtless expected to be joined by the multitude; but finding himself mistaken, and being deserted by his friends, he gave up all for lost. —*The murderer* was to be taken from the altar and slain: (*Note, Ex.* xxi. 12—14:) but in other crimes it was a customary refuge, at least till a pardon could be supplicated; as representing the method of obtaining forgiveness from God, through the great sacrifice for sin.—Adonijah acknowledged Solomon as king, both by word and deed; and received a conditional pardon, but Solomon gave him fair warning that he was put upon his good behaviour. He also required him to go to his house and live a retired, private life, not affecting the splendour and state which he had before.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—10.

The most vigorous constitutions must soon wear out, and our lives hasten to a close: and, though proper means of restoring health and prolonging our days should be used; yet a pious and wise man ought not to yield to such expedients as have the appearance of evil, or may become temptations to him. But carnal men counsel others according to their own inclinations, and often enforce their advice under specious pretexts; by which they impose upon such as mean no evil, but are induced to actions inconsistent with their character and profession.—*Indulgent* parents are commonly chastised with *disobedient* children, who ungratefully despise their infirmities, and are impatient to get possession of their estates.—Every depraved propensity gathers strength by being gratified: and when ambition comes within the reach of its object, it urges a man to violate all obligations, to break through all obstructions, to despise all dangers, and to disregard the examples of those who have before been ruined by similar attempts. So long as carnal self-love reigns in the heart, no worldly wisdom and experience, no maturity of age, nc rank or station in the community or in the church, no previous fidelity or attachment to princes or patrons, can secure men's continuance in their former course or connexions: for innumerable circumstances may occur, which may prompt them to some new method of attempting to gratify their reigning inclinations. So that disgust, fear, conscious guilt, or the hope of greater authority, influence, or wealth, may speedily induce them to measures, which stand in opposition to all their former lives! We ought therefore to depend on the Lord to preserve us from the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and from the fickleness and treachery of men.—Political wisdom frequently contradicts the word of God, and proves in the event the greatest folly: and crafty seducers can discern who are, and who are not, fit for their purpose; and will shun determined honest characters as their enemies and rivals.

V. 11—27

In every age men form designs, which their own consciences condemn as contrary to the will of God: and yet they hope for success from the favour and assistance of

CHAP. II.

David charges Solomon to serve God; and directs him how to act towards Joab, the sons of Barzillai, and Shimei, 1—9. His death, and the years of his reign, 10, 11. Solomon succeeds him, 12. Adonijah persuades Bath-sheba to ask Solomon to give him Abishag to wife; and is put to death, 13—25. Abiathar's life is spared, but he is deprived of the high priesthood, 26, 27. Joab, having fled to the altar, is there put to death, 28—34. Benaiah succeeds Joab, and Zadok, Abiathar, 35. Shimei is, by Solomon, required to reside in Jerusalem, and engages by oath to do so: but breaking his engagement, he is put to death, 36—46.

NOW [a] the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he [b] charged Solomon his son, saying,

2 [c] I go the way of all the earth: [d] be thou strong therefore, and [e] shew thyself a man;

a Gen. xlvii. 29. Deut. xxxi. 14. xxxiii. 1. 2 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 13—15.
b Num. xxvii. 19. Deut. iii. 28. xxxi. 23. Acts xx. 28—31. 1 Tim. i. 18. vi. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 1.
c Josh. xxiii. 14. Job xvi. 22. xxx. 23. Heb. ix. 27.
d Deut. xxxi. 6. Josh. i. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20. Eph. vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
e iii. 7. 2 Sam. x. 12. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 1 Tim. iv. 12.

man! But those, who are vain of their own accomplishments, often flatter themselves with the imagined attachment of numbers, that have no real esteem or affection for them.—A feast, and a sacrifice, are proper baits to draw in the sensual or the unsuspecting: and aspiring men, according to the taste of the times, have always employed one or both of these expedients, to subserve their own ambitious purposes; by which numbers have been inadvertently betrayed to concur in criminal measures, contrary to their judgments, consciences, characters, and interests.—In these days, when kingdoms are disposed of by common providence, the ministers of God have little to do with disputed successions; and are best at a distance from the cabals, intrigues, and parties, which generally surround the courts of kings: yet the welfare of the state, as well as of the church, should lie near their hearts: and they ought to use all their influence, and embrace every opportunity, to remind the greatest men, to whom they are allowed access, of the words of God, and to excite them to do their duty according to his revealed will.—If a neighbour is in danger of being injured or murdered, without knowing it, or being able to avoid the snare; it must be the duty of every man, in all cases or at any hazard, to give him warning or counsel, and to interpose for his preservation.—When others are neglecting their duty, through inattention or multiplied infirmities or engagements, they should be put in remembrance of it: when they are slack to do it, prudent contrivances, and quickening expostulations may be successfully employed to incite them; and every means should be used to prevent manifest injustice, to exclude occasions of future discord, and to promote decisive measures for the glory of God, and the good of his people: for if the enemies of religion be combined, active, and daring; its friends should not be timid, supine, and disunited.—The most respectful behaviour to our superiors is very consistent with plainness of speech in the great concerns of God; and such language and behaviour, combined in persons of known and approved character, will be very forcible with men of piety and integrity.

V. 28—53.

The true believer loves to review his past experience: even the frequent recollection of his distresses, from all which "the LORD hath redeemed him," increases his comfort as well as his gratitude; and inspires him with hope, and animates him to his duty, though under the decays of nature, and at the approach of death. In preparation for that event, we should arrange all our domestick or more publick concerns, as may best secure peace and good to the survivors: and we should lose no time before we do so useful a work, even though it somewhat interrupt our religious exercises.—Those enterprises must end well, which are conducted with piety and integrity, in simple dependence on God, and cordial acquiescence in his will.—We can see no one so wise, so good, or so happy, in this world, but we may well desire that others may be more wise, more holy, and more happy than he; and every pious man must long that it may be thus with his beloved children, both for their sakes, and for the benefit of the community.—They, who are engaged in a bad cause, are exposed to continual terrors: and no *good man* can bring other than *evil tidings* to those who are rebelling against God and the king.—Vain confidence and sensual pleasure are the usual forerunners of temporal and eternal destruction.—Combinations formed upon iniquitous principles will speedily be dissolved, when self-preservation or self-interest calls another way. But clemency becomes those in power, especially towards such as have rather injured them than the publick: yet, no government can pardon or tolerate a traitor, who perseveres in his treasonable machinations.—But we see here, as in a glass, Jesus, the Son of David and the Son of God, exalted to the throne of glory, notwithstanding all the conspiracies and opposition of his enemies. (*Notes, Ps.* ii.) His kingdom is far greater than that of his father David; and all the true people of God most cordially rejoice in his exaltation. The prosperity of his cause and the triumphing of his servants, are the vexation and terror of his enemies: and no "horns of the "altar," no forms of godliness, no pretences to religion of any kind, can profit those who will not submit to his authority and accept of his salvation. He spares and is ready to pardon those, who have most desperately rebelled against him, when they seem disposed to repent, and do works meet for repentance. But if wickedness be afterwards found in them, discovering the hypocrisy of their professed submission, they will at length die without mercy, and perish without remedy.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. Solomon could not at this time be more than twenty years of age; and, it is probable, he was not so much: an early period for him to enter upon so weighty a charge, as the government of God's people! (*Note*, iii. 5—14.) But he was endowed with extraordinary wisdom; and David charged and exhorted him to shew all Israel, that though he was but a child in years, he was a man in capacity and attention to business. (*Notes, Num.* xxvii. 19. 1 *Tim.* iv. 11—16. 2 *Tim.* ii. 1, 2.)

3 And [f]keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his [g] statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his [h] testimonies, [i] as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest [*] prosper in all that thou doest, and [k] whithersoever thou turnest thyself:

4 [l] That the LORD may continue [m] his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way to [n] walk before me in truth, [o] with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not [†] fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

5 Moreover, thou knowest also what [p] Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, *and* what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel, unto [q] Abner the son of Ner, and unto [r] Amasa the son of [s] Jether, whom he slew, and [‡] shed the blood of war in peace, and [t] put the blood of war upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his shoes that *were* on his feet.

6 Do therefore [u] according to thy wisdom, and [x] let not his hoar head go down to the grave [y] in peace.

7 But shew kindness unto the sons of [z] Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that [a] eat at thy table: for so they came to me [b] when I fled because of Absalom thy brother.

8 And, behold, *thou hast* with thee [c] Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a [§] grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but [d] he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

9 Now therefore [e] hold him not guiltless: for thou *art* [f] a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him: but [g] his hoar head bring thou down to the grave [h] with blood.

f Deut. xxix. 9. Josh. i. 7. xxii. 5. 1 Chr. xxii. 12, 13. xxviii. 8, 9. xxix. 19.
g See on Deut. iv. 1. 5. 8. v. 1. vi. 1. 2.
h Deut. iv. 45. Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 2. 111. 138.
i Deut. xvii. 18—20. Mal. iv. 4.
* Or, *do wisely.* Josh. i. 7, 8. *marg.* — 1 Sam. xviii. 5. 14. 30. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Ps. i. 2, 3. cxix. 98—100. Prov. iii. 1—4.
k 2 Sam. viii. 6. 14. 2 Kings xviii. 7.
l Gen. xvii. 19. Deut. vii. 12. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. John xv. 9, 10. Jude 20, 21. 24.
m 2 Sam. vii. 11—16. 25. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—15. xxii. 9—11. xxviii. 5—7. Ps. lxxxix. 29—37. cxxxii. 11, 12.
n iii. 3. 14. viii. 23. Gen. xvii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 3. 2 Kings xx. 3. xviii. 3. 25. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. Luke i. 6.
o Deut. vi. 5. x. 12. xi. 13. Matt. xxii. 37.
† Heb. *be cut off from the throne.* viii. 25. Ps. xxxvii. 9. 22. Zech. xiv. 2. xviii. 5. 14. xix. 5—7.
p i. 7. 18, 19. 2 Sam. iii. 39. q 2 Sam. iii. 27. r 2 Sam. xx. 10. s 2 Sam. xvii. 25. *Ithra.*
‡ Heb. *put.* t Jer. ii. 34. vi 15. Ez. xxiv. 7, 8.
u 9. Prov. xx. 26.
x 28—34. Gen. ix. 6. Num. xxxv. 33. Prov. xxviii. 17. Ec. viii. 11. Is. lxv. 20.
y 2 Kings xxii. 20. Ps. xxxvii. 37. Is. xlviii. 22. lvii. 2. 21.
z 2 Sam. xvii. 27—29. xix. 31—38. Prov. xxvii. 10.
a 2 Sam. ix. 10. xix. 28. Luke xii. 37. xxii. 28—30. Rev. iii. 20, 21.
b 2 Sam. xv. 13—15.
c 36—46. 2 Sam. xvi. 5—8.
§ Heb. *strong.*
d 2 Sam. xix. 16—23. Jer. iv. 2.
e Ex. xx. 7. xxii. 28. Job ix. 28.
f iii. 12. 28.
g 6. Gen. xlii. 38. xliv. 31.
h Num. xxxii. 23.

V. 3. (*Notes, Josh.* i. 7, 8. 1 *Chr.* xxii. 11—13. † viii. 9.) *Testimonies*, in this connexion, may signify those laws, which preserved the remembrance of great events; as the sabbaths, the passover, and others. ‡ (*Notes, Deut.* vi. 1. *Ps.* xix. 7—11. *Is.* viii. 16. 20.)—Nothing can be more manifest, than that the law of Moses, as *written* in the Pentateuch, was known at this time. (*Notes, Deut.* xvii. 16—18.)

V. 4. (*Notes, Gen.* xviii. 18, 19. 2 *Sam.* vii. 12—16.) The continuance of the kingdom to David's posterity was sure, as it respected the Messiah and his spiritual reign: nor would every transgression forfeit the temporal kingdom entailed upon his descendants; for chastisements would be used to bring them to repentance: yet obstinate and aggravated disobedience would cut off the entail. Thus the Lord punished Solomon's idolatry by the defection of the ten tribes from his son: (*Notes,* xi. 9—13. xii. 8—15:) and at length, the family of David was deprived of all authority, till Christ came and set up his spiritual kingdom.

V. 5, 6. These dying counsels of David ought by no means to be imputed to personal resentment; but to a regard to justice, and a wise and pious concern for the security of Solomon's throne, which was the cause of God and of Israel.—Joab had long deserved to die: and David's timidity had left blood-guiltiness upon his family and kingdom. (*Notes, Num.* xxxv. 31—34. 2 *Sam.* iii. 28, 29.) His late conspiracy proved him to be a factious and dangerous person: and, though his influence seems to have been weakened by it; yet his party was still so strong, that it was not probable Solomon would reign in peace while he lived.—He had not so much as attempted to conceal the base murders which he had committed; but he avowed and vindicated them, without shame or fear of punishment; and it was evident that he did not now repent, but would readily repeat them, to carry his purpose and secure his preferment. His murders were crimes *against David,* as committed upon two men who were connected with David: and yet they were so conducted, as to bring him into suspicion as if privy to them. David, therefore, reminded his successor to expiate the guilt of these murders by Joab's blood, that he and his kingdom and family might be guiltless. (*Note,* 28—34.)—It is observable that David did not blame Joab for killing Absalom: being doubtless conscious that he deserved to die; and that his own desire to spare him was a weakness and a sin.

V. 7. *Notes,* 2 *Sam.* xvii. 27—29. xix. 31—39.

V. 8, 9. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xvi. 5—14. xix. 19—23.) Shimei also deserved to die, though for an offence of a different kind from Joab's. Probably he retained his old enmity to the family of David, and his partiality to the house of Saul. Solomon was not bound by the oath, which David had sworn not to put him to death: his punishment, at first, would indeed have been a salutary act of justice; yet David would not *then* consent to it, because unsuitable to his circumstances: and had he been suitably affected with David's lenity, and acted properly afterwards, he would have been fully and finally pardoned. But it is evident that he had not done this: and the case was different with Solomon; who might take occasion from some recent offence, to remember the old crimes, and to execute deserved vengeance on an irreconcilable enemy to him and the peace of the kingdom. David therefore counselled him, as a wise man, not to trust Shimei, but to watch him narrowly; and he would be sure to find just cause for punishing him. (*Note,* 36—46.)

10 ¶ So [i] David slept with his fathers, and was buried in [j] the city of David.

11 And the days that David [k] reigned over Israel *were* forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

12 ¶ Then [l] sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and [m] his kingdom was established greatly.

13 And [n] Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, [o] Comest thou peaceably? and he said, Peaceably.

14 He said moreover, [p] I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on.

15 And he said, [q] Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and *that* all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's; for [r] it was his from the LORD.

16 And now I ask one petition of thee, [*] deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

17 And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me [s] Abishag the Shunammite to wife.

18 And Bath-sheba said, [t] Well; I will speak for thee unto the king.

19 Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king [u] rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and [x] she sat on his right hand:

20 Then she said, [y] I desire one small petition of thee; *I pray thee*, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, [z] Ask on, my mother, for I will not say thee nay.

21 And she said, [a] Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.

22 And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And [b] why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him [c] the kingdom also; for he *is* mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.

i See *on* i. 21.—1 Chr. xxix. 28. Acts ii. 29. xiii. 36.
j iii. 1. xi. 43. 2 Sam. v. 7. 1 Chr. xi. 7.
k 2 Sam. v. 4. 1 Chr. xxix. 26, 27.
l i. 46. 1 Chr. xxix. 23—25. 2 Chr. i. 1. Ps. cxxxii. 12.
m 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. 29. Ps. lxxxix. 36, 37.
n See *on* i. 5—10. 50—53.
o 1 Sam. xvi. 4, 5. 2 Kings ix. 18—22. 1 Chr. xii. 17, 18. Luke x. 5, 6.
p 2 Sam. xiv. 12. Luke vii. 40.
q i. 5. 25. 2 Sam. xv. 6. 13. xvi. 18.
r 2 Sam. vii. 12. xii. 24. 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10. xxviii. 5—7. Prov. xxi. 30. Jer. xxvii. 5—7. Dan. ii. 21.
* Heb. *turn not away my face.* Ps. cxxxii. 10. Prov. xxx. 7. *marg.*
s i. 2—4. 2 Sam. iii. 7. xii. 8.
t Prov. xiv. 15.
u Ex. xx. 12. Lev. xix. 3.
x Ps. xlv. 9. cx. 1. Matt. xxv. 33.
y Matt. xx. 20, 21. John ii. 3, 4.
z Matt. vii. 7—11. xviii. 19. Mark x. 35, 36. xi. 24. Luke xi. 9, 10. John xiv. 13, 14. xv. 16.
a 2 Sam. xvi. 21, 22.
b Matt. xx. 22. Mark x. 38. Jam. iv. 3.
c i. 5—7. 11. 24, 25.

V. 10, 11. (*Marg. Ref.*) The remains of Saul, and his sons, were buried in the sepulchre of Kish his father. (2 *Sam.* xxi. 14.) But David was not buried in the sepulchre of Jesse at Bethlehem; but in that city which he had taken from the Jebusites, and made the capital of his kingdom, and the seat of his government, and that of his family. (*Note, Acts* ii. 25—32.)

V. 14—18. It is *evident* that Adonijah had by no means given up his pretensions to the throne: and highly *probable*, that neither he, nor Joab, nor Abiathar expected safety, unless in success; and that they were in concert forming new designs against Solomon. With this view, they seem to have thought, that if Adonijah married Abishag, it would increase the number of his adherents; both by the accession of her friends and relations, and from the general notions which prevailed, concerning the wives and concubines of deceased kings. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* iii. 6—10. xii. 8. xvi. 20—23.) But they could not get possession of Abishag, without Solomon's consent; which they had no hopes of obtaining, but by the interposition of Bath-sheba.—In Adonijah's speech to her, he insinuated, that the kingdom was his, by the right of primogeniture: and that he had been in possession of it, by the consent of all Israel. This, however, was totally false: the kingdom had never been his, except in his own groundless opinion, and that of the few who abetted his usurpation; for the people generally favoured Solomon. But he meant to induce Bath-sheba to compassionate his case; and to make a merit with her of peaceably receding from his claim: and that she might not suspect any ill design, he at length conceded, that "it was Solomon's from the LORD." But though his language was not well calculated to inspire confidence; and his request was in itself improper, and highly indecorous at least; yet, according to his hopes, Bath-sheba suspected no ill, but considered him as entitled to compassion, and supposed his request to be the result of love, not ambition: and perhaps she thought this an easy way of satisfying Adonijah, and securing Solomon in the kingdom.—She did not look upon Abishag as the *wife* of David, (*Note*, i. 1—4,) and therefore did not consider her marriage with Adonijah as unlawful: and she readily consented to become his intercessor with Solomon. (*Note, Matt.* xx. 20—23.)

V. 20. *For I*, &c.] All such general promises imply the supposition, that the request is lawful and proper to be granted: for even the assurances of God's word, that whatever we ask of him, shall be given, admit of a similar limitation: *i. e.* if consistent with his glory, and for our real good. (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 24—27. *Jam.* iv. 1—3. 1 *John* v. 14, 15.)

V. 22. Solomon immediately saw through Adonijah's intentions, and was fully convinced that he was aiming to take the fortress by sap, (so to speak,) which he had failed of seizing by surprise. He perceived him still restless, aspiring, and scheming; that he considered this as one step to the throne, and that Joab and Abiathar were concerned in the project. To shew the inefficacy therefore of every application in his favour; to convince Bath-sheba of the impropriety and impolicy of her request; and to declare the necessity of his death, in order to publick peace,

23 Then king Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, [d] God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not [e] spoken this word against his own life.

24 Now therefore, [f] *as* the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and [g] set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath [h] made me an house, [i] as he promised, Adonijah shall be [k] put to death this day.

25 And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada: and [l] he fell upon him, that he died.

26 ¶ And unto [m] Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to [n] Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou *art* [*] worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, [o] because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and [p] because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted.

27 So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; [q] that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in [r] Shiloh.

28 ¶ Then tidings came to Joab; for [s] Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and [t] caught hold on the horns of the altar.

29 And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and behold, *he is* by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, [u] Go, fall upon him.

30 And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.

31 And the king said unto him, [x] Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou [y] mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and [z] from the house of my father.

32 And the LORD shall [a] return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon [b] two men [c] more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, [d] my father David not knowing *thereof*, *to wit*, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of [e] Jether, captain of the host of Judah.

33 Their blood shall therefore return [f] upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but [g] upon David, and upon his seed, and [h] upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

34 So [i] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: [j] and he was buried in his own house [k] in the wilderness.

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and the establishment of his authority, he spoke with great earnestness and decision. (*Notes, Matt.* xii. 46—50. *John* ii. 1—5.)

V. 23—25. Solomon has been censured, as too severe and precipitate in this execution; but there is no intimation of this in the Scripture. Adonijah's pardon had been conditional; and he had owned Solomon as king, yet he was plotting against him: (*Note*, i. 49—53:) he affected to tread in the steps of Absalom; and doubtless he would have created as fatal disturbances to Solomon's government, as Absalom had to David's. Nor would sound policy admit of any delay; when persons of so great authority and extensive influence were joined in the conspiracy, and had far more specious reasons for opposing Solomon, than Absalom had for rebelling against David.

V. 26, 27. Solomon's language to Abiathar, and his silence, clearly prove, that some recent conspiracies had been formed. Abiathar had suffered much with David, and had been faithful and useful to him; (1 *Sam.* xxii. 20—23. *Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 1—13. 2 *Sam.* xv. 24—29;) so that, in remembrance of his services, as well as in respect to his sacred character, Solomon resolved to spare his life: and as he had not committed murder, this clemency might properly be exercised. In deposing Abiathar from the high priesthood, Solomon purposely intended to fulfil the word of God to Eli. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* ii. 30—36.) And in confining him to his own estate in the country, he only put him under a disgrace which he justly merited. (*Notes*, 36—46. 2 *Sam.* xiv. 28, 29.) The entire subjection of the priests, and even of the high priest, to the kings of Israel, in all civil and political concerns, is clearly shewn in this instance: nor is any exemption from capital punishment, in the case of treason, or other crimes deserving death, even in favour of the high priesthood itself, in the least intimated.—How different from the claims of the Roman hierarchy in these respects!

V. 28—34. (*Note*, 5, 6.) In fleeing to the altar, Joab pleaded guilty of the treason charged upon him: and Solomon, in ordering him to be slain before the altar, not for that crime alone, but especially for his former murders,

35 And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and [l] Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar.

36 ¶ And the king sent and called for [m] Shimei, and said unto him, [n] Build thee an house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither.

37 For it shall be, *that* on the day thou goest out, and passest [o] over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: [p] thy blood shall be upon thine own head.

38 And Shimei said unto the king, [q] The saying *is* good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.

B. C. 1011. 39 And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto [r] Achish son of Maachah king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants *be* in Gath.

40 And Shimei [s] arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants; and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath.

41 And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.

42 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, [t] Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The word *that* I have heard *is* good.

43 Why [u] then hast thou not kept the oath of the LORD, and [x] the commandment that I have charged thee with?

44 The king said moreover to Shimei, [y] Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall [z] return thy wickedness upon thine own head;

45 And king Solomon *shall be* [a] blessed, [b] and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever.

46 So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out and fell upon him, that he died. And [c] the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

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evinced his knowledge of, and his regard for, the law of God, and his superiority to vulgar prejudices. He also shewed the people, that no place, however sacred, should secure a murderer from justice. (*Note, Ex.* xxi. 12—14.)—His language, on this occasion, proves, that he considered the guilt of innocent blood as resting on his family and kingdom, so long as Joab's murders remained unpunished. (*Note, Num.* xxxv. 31—34.)

V. 35. *Zadok.*] The high priesthood seems to have continued, from this time, in the line of Eleazar and Phinehas, at least till long after the Babylonish captivity. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 1 *Chr.* vi. 4—15.)—Nothing further is said of Jonathan the son of Abiathar. (*Note,* i. 42.)

V. 36—46. No doubt Solomon suspected, that Shimei's influence would be dangerous upon his own estate, and among his numerous dependants in different parts of the land: and therefore he proposed to him, as the condition of his indemnity for former crimes, that he should live in Jerusalem under his eye, and by no means remove thence. (*Note,* 26, 27.) These terms Shimei readily agreed to, and solemnly sware to observe them; and for three years he lived unmolested, and in affluence. But growing secure, in contempt of Solomon's authority, and of the oath of God, upon an unnecessary business, he took a journey, which according to his own engagement forfeited his life. Thus the Lord left him to be infatuated, that due punishment might be inflicted upon him: in order, that every ringleader of opposition to Solomon's kingdom might be crushed, and others be intimidated by their examples; and that his throne might be established in peace, as the type of the Redeemer's kingdom of peace and righteousness. (*Note,* 8, 9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

It is desirable to be habitually and calmly expecting the approach of death; for that is "the way of all flesh," appointed for all men, to pass from this world to another: a dark and gloomy road indeed it is for the workers of iniquity, to a still more dark and dreadful place; but rendered cheerful to the righteous, by the presence of the Lord, and by the hopes of complete felicity. Whilst they are supported by these lively hopes and strong consolations, how becoming is it for them to animate their survivors and successors, to fill up their stations in the church of God, and in society, after a proper manner!—Young men, who are called to important services, should be cautioned by their seniors to act with gravity and prudence, that they may prevent others "from despising their "youth." And those who, in this evil world, would keep the commandments of God, and, as magistrates or ministers, would induce others to do the same, need resolution and fortitude, as well as meekness, discretion, and zeal. "For they must keep the charge of the LORD;" and the smiles and flatteries, the reproaches and opposition, the

CHAP. III.

Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter, 1. The people sacrifice in high places, 2, 3. Solomon offers a thousand burnt-offerings at Gibeon, 4. God appears to him in a dream; and he asks and obtains from him wisdom, together with riches and honour, 5—15. His sagacious decision of a perplexing cause between two harlots renders him celebrated for wisdom, 16—28.

friendship and enmity of the world, will, in different ways, impede them in the performance of their duty.—We can neither act with true wisdom, nor prosper in our undertakings further, than we make the whole word of God our rule and our hope; nor can we finally come short of all desirable success, if we do this, however appearances may for a while be against us.—No length of time will obliterate the guilt of sin; and justice, though long delayed, will finally be executed on the impenitent.—In human governments undue lenity is an evidence of imbecility, want of wisdom, and disregard to justice. Can it then be supposed that the King of heaven will so indiscriminately exercise mercy, as not to magnify his law, and shew decidedly his abhorrence of iniquity?—No human authority has a right to pardon *wilful murder*: and the magistrate, who presumes to do so, is unfaithful to him, who has commissioned him to execute vengeance upon evil doers; and not only exposes the peaceable subject, but brings guilt on his own soul, on his family, and on the land. They, therefore, who act "according to wisdom," will not let the murderer, though advanced in years, or exalted in rank, go down to the grave in peace.—As private persons, we are not to avenge ourselves, but must return blessings and prayers for the bitterest curses and injuries of our enemies: but such offenders will not be held guiltless before God; and if their crimes be a violation of human laws, we may, out of regard to publick justice, and for the sake of the peace and prosperity of the church or state, desire that they should be restrained and punished; and in our proper stations we may promote the execution of the law upon them. Nay, in doing this, we "may serve our "generation according to the will of God," and prepare for death; no less than when we are recompensing our benefactors, and doing acts of kindness to the distressed.

V. 10—25.

It is very happy for a nation, when the death of one good king is followed by the peaceable succession of another, equally wise and righteous. But men are not duly thankful for these blessings: and therefore the Lord permits their course to be interrupted; that publick calamities, experienced or dreaded, may promote humiliation for sin, fervency in prayer, and general reformation; and make way for more lively gratitude, when they are removed or prevented. On such great emergencies, wisdom is needful to direct Christians, that they may neither neglect their present duty, nor intermeddle out of their proper sphere.—Ambitious men can never rest; they must continually be aiming to disturb the settled order and publick peace, that they may mount to superior authority; and when baffled with one weapon, they make trial of another. Whatever goes besides them in Providence they deem taken from them; and if they may not domineer, they claim compassion as injured persons: under plausible pretences and soft insinuations, they conceal their aspiring purposes; and with apparent modesty and affection, address themselves to the passions of the unsuspecting, the undiscerning, and the tender-hearted. These they would persuade into improper concessions, and engage to use their influence, that their moderate and equitable desires may be granted; and then they shall rest satisfied, and give nobody any further disturbance: whilst perhaps all this covers the most dangerous and subtle intentions. But those, who have the ear of princes, should be careful what requests they present to them. Compassion, generosity, or even gratitude, may induce them to ask for others, what cannot be granted, consistently with the honour of the sovereign, or the interest of the kingdom: and it were better to be upbraided with unkindness or ingratitude, than to make so ill a use of influence.—The duty of honouring parents is obligatory upon us in every station in life; and too much respect and gratitude cannot be shewn them, provided they be not gratified by unlawful and improper compliances: but no relative affection, no engagement whatever, can bind us to do a thing that is evil, or of bad tendency to the publick.—The machinations of crafty men generally entangle themselves, and involve them in mischiefs which simple, upright men escape. (*Note, Ps.* cxxv. 4, 5.) No government can be secure, whilst they, who aim to subvert it, remain unpunished: and such as have been convicted, and still persist in treasonable designs, are proper persons to be sacrificed for the publick good, and for an example to others; for apparent severity to them may eventually be mercy to thousands.

V. 26—46.

Those, who have disgraced the sacred ministry by their crimes, are unworthy to officiate in holy things, and should be excluded from them; and wicked priests, though often spared here, will hereafter receive the deepest condemnation. Yet distinctions should be made in the punishment of the guilty; former services and sufferings in a good cause may plead for an alleviation of the sentence, where the law of God will admit of it: and in every event his word will one way or other be accomplished.—Many, who slight the ordinances of God in their prosperity, flee to them in terror and affliction: but no expedients will avail to secure the impenitent from condign punishment; and the crimes, in which men long glory and prosper, will at length fall with heavier vengeance on their heads.—Even murder admits of degrees of criminality. The character of the persons murdered, their rank, and usefulness to society; and the malice, treachery, and boldness, with which the crime was perpetrated; enhance proportionably its malignity.—Different offenders ought to be treated in diverse ways, and punishments so inflicted, as may appear most equitable.—The old malignity remains in the unconverted heart, and a watchful eye should be kept on those, who have manifested their enmity, but have given no evidence of their repentance: yet, it is well to shew them such impartiality, as shall cause them to confess, "The saying is "good." But no engagements or dangers can restrain worldly men from their pursuits; they will go on, though they forfeit their lives and souls: and contempt of authority, and the obligation of an oath, when their own interests

AND Solomon [a] made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, [b] and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into [c] the city of David, until he had made an end of building [d] his own house, and [e] the house of the LORD, and [f] the wall of Jerusalem round about.

2 Only [g] the people sacrificed in high places, because there [h] was no house built unto the name of the LORD until those days.

3 And Solomon [i] loved the LORD, [j] walking in the statutes of David his father: [k] only he sacrificed and burned incense in high places.

4 And the king went to [l] Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place. [m] A thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

5 In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon [n] in a dream by night: and God said, [o] Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto [p] thy servant David my father [q] great * mercy, [r] according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that [s] thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day.

7 And now, O LORD my God, [t] thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I *am but* [u] a little child: I know not *how* [v] to go out or come in.

8 And thy servant *is* in the midst of [x] thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that [y] cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 [z] Give therefore thy servant an † understanding heart [a] to judge thy people, that I may [b] discern between good and bad; for [c] who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

10 And the speech [d] pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing.

a 2 Chr. xviii. 1. Ezra ix. 14
b vii 8. ix. 24. xi. 1.
c 2 Sam. v. 7. 1 Chr. xi. 7.
d vii. 1—12.
e vi. vii. 13—51. 2 Chr. ii.—iv. Ezra v. 11.
f ix. 15—19.
g xxii. 43. Lev. xvii. 3—6. xxvi. 30. Deut. xii. 2—5. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 17.
h v. 3. 1 Chr. xvii. 4—6. xxviii. 3—6. Acts vii. 47—49.
i Deut. vi. 5. x. 12. xxx. 6. 16. 20. 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. Ps. xxxi. 23. Mark xii. 29, 30. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. viii. 3. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5. 1 John iv. 19, 20. v. 2, 3.
j *See on* 14.—ii. 3, 4. xi. 34. xv. 3. 1 Chr. xxviii. 8, 9. 2 Chr. xvii. 3—5.
k xv. 14. xxii. 43. 2 Kings xii. 3. xiv. 4. xv. 4. 35. xviii. 4. 22.
l ix. 2. Josh. ix. 3. x. 2. 1 Chr. xvi. 39. xxi. 29. 2 Chr. i. 3.
m viii. 63. 2 Chr. i. 6. vii. 5. xxix. 32—35. xxx. 24 Is. xl. 16. Mic. vi. 6, 7.
n Gen. xxviii. 12, 13. Num. xii. 6. Job xxxiii. 14, 15. Matt. i. 20. ii. 13. 19. xi. 24. John xiv. 13, 14. xv. 16. xvi. 23, 24. Jam. i. 5, 6. 1 John v. 14, 15. p Num. xii. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 5.
q 2 Sam. vii. 8—12. xii. 7, 8. xxii. 47—51. 1 Chr. xxix. 12—14. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72.
* Heb. *bounty*. Ps. xiii. 6. cxvi. 7. cxix. 17. 2 Cor. ix. 5. 11.
r ii. 4. ix. 4. 2 Kings xx. 3. Ps. xv. 2. xviii. 20—24.
s *See on* i. 48.
t Dan. ii. 21. iv. 25. 32. v. 18. 21.
u 1 Chr. xxix. 1. Job xxxii. 6—8. Ec. x. 16. Jer. i. 6. Matt. xviii. 3, 4.
v Num. xxvii. 17. Deut. xxxi. 2. 1 Sam. xviii. 16. 2 Sam. v. 2. John x. 3, 4. 9.
x Ex. xix. 5, 6 Deut. vii. 6—8. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Ps. lxxviii. 71.
y Gen. xiii. 16. xv. 5. xxii. 17. 1 Chr. xxi. 2. 5, 6. xxvii. 23, 24.
z 1 Chr. xxii. 12. xxix. 19. 2 Chr. i. 10. Ps. cxix. 34. 73. 144. Prov. ii. 6. iii. 13—18. xvi. 16. Jam. i. 5. iii. 17.
† Heb. *hearing*.
a 26. Ps. lxxii. 1, 2. Prov. xiv. 8. Ec. vii. 11. 19. ix. 15—18.
b 2 Sam. xiv. 17. Is. xi. 2—4. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. Eph. v. 17. Phil. i. 10. *Gr.* Heb. 14. 2 Cor. ii. 16. iii. 5.
c Ex. iii. 11, 12. iv. 10—13. Jer. i. 6. Matt. iii. 11.
d Prov. xv. 8.

are concerned, evince them to be ripe for destruction.—Thus, the kingdom of Christ is established by the ruin of its obstinate opposers, and the advancement of its cordial friends. Those who injure his people will be called to account perhaps long after; and all, who are kind to them, shall be surely recompensed. Wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy unite in his administration: his kingdom is from the Lord; his enemies will be condemned out of their own mouths; and the wickedness, to which their own hearts are privy, will silence all their pleas. (*Note*, 1 *John* iii. 18—24.) Many have incurred his wrath by a forbidden pursuit of worldly objects; and in aiming to secure some needless possession, have lost their immortal souls. May we be his faithful subjects! May the Lord more and more establish and extend his kingdom, by making his foes his footstool; and may the whole earth be filled with his glory, and with the acclamations of his willing people!

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. As Rehoboam was born before the death of David, (comp. xi. 42 with xiv. 21;) it is plain that Solomon had before this married Naamah an Ammonitess; (*Note*, xiv. 21:) and at this time he married the daughter of the Egyptian king. It is supposed that both of them had embraced the religion of Israel: and, as Solomon is not censured on this account, there might be special reasons inducing him to this conduct, of which we are not informed. It is also remarkable, that when Solomon's wives drew him into idolatry, the idols of Egypt are not mentioned: so that Pharaoh's daughter does not seem to have been one of his tempters. (*Note*, xi. 1—8.) At first he brought her into the city of David: but after he had finished his other works, he built her a palace at some distance from the temple. (ix. 24. *Note*, 2 *Chr.* viii. 11.)

V. 2, 3. Until the temple was builded, the irregularity of sacrificing to the God of Israel in high places, and burning incense at them by the priests, was in some degree connived at: but the people proceeded much further in it, than in the days of David, and Solomon was censurable for countenancing them by his example. Upon high hills, especially when covered with trees, as having peculiar solemnity, and being favourable to retirement, they erected altars, and offered sacrifices, after the manner of the nations around them, but contrary to the law of Moses. (*Notes*, *Lev.* xxvi. 30. *Deut.* xii. 2—7. 2 *Kings* xviii. 4. 22. *Ez.* xx. 28, 29.) Solomon, however, "loved "the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father."

V. 4. The tabernacle made under the direction of Moses, and the altar belonging to it, were at this time stationed at Gibeon: and this was on that account, the principal high place, where the priests and Levites officiated according to the law. (2 *Chr.* i. 5, 6. *Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xvi. 37—43. xxi. 28—30.) Solomon must have continued at Gibeon for some time on this occasion; as he offered a thousand burnt-offerings, upon the *altar* made by Bezaleel, (*Note*, *Ex.* xxvii. 1—8,) which the constant and vehement fire on the altar entirely consumed. (*Note*, viii. 63—65.)

V. 5—14. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xx. 1—6. xxxi. 23, 24. *Job* iv. 12—16. xxxiii. 14—18.) In ordinary dreams almost every thing is incoherent and irrational, though they often savour of a man's waking thoughts, pursuits, and character: but Solomon's dream was of another kind. While his

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and [e] hast not asked for thyself [*] long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding, to [†] discern judgment;

12 Behold, [f] I have done according to thy words: lo, [g] I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither [h] after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 And [i] I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both [k] riches and honour; so that there [‡] shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

14 And [l] if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, [m] as thy father David did walk, then [n] I will lengthen thy days.

15 And Solomon [o] awoke; and behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood [p] before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered [q] peace-offerings, and made [r] a feast to all his servants.

16 ¶ Then came there two women, *that were* harlots, unto the king, and [s] stood before him.

17 And the one woman said, [u] O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house, and I was delivered of a child with her in the house.

18 And it came to pass, the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.

19 And this woman's child died in the night, because she overlaid it.

20 And she arose at [x] midnight, and [y] took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

21 And when I arose in the morning to [z] give my child suck, behold it was dead; but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son which I did bear.

22 And the other woman said, [a] Nay;

e Ps. iv. 6. Prov. xvi. 31. Matt. xx. 21, 22. Jam. iv. 3.
* Heb. *many days.*
† Heb. *hear.* 9. *marg.*
f Ps. x. 17. Is. lxv. 24. Rom. viii. 26, 27. 1 John v. 14, 15.
g 28. ii. 6. 9. iv. 29—34. v. 12. x. 3—8. 2 Chr. i. 11, 12. ii. 12. ix. 5—8. Ec. i. 16. Luke xxi. 15.
h Matt. xii. 42. Col. ii. 3.
i Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 12. Matt. vi. 33. Rom. viii. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Eph. iii. 20.
k iv. 21—24. x. 23. 27. Prov. iii. 16.
‡ Or, *hath not been.*
l ii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. xxii. 12, 13. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr vii. 17—19. Ps. cxxxii. 12. Zech. iii. 7.
m See on 3.—ix. 4, 5. xv. 5. 2 Chr. xvii. 3, 4. xxix. 2. xxxiv. 2. Acts xiii. 22.
n Deut. v. 16. Ps. xci. 16. Prov. iii. 2. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 8.
o Gen. xli. 7. Jer. xxxi. 26.
p 2 Sam. vi. 17. 1 Chr. xvi. 1, 2.
q viii. 63. Lev. iii. vii. 11—19. 2 Sam. vi. 18, 19. 2 Chr. vii. 5. 7—10. xxx. 22—26.
r Gen. xxxi. 54. xl. 20. Esth. i. 3. Dan. v. 1. Mark vi. 21.
s Lev. xix. 29. Deut. xxiii. 17. Josh. ii. 1.
t Ex. xviii. 13 16. Num. xxvii. 2.
u Gen. xliii. 20. Rom. xiii. 7.
x Job xxiv. 13—17. Matt. xiii. 25. John iii. 20.
y 21.
z Gen. xxi. 7. 1 Sam. i. 23. Lam. iv. 3, 4.
a 23, 24.

corporeal senses were locked up in sleep, the powers of his soul were supernaturally invigorated; and he was enabled to receive the divine vision, and to make a suitable choice in the case referred to him. His pleas were cogent, and his determination wise. His father had ruled over Israel in truth and righteousness, and had been greatly favoured and prospered; he was the first of the rulers of Israel, who had been succeeded by his son; Solomon had been preferred before his elder brethren by God's own appointment: all these circumstances concurred to raise men's expectations, or to excite their enmity and envy; and thus to increase the importance and arduousness of his station. The people were very numerous, they were the chosen of God, and among them he must both judge in equity, and promote true religion. Yet he was very young, and inexperienced as a child. (*Notes*, ii. 2. 1 *Chr.* xxii. 2—5. xxix. 1. *Jer.* i. 6—8.) His single petition therefore was, that the Lord would give his servant an understanding heart: that is, that he would enlarge and strengthen his intellectual powers, give him a ready discernment in spiritual things and a correspondent disposition; and furnish him with the peculiar talents and capacities for government; that he might administer justice and judgment, with impartial rectitude and deep penetration, for the benefit of the people and the honour of God. Doubtless these sentiments were habitually in Solomon's mind, previously to this dream: and his consciousness of his own insufficiency had led him to depend upon the Lord to qualify him for the discharge of the duties of his important station: and his request accorded to the exhortations which David had given him, and the prayers which he had offered for him. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxii. 11, 12. xxviii. 9. xxix. 10—19. *Ps.* lxxii. *title.* 1, 2. *Prov.* ii. 1—6. xiv. 8. *Jam.* i. 5—8.)—Absalom and Adonijah do not seem to have been troubled with anxiety on this account, though far inferior to Solomon in capacity for ruling: but *they* sought the *honour and power* of the kingdom, *he* desired *to discharge the duty* of a king.—The disposition and judgment which dictated this petition, in preference to all those alluring distinctions which carnal minds pursue, and which especially attract young persons in superior stations, was well pleasing to the Lord; and he assured Solomon, that "*he had given* him a "wise and understanding heart," and that he should receive a very large accession of wisdom: (*Note, Matt.* xiii. 12:) so that he should excel all the kings of Israel, who had preceded or should succeed him, and indeed all other kings, in every kind of knowledge and discernment, and also in riches and honour which he had not asked. (*Notes*, iv. 30—34. *Matt.* vi. 33, 34. xii. 41, 42.)—The promise of long life was conditionally added; and perhaps it was in part forfeited by the idolatry, and other sins, into which he was afterwards betrayed. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* i. 7—13.)

V. 15. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 17.

V. 16—22. These harlots, who by some means escaped punishment for their licentious conduct, were alone when the child of the one died; though probably not when the children were born. The first woman's account, though

but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king.

23 Then said the king, The one saith, This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living.

24 And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king.

b Prov. xxv. 8. 25 And the king said, [b]Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.

26 Then spake the woman, whose the living child *was*, unto the king, (for [c]her bowels [*]yearned upon her son,) and she said, O my lord, [d]give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide *it*.

c Gen. xliii. 30. Is. xlix. 15. Jer. xxxi. 20. Hos. xi. 8. Phil. i. 8. ii. 1. 1 John iii. 17.
* Heb. *were hot.* Ps. xxxix. 3.
d Rom. i. 31. 2 Tim. iii. 3.

27 Then the king answered, and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof.

e Ex. xiv. 31. Josh. iv. 14. 1 Sam. xii. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 24. Prov. xxiv. 21.
f 9—12. Ezra vii. 25. Ec. vii. 19. Dan. ii. 21. 47. v. 11. 1 Cor. i. 24. 30. Col. ii. 3.
† Heb. *in the midst of him.*

28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they [e]feared the king: for they saw that [f]the wisdom of God *was* [†]in him to do judgment.

in great part conjectural, seems to have been the truth. Perhaps the other woman feared some reproach, suspicion, or punishment, as if she had willingly or negligently occasioned the death of her child; or she hoped to have some gain by means of the living child; or perhaps she was induced by envy and malignity to claim it as her own: for her willingness to have it divided afterwards evinced that she had no true affection for it (26).

V. 23—28. As there were no witnesses in this transaction, and both parties were alike strenuous and positive, the cause became extremely difficult; and probably it was referred to the king's hearing, because it had proved too difficult for the inferior judges. In many countries such cases have been decided by *lot*, and, which is much worse, by *duels;* or the parties have been tortured, that they might be compelled to declare the truth. But Solomon adopted the only rational method, by making use of his acquaintance with the human heart, to discover which of them had the *feelings* of a mother for the living child. Yet when he called for the sword, and ordered the living child to be divided; as none of the auditors seemed to have perceived his intentions, they doubtless would secretly condemn the proposal, as puerile, absurd, and inhuman. The woman, who consented to the division of the child, perhaps expected to obtain Solomon's favour by this acquiescence: but she betrayed her want of natural affection for the child, and her resentment against her competitor; while the other expressed all the feelings of a mother in an artless and inimitable manner. And when the people saw, that, by this extraordinary measure, Solomon had extorted the truth beyond all further doubt; they revered and stood in awe of him, notwithstanding his youth; perceiving "that "the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment." (*Note*, ii. 2.)—The murder of illegitimate infants by their mothers, to conceal their own sin and shame, which so frequently occurs in this land, is not so much as intimated in any way in the scriptures, nor, as far as my reading and recollection extend, in any ancient history. The state of morals among the heathen accounts for this, among them, in two ways: 1st. It was not considered as peculiarly disgraceful to either parent to have spurious children: and 2dly. The common practice of exposing infants, whether spurious or not, excluded all temptation to the secret murder of any. But the case must have been very different in Israel: yet this crime seems never to have occurred; nor was any law enacted concerning it. It is not, however, difficult to discover the cause of its frequent and horrid occurrence in our enlightened land, in the stern rejection of the offending female, if detected, from the society of all who are not thus disgraced, without discrimination, or hope of recovery from this infamous *loss of caste*, so to speak; and in the entire impunity of her male paramour, though perhaps far more deeply criminal. And it is a question of no small importance, in every view, whether some measures might not be taken, to counteract this dire evil, without lowering the standard of morality, or giving encouragement to vice.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

Whatever external or intellectual accomplishments any man may possess; "to love the LORD" is the grand distinction between one man and another: and thus the meanest believer is preferred before all the wise, learned, renowned, and prosperous unbelievers on earth; and is classed among apostles, prophets, and those few princes who have served God. Indeed, admiration of his perfections, gratitude for his goodness, delight in his service, and zeal for his glory, form the perfection and felicity of angels: and to this character the grace of our Redeemer renews all those, who accept of his salvation.—Such as love the Lord ought to copy the examples, and follow the instructions, of those who have gone before them in the same path; especially of pious parents: but they should be careful to avoid their errors and transgressions; for even good men find it difficult to act themselves *at all times* as they would counsel others: so that defects will be found in the best characters, and the best state of the church upon earth. We should indeed watch and pray against all evil in ourselves, and use our influence to prevent it in others: yet we should expect to see many things that we disapprove, and learn to make allowances for them.—That is never wasted, which is prudently spent in the service of God: and the munificence and liberality of the great should be proportioned to their affluence, that their example may edify their inferiors. To abound in the work of the Lord,

CHAP. IV.

Solomon's princes, 1—6. Twelve officers who provided for his household, each in his month, 7—19. The prosperity and grandeur of his kingdom, 20—25. His horses and chariots, 26—28. His wisdom and reputation, 29—34.

a xi. 13. 35, 36. xii. 19, 20. 2 Sam. v. 5. 1 Chr. xii. 38. 2 Chr. ix. 30. Ec. i. 12.

SO king Solomon was king [a] over all Israel.

b Ex. xviii. 21. 2 Sam. viii. 15—18. xx. 23—26. 1 Cor. xii. 28.

2 And these *were* [b] the princes which he had; [c] Azariah the son of Zadok the [*] priest;

c 1 Chr. vi. 8—10. xxvii. 17.

* Or, *chief officer.*

3 Elihoreph and Ahiah, the sons of [d] Shisha, [†] scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the [‡] recorder.

d 2 Sam. xx. 25. *Sheva.* 1 Chr. xviii. 16. *Shavsha.*

† Or, *secretaries.*

‡ Or, *remembrancer.* 2 Sam. viii. 16. 1 Chr. xviii. 15. Is. lxii. 6. *margins.*

4 And [e] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the host: and [f] Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests;

e *See on* ii. 35.

f *See on* ii. 26, 27. 35.

5 And Azariah the [g] son of Nathan *was* over the officers; and Zabud the

g i. 10, &c. 2 Sam. vii. 2. xii. 1—15. 25.

upon scriptural principles, forms the proper method of waiting for the communications of further knowledge, grace, and comfort.—In effect, the Lord by his gospel makes this proposal to all who hear it, "Ask what I shall "give thee." (*Note, Matt.* vii. 7—11.) He does not indeed engage to gratify the desires of the ambitious, the covetous, the sensual, the envious, or the revengeful: but he is ever ready to answer the petitions of those, who ask of him heavenly wisdom and spiritual blessings, however guilty, depraved, and foolish they have hitherto been. We should therefore first request the Lord to teach us what to pray for, and how to pray aright: and if we pray from our hearts, and in the Redeemer's name; if we have been taught to ask of the Lord, his favour, his image, his graces, and his comforts; with wisdom, ability, and a willing mind, to fill up our station, in the church and in society, to his glory and the good of others; he has already given us an understanding heart, and will make continual accessions to this gift. When we decidedly prefer these spiritual blessings to all worldly advantages, we may be sure that he will give us as much of outward comforts, as he sees really subservient to our good. We should also honour the riches of his all-sufficiency and liberality, by multiplying and enlarging our requests, and grasping at more and more from him; for he will take it graciously, and deal with us accordingly.—In every service, publick and private, they are most qualified for their work, and acquit themselves the best in it, who are most sensible of its difficulty, and of their own insufficiency. It is a hopeful circumstance, when those, whom others call *wise men,* deem themselves *children;* and very discouraging, when men are *singular* in a good opinion of their own abilities and attainments.—Distinguishing favours require peculiar returns of gratitude: and a man's being evidently called to very important and arduous services, may dictate his prayers, and encourage his expectations of proportionable assistance.—Such as succeed eminently wise and good men, should ask a double portion of wisdom and grace, to answer the expectations of others from them: and they who, in deviation from ordinary rules, are employed in any publick service, will be more narrowly watched, and more severely censured, if they act inconsistently. Let not this hint be overlooked, or taken amiss, by those who preach the gospel without an express regular appointment from man, in any of those ways by which ministers are ordinarily sent forth.—The continued blessing of God can only be expected in the way of persevering obedience: and negligence or wickedness will always ensure loss in our temporal or spiritual comforts.

V. 16—28.

Judges, magistrates, and all concerned in trying causes, need great discernment, as well as integrity, in order to search out the truth, when all possible pains and fallacy are employed to conceal it: they ought therefore, in all their studies and in all their decisions, to ask wisdom of God; and we should earnestly remember them in our prayers that he would confer it upon them.—Where the Lord has given abilities, and a heart disposed to improve them, he will open a way for the profitable exercise of them in his due time: and an accurate acquaintance with the human heart will be found a most profitable kind of knowledge for all, but especially for magistrates and ministers.—God has made natural affection very strong, especially in mothers, as the great means of preserving their infants, in the midst of their dangers and infirmities, and notwithstanding all the trouble and fatigue which they occasion. Yet human depravity, habitual wickedness, or fear and shame, can extinguish it, and even mothers are capable of becoming the murderers of their own infants! Surely these harlots will rise up in judgment against such unnatural criminals, and condemn them; and still more their brutal seducers, who have deserted them when exposed to these awful temptations.—But to accommodate this transaction, may we not observe, that many professors of the gospel (like the pretended mother who consented to have the child divided,) would mutilate the sacred Scriptures, and leave out those parts, which oppose their prejudices, pride, and lusts? yea, they would fain divide their hearts between God and mammon. But the true believer loves the whole Scripture, and holds it fast, and values doctrines, precepts, warnings, promises, and every part, as necessary to the perfection of the inestimable whole: and this cordial affection proves the whole to be his own. He would yield his heart entirely to the Lord, and seek after his happiness from him alone. Soon *our* Solomon will decide between these two characters: "in him is the wisdom of God to do judg-"ment." Let us then see to it, that our cause and title be clear: for he cannot be imposed upon by any evasions or subterfuges; seeing he "searcheth the hearts of all the "children of men," and "all things are naked and open "before him, with whom we have to do."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. David had not at first reigned over "all Israel;" and none of Solomon's successors had this privilege continued to them. (*Note, Ec.* i. 1.)

V. 2—6. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Several of these *princes,* or

son of Nathan *was* principal officer, *and* [h] the king's friend;

6 And Ahishar *was* over the household: and [i] Adoniram the son of Abda *was* over the [*] tribute.

7 ¶ And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: [j] each man his month in a year made provision.

8 And these *are* their names: [†] The son of Hur, in [k] mount Ephraim.

9 [‡] The son of Dekar, in Makaz, and in [l] Shaalbim, and [m] Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan.

10 [§] The son of Hesed in Aruboth; to him *pertained* [n] Sochoh, and all the land of [o] Hepher.

11 [‖] The son of Abinadab, in all the region of [p] Dor; which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife.

12 Baanah the son of Ahilud; *to him pertained* [q] Taanach and [r] Megiddo, and all [s] Beth-shean, which *is* by [t] Zartanah beneath [u] Jezreel, from Beth-shean to [x] Abel-meholah, *even* unto *the place that is* beyond Jokneam.

13 [*] The son of Geber, in [y] Ramoth-gilead; to him *pertained* [z] the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which *are* in Gilead: to him *also pertained* the region of [a] Argob, which *is* in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brazen bars.

14 Ahinadab the son of Iddo *had* [†] Mahanaim.

15 Ahimaaz *was* in [b] Naphtali; he also took Basmath [c] the daughter of Solomon to wife.

16 Baanah the son of Hushai *was* in [d] Asher and in Aloth:

17 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in [e] Issachar:

18 [f] Shimei the son of Elah, in [g] Benjamin.

19 Geber the son of Uri *was* in the country of Gilead, *in* [h] the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; and *he was* the only officer which *was* in the land.

20 Judah and Israel *were* many, [i] as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude, [k] eating and drinking and making merry.

21 And [l] Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they [m] brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

22 ¶ And Solomon's [‡] provision for

[h] 2 Sam. xv. 37. xvi. 16. xix. 37, 38. Prov. xxii. 11. John xiii. 23. xv. 14, 15. Jam. ii. 23.
[i] xii. 18. 2 Sam. xx. 24. *Adoram.*
[*] Or, *levy.* v. 13, 14. ix. 15.
[j] 1 Chr. xxvii. 1—15.
[†] Or, *Ben-hur.*
[k] Judg. xvii. 1. xix. 1.
[‡] Or, *Ben-dekar.*
[l] Josh. xix. 42. *Shaalabbin.*
[m] *See on* 1 Sam. vi. 12. 20.
[§] Or, *Ben-hesed.*
[n] *See on* Josh. xv. 36.
[o] Josh. xii. 17. xvii. 2.
[‖] Or, *Ben-abinadab.*
[p] Josh. xii. 23. xvii. 11. Judg. i. 27.
[q] *See on* Josh. xvii. 11. Judg. v. 19.
[r] 2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30.
[s] 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. 12.
[t] vii. 46. *Zarthan.* Josh. iii. 16. *Zaretan.*
[u] xviii. 46.
[x] xix. 16.
[*] Or, *Ben-geber.*
[y] xxii. 3. Deut. iv. 43. Josh. xx. 8. xxi. 38. 2 Kings ix. 1. 14.
[z] Num. xxxii. 41. Deut. iii. 14.
[a] Deut. iii. 4. 10, 14. Ps. xxii. 12. lxviii. 15.
[†] Or, *to Mahanaim.* Gen. xxxii. 2. 2 Sam. ii. 8. xvii. 24. 27.
[b] Josh. xix. 32—39.
[c] 11. 1 Sam. xviii. 18.
[d] Josh. xix. 24—31.
[e] Josh. xix. 17—23.
[f] 1 Chr. vi. 8. Zech. xii. 13.
[g] Josh. xviii. 20—28.
[h] Num. xxi. 21—35. Deut. ii. 26—37. iii. 1—17. Josh. xiii 9—12.
[i] iii. 8. Gen. xiii. 16. xv. 5. xxii. 17. Prov. xiv. 28.
[k] 1 Sam. xxx. 16. 1 Chr. xii. 39. Job i. 18. Ps. lxxii. 3—7. Ec. ii. 24. Is. xxii. 13. Mic. iv. 4. Zech. iii. 10. ix. 15. Acts ii. 46.
[l] 24. Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31. Deut. xi. 24. Josh. i. 4. 2 Chr. ix. 26. Ezra iv. 20. Ps. lxxii. 8, 9.
[m] 1 Sam. x. 27. 2 Kings xvii. 3. 2 Chr. xvii. 5. xxxii. 23. Ps. lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10, 11. lxxvi. 11.
[‡] Heb. *bread.*

ministers of state, and chief officers, were either the same persons as David had employed, or their sons. (xx. 23—25. *Note*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 15—18.)—Abiathar, though deposed from the high priesthood, and secluded from the sanctuary, retained under Zadok the title and emoluments of a priest, or one of the chief priests. Azariah the son, or grandson, of Zadok, being the son of Ahimaaz, (1 *Chr.* vi. 8, 9,) might under his grandfather have the chief management of ecclesiastical matters. Two sons of Nathan the *prophet*, as it is supposed, were preferred by Solomon, and one was dignified as the king's friend.

V. 7—19. (*Marg. Ref.*) These officers were appointed to procure every kind of provision, where it was most plentiful and good: and we may suppose that, besides the monthly supply of such productions as were common to the whole land, they would purchase upon the spot those provisions which were peculiar to each district, and which could be preserved. This was a salutary and economical arrangement, and would prevent any part of the country from being improperly drained; it would also promote an equal consumption, and supply the requisite plenty upon the best terms.—Two of these purveyors married daughters of Solomon: for it was not *his policy*, to prevent his children from intermarrying with his subjects. Perhaps he had more daughters, though but one son by all his wives. But these marriages must have taken place many years after his accession, and this chapter should be considered as a general account of the state of the land in his reign. Geber seems to have had the chief management of the whole country beyond Jordan, and to have employed his son, and Ahinadab, under him in that district. (13, 14. 19.)

V. 20. The people were not diminished in Solomon's reign, by wars, invasions, or intestine contests; and therefore they grew exceedingly numerous and prosperous, and lived in great peace and plenty. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Ec.* ii. 24—26.) But they seem to have been too much pleased and elated with their external blessings, and to have indulged themselves too freely in the use of them.

V. 21. David had subdued all the countries, from the entrance of Egypt to the river Euphrates: and Solomon reaped the fruit of his victories, by reigning peaceably over these extensive territories, and increasing his own wealth, and that of his native subjects, by the presents and tributes of the inhabitants. (*Notes, Gen.* xv. 18—21. *Ex.* xxiii. 31. *Josh.* i. 3, 4. 2 *Sam.* viii. 3. *Ps.* lxxii. 8—11.)

V. 22, 23. The provisions here mentioned would suffice for several thousands of people. Solomon's servants and officers, and those who flocked to his court from all

one day was thirty * measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal.

23 [n] Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl.

24 For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to [o] Azzah, over [p] all the kings on this side the river: and he [q] had peace on all sides round about him.

25 And Judah and Israel dwelt [†] safely, [r] every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, [s] from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon.

26 And Solomon had [t] forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

27 And [u] those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.

28 Barley also and straw for the horses and [‡] dromedaries brought they unto the place, where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.

29 ¶ And [x] God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and [y] largeness of heart, even [z] as the sand that *is* on the sea-shore.

30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all [a] the children of the east country, and all [b] the wisdom of Egypt.

31 For he was [c] wiser than all men; than [d] Ethan the Ezrahite, and [e] Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and [f] his fame was in all nations round about.

32 And [g] he spake three thousand proverbs: and his [h] songs were a thousand and five.

33 And he spake of trees, from [i] the cedar-tree that *is* in Lebanon, even unto [k] the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also [l] of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

34 And [m] there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

* Heb. cors.

n Neh. v. 17, 18.

o Gen. x. 19. Judg. xvi. 1. *Gaza.*

p *See on* 21.—Ps. lxxii. 8. 11.

q v. 4. 1 Chr. xxii. 9. Ps. lxxii. 3. 7. Is. ix. 7. Luke ii. 14. Heb. vii. 1, 2.

† Heb. *confidently.* Is. lx. 18. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 15, 16. Ez. xxxviii. 11. *marg.*

r 2 Kings xviii. 31. Mic. iv. 4. Zech. iii. 10.

s Judg. xx. 1. 2 Sam. xvii. 11. xxiv. 15.

t x. 25, 26. Deut. xvii. 16. 2 Sam. viii. 4. 2 Chr. i. 14. ix. 25. Ps. xx. 7.

u 7—19.

‡ Or, *mules*, or *swift beasts.* Esth. viii. 10. 14. Mic. i. 13.

x *See on* iii. 12. 28.—x. 23, 24. 2 Chr. i. 10—12. Ps. cxix. 34. Prov. ii. 6 Ec. i. 16. ii. 26. Jam. i. 5. 17. iii. 17.

y Is. lx. 5.

z *See on* 20.—Gen. xii. 49. Judg. vii. 12. Jer. xxxiii. 22. Hab. i. 9.

a Gen. xxv. 6. Job i. 3. Dan. i. 29. iv. 7. v. 11, 12. Matt. ii. 1.

b Is. xix. 11, 12. Acts vii. 22.

c *See on* iii. 12.—Matt. xii. 42. Luke xi. 31. Col. ii. 3.

d 1 Chr. xv. 19. Ps. lxxxix. *title.*

e 1 Chr. ii. 6. vi. 33. xv. 17. 19. Ps. lxxxviii. *title.*

f v. 7. x. 1. 6. 2 Chr. ix. 23. Matt. iv. 24.

g Prov. i. 1. Ec. xii. 9. Matt. xiii. 35.

h Cant. i. 1.

i Num. xxiv. 6. 2 Kings xix. 23. Ps. xcii. 12

k Ex. xii. 22. Num. xix. 18. Ps. li. 7. Heb. ix. 19.

l *See on* Gen. i. 20—25.

m x. 1. 2 Chr. ix. 1. 23. Is. ii. 2. Zech. viii. 23.

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parts of the land, and from distant nations, with their retinues, were no doubt entertained upon them. (*Note, Neh.* v. 14—18.)

Measures. (22) *Cors.* (*marg.*) A cor is generally computed at ten ephahs, or rather above seventy-two gallons.

V. 24. Tiphsah is supposed to have been a city, near which there was a passage over the Euphrates, either by a ford, a ferry, or a bridge; the name being derived from a word which signifies *to pass over.* (*Note, 2 Sam.* xix. 18.) *Azzah* is *Gaza* of the Philistines, the original word being the same.

V. 25. (*Marg. Ref.*) The land from the one end to the other was in such profound peace, and was so exempt from oppression or terror, that the people disregarded the protection of walled cities, and lived upon their lands, that they might enjoy their abundance upon the spot, where it was produced. (*Notes, Ez.* xxxviii. 11. *Mic.* iv. 4. *Zech.* iii. 9, 10.)

V. 26. "A thousand four hundred chariots, &c." x. 26. *2 Chr.* i. 14. "Four thousand stalls for horses and cha-"riots, &c." *2 Chr.* ix. 25. Different ways have been taken of reconciling these texts; none of which are satisfactory. Four thousand *stalls* (not *stables*) would be a proper number, for a thousand chariots to have change of horses. The four hundred might be added afterwards. As numbers were generally expressed in the manuscripts by numeral letters, over which, in many cases, a small mark distinguished one number from another much smaller; it seems most obvious to suppose that a trivial mistake has here occurred. Forty thousand stalls for chariot horses, (unless all sorts of carriages be included,) seems out of all proportion to twelve thousand horsemen: and in no other place are more, than a thousand and four hundred chariots mentioned. (*Notes,* x. 24—27. *Deut.* xvii. 16.)

V. 27, 28. *Note,* 7—19.—*Dromedaries.* (28) *Marg.*—*Esth.* viii. 10. 14.

V. 29. *Largeness of heart,* &c.] This expression and comparison denote the unparalleled greatness of Solomon's intellectual powers, his most extensive knowledge, and his enlargement of heart in communicating instruction to all around him. 'A mind very comprehensive of all 'sort of knowledge; and a heart to do a vast deal of 'good.... As the sand... incloses a vast body of waters; so 'his mind contained an ocean of knowledge, as Lord 'Bacon... speaks.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Ps.* cxix. 32. *2 Cor.* v. 13—15.)

V. 30—34. God gave Solomon, not only heavenly wisdom, and singular talents for government, but extraordinary capacities for the attainment of all kinds of knowledge: so that he excelled the wise men of Egypt, and of Babylon, of Arabia, or countries still more to the east, in astronomy, and all other sciences for which they were renowned. In the knowledge of divinity he surpassed Ethan and Heman, who seem to have been men renowned for extraordinary piety and wisdom at that time; and all others who were celebrated in Israel on the same account. (*Marg. Ref.* d—f. *1 Chr.* ii. 5, 6.) He excelled also in morality, politicks, and economicks; for he spake three

CHAP. V.

Hiram, king of Tyre, sends to congratulate Solomon; who informs him that he intends to build a temple, and desires him to furnish the timber, 1—6. Hiram blesses God for Solomon's wisdom, and engages for the timber; requiring in return food for his household, 7—9. The mutual good offices between Hiram and Solomon, 10—12. The number of Solomon's workmen and labourers, 13—18.

AND [a]Hiram king of Tyre [b]sent his servants unto Solomon: for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father; [c]for Hiram was ever a lover of David.

[a] 10 18. ix. 11—14. 2 Chr. ii. 3. *Huram.*
[b] 2 Sam. viii. 10. x. 1, 2. Ps. xlv. 12.
[c] 2 Sam. v 11. 1 Chr. xiv. 1. Am. i. 9.

thousand proverbs, of which such as were most suited for general utility have come down to us in the book of Proverbs. He likewise excelled in poetry, and wrote one thousand and five songs: but only one of these is preserved in Scripture. It may, however, be supposed, that many of the others were upon moral and religious subjects; as well as remarkable for the beauties of poetry. He was, moreover, deeply versed in all the branches of natural philosophy, and discoursed in an admirable manner upon the nature, properties, and uses of the several species of plants and animals. So that in every thing he possessed such an undisputed superiority over all men in that age, that his reputation for wisdom brought numbers from different kings and nations all around, to learn every kind of useful knowledge from him: and perhaps he possessed more accurate and extensive knowledge, on an immense variety of subjects, than any mere man besides, in any age or nation of the world, ever did.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—28.

True wisdom generally directs those, who succeed prudent and prosperous men in kingdoms or estates, to tread in their steps, to employ their servants, and to avail themselves of the good advice of their friends and counsellors: but folly and self-conceit delight in making many and great changes, though they commonly prove disadvantageous. (*Notes*, xii. 6—15. 2 *Kings* xxi. 1—3. *Ec.* ii. 18—23.)—Those who faithfully seek the good of our souls, though sometimes with sharp reproofs, are our best friends: and their memories are always entitled to grateful respect, and their children to kind regard; yet these are worthy of a wise man's confidence and friendship, only when they tread in the steps of their pious parents.—The different ranks of men in society should be distinguished by a suitable attendance and provision: but "when goods increase, they are increased that eat them," and the owners have much additional incumbrance, and but little accession of solid advantage. (*Note, Ec.* v. 9—12.) It is also extremely difficult to possess abundance, without covetousness, luxury, or ostentation; without abusing, wasting, or burying, the goods of our common Lord, to whom every one must give an account of his stewardship: yet, prudent management and frugality are excellent appendages to liberality, and serve to support the expenses of it.—Wise and righteous princes are most valuable blessings to whole kingdoms, and should be sought in prayer from that God, who has all hearts in his hands: yet all outward prosperity is precarious and transient; and too often it proves unfavourable to religion, and increases pride, sloth, and sensual indulgence; thus rendering divine judgments necessary.—Wealth without wisdom, and knowledge without humility and grace, are generally destructive to the possessor, and to those with whom he is connected; yet both are the gifts of God, good in themselves, and only evil as perverted by man's depravity. And heavenly wisdom teaches men to give God the glory in the use of these inferior blessings, and so renders them ornamental to the Christian profession, and conducive to promote designs of extensive usefulness.

V. 29—34.

A reputation for wisdom and piety is no further desirable, than as it consists with humility, and affords a man an opportunity of communicating more extensively that useful knowledge, which the Lord has imparted. (*Note, Ec.* x. 1.)—Every information, which is needful in order to our glorifying God and obtaining his "salvation with "eternal glory," is preserved to us in the sacred Scriptures: and the light of heaven will more certainly and speedily instruct us in all useful knowledge, than all the regretted records of antiquity could do if we had them. Let us then rejoice that the Lord reigns on a mercy-seat, and that his name is Emmanuel. His kingdom was faintly shadowed forth in that of Solomon, but is of a nobler and more heavenly nature. The blessings of it consist not "in meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy "in the Holy Ghost." In his days the righteous flourish; their numbers have already been exceedingly multiplied, and future ages shall witness a more rapid and immense increase, "when all kings shall bow down before him, and "all nations shall serve him." (*Note, Ps.* lxxii. 8—11.) Then "shall they beat their swords into plow-shares, "and war shall be learned no more:" then shall "every "man call his neighbour under the vine, and under the "fig-tree." (*Notes, Is.* ii. 2—5. *Mic.* iv. 1—5.) "In him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" his fame shall spread through all the earth, and all people shall come to him, learn of him, take upon them his easy yoke, and find rest for their souls.—But, whilst we look with joyful, longing desires and fervent prayers for these glorious days, let us now sit at his feet, hear his word, ask of him wisdom, submit to his will, and seek his glory. Then, outward tribulation shall not break our inward peace; then, we shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of his house; then, we shall enjoy much liberty, and have many glimpses of his glory on earth; and shall speedily remove to yon brighter world above, where innumerable angels, and redeemed sinners, are happy in his presence, and rapturously celebrating his praises.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. (*Note, 2 Sam.* v. 11.) It is highly probable, that Hiram was himself a worshipper of JEHOVAH, and loved David on account of his wisdom and piety; though his people in general seem to have continued idol-

d 2 Chr. ii. 3.

2 And [d] Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,

3 Thou knowest how that David my
e 2 Sam. vii. 5—11. 1 Chr. xxii. 4—6. 2 Chr. vi. 6—9.
father [e] could not build an house unto
f 1 Chr. xxii. 8. xxviii. 3.
the name of the LORD his God, [f] for the
g Josh. x. 24. Ps. viii. 6. cx. 1. Mal. iv. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Eph. i. 22.
wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD [g] put them under the soles of his feet.

h See on iv. 24.—1 Chr. xxii. 9. Ps. lxxii. 7. Is. ix. 7. Acts ix. 31.
4 But now the LORD my God [h] hath given me rest on every side, *so that there is* neither adversary, nor evil occurrent.

i 2 Chr. ii. 1. 4.
* Heb. *say.*
5 And, [i] behold, I [*] purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto
k 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 12. xxii. 10. xxviii. 6. 10. Zech. vi. 12, 13.
[k] David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name.

6 Now therefore command thou, that they hew me [l] cedar-trees out of
l vi. 9, 10. 16. 20. 2 Chr. ii. 8. 10. Ps. xxix. 5.
Lebanon; and my servants shall be
m Rom. xii. 17. Phil. iv. 8.
with thy servants: and unto thee [m] will I give hire for thy servants, according
† Heb. *say.*
to all that thou shalt [†] appoint: for thou
n 1 Cor. xii. 14—21. Eph. iv. 7.
knowest [n] that *there is* not among us any that can skill to hew timber like
o Gen. x. 15. Ezra iii. 7.
unto the [o] Zidonians.

7 And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he
p x. 9. 2 Chr. ii. 11, 12. ix. 7, 8. Ps. cxxii. 6, 7. cxxxvii. 6.
rejoiced greatly, and said, [p] Blessed *be*
q 1. 48. Gen. xxxiii. 5. Is. viii. 18. ix. 6.
the LORD this day, [q] which hath given unto David [r] a wise son over this great people.

r See on iii. 9.—2 Chr. ii. 12. Prov. x. 1. xv. 20. xxiii. 24.
8 And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have [‡] considered the things which thou sentest to me for: *and* I will do all thy desire, concerning tim-
‡ Heb. *heard*
s vi. 15. 34. 2 Sam. vi. 5. 2 Chr. iii. 5.
ber of cedar, and concerning [s] timber of fir.

9 My servants shall bring *them* down
t Deut. iii. 25.
from [t] Lebanon unto the sea; and [u] I will convey them by sea in floats unto
u 2 Chr. ii. 16.
the place that thou shalt [§] appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive *them;* and thou shalt accomplish my desire in [x] giving food for my household.

§ Heb. *send.*
x 2 Chr. ii. 15. Ezra iii. 7. Ezr. xxvii. 17. Acts xii. 20.

10 So Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees and fir-trees, *according to* all his desire. B. C. 1012.

11 And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand [‖] measures of wheat *for* food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.

‖ Heb. *cors.* iv. 22. *marg.* 2 Chr. ii. 10.

12 And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, [y] as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solo-
y iii. 12. iv. 29. 2 Chr. i. 12. Jam. i. 5.
mon; and [z] they two made a league together.

z xv. 19. Gen. xxi. 32. Am. i. 9.

13 ¶ And king Solomon raised a [*] levy out of all Israel; and [a] the levy was thirty thousand men.

* Heb. *tribute* of men. See on iv. 6.
a ix. 15.

14 And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand [b] a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, *and* two months at home: and [c] Adoniram *was* over the levy.

b iv. 7—19. 1 Chr. xxvii. 1—15.
c See on iv. 6.

15 And Solomon had [d] threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains;

d ix. 20—22. 2 Chr. ii. 17, 18. viii. 7—9. Ezra ii. 56. Neh. vii. 57. 60.

16 Beside the chief of Solomon's officers, which *were* over the work, [e] three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.

e ix. 23. 2 Chr. viii. 10.

17 And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, [f] costly stones, *and* hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.

f vi. 7. vii. 9. 1 Chr. xxii. 2. Is. xxviii. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. Rev. xxi. 14—21.

18 And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew *them*, and [†] the stone-squarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house.

† Or, *Giblites.* Josh. xiii. 5. Ps. lxxxiii. 7. Ezr. xxvii. 9.

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aters. He sent to condole with Solomon on his father's death, and to congratulate him on his peaceable succession. —Tyre and Zidon lay north of Canaan, and were not expressly included in the grant to Israel; it was therefore lawful to form alliances with them.

V. 2—9. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xxii. 6—10. 2 *Chr.* ii. 3—12.) The Tyrians possessed only a small tract of land, and were employed and enriched by commerce and manufactures; and they had their provisions chiefly from the fruitful land of Canaan. (*Note, Acts* xii. 20—23.)

V. 11. "Twenty thousand *baths* of oil" are mentioned in Chronicles, which amounted at least to two thousand *cors.* (*Marg. Note,* iv. 22.) But as barley and wine are *there* spoken of; some think that the *wheat, here* mentioned, was intended for the use of Hiram's family, and the small quantity of very fine oil for his own use; whereas in Chronicles the provisions made for the workmen are intended. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* ii. 3—10.)

V. 13—18. A small number comparatively of Israelites were employed, in rotation, as it consisted with their conveniency, and probably in the easier services: but a great number of the remains of the ancient inhabitants of the

CHAP. VI.

The building of the temple is begun, 1. The dimensions of the house, and its porch, 2, 3. The windows, 4. The chambers, 5—10. The promise of God concerning the temple, 11—13. Its walls, ceiling, floor, and ornaments, 14—18. The Oracle and Cherubim, 19—30. The doors of the Oracle, and of the house, 31—35. The inner-court, 36. The time in which the whole was completed, 37, 38.

[a] Judg. xi. 26. 2 Chr. iii. 1, 2. AND [a] it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, [b] in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he

[b] 37. Num. i. 1.

[*] began to [c] build the house of the LORD.

[*] Heb. *built.* Acts vii. 47.

[c] 1 Chr. xxix. 19. Zech. vi. 12, 13. Ib. John ii. 19—21. 1 Cor. vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph ii. 20—22. Col. ii. 7. Heb. ix. 11. xi. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

2 And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof *was* [d] threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.

[d] Ezra vi. 3, 4. Ez. xli. 1, &c. Rev. xxi. 16, 17.

3 And the [e] porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits *was* the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house, *and* ten cubits *was* the breadth thereof before the house.

[e] 1 Chr. xxviii. 11. 2 Chr. iii. 3, 4. Ez. xli. 15. Matt. iv. 5. John x. 23. Acts iii. 10, 11.

land continually assisted the Tyrians, by removing the timber, conveying it to the sea, helping to navigate the floats, and conveying it when landed to Jerusalem; and in preparing stones for the temple. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, ix. 20—22.) These were superintended by three thousand and three hundred persons, perhaps of the same nations. Three thousand six hundred are mentioned in Chronicles: (2 *Chr.* ii. 17, 18:) perhaps three hundred were officers over the rest; or they were supernumeraries, to supply for such as were sick and disabled from attendance.—Thus the temple was chiefly built by the labour and riches of those, who were originally Gentiles; which typified the calling of the Gentiles into the church: and the costly stones laid out of sight, as the foundation of the temple, typified Christ our tried and precious Foundation; and were an emblem of the hidden excellency of those who form a part of his spiritual temple. (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 4—6.)

Stone-squarers. (18) *Giblites.* (*Marg.*—*Josh.* xiii. 5.) 'The 'Giblites, ... being Phenicians, inhabitants of Gabala, a 'promontory mentioned by Pliny, ... were the most ex-'cellent artists in those parts.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those who love God are influenced to love one another, and rendered superior to selfish jealousies and envyings: and this divine energy teaches them to rejoice in each other's prosperity, and to be glad to receive or afford mutual assistance in every good undertaking.—The most necessary and successful wars, not only produce very much temporal evil, but obstruct or retard the execution of many useful designs for promoting godliness: we may then, well pray, 'Send peace in our time, O Lord:' and when he "gives rest on every side, so that there is no "adversary nor evil occurrent," no time should be lost, but every one should be intent to devise and execute such useful undertakings as were before prevented. (*Note, Acts* ix. 31.)—Different persons are qualified for diverse services; and while all harmoniously concur, in their proper places, and by improving their several talents, the common cause will prosper.—It is admirable when the children rise up, and complete the wise and pious designs of their deceased parents: and all should rejoice and bless the Lord, when they see such tokens of the prosperity of his church.—God has so constituted the earth, that every nation has its peculiar productions, and its inhabitants their distinguished endowments: thus their mutual intercourse is forwarded; and, by an interchange of benefits, they are instructed to love one another as children of the same family. Happy would it be, if commerce were generally conducted on such principles, and rendered subservient to the promulgation of true religion: but alas! through man's depravity, it has often tended to diffuse wickedness and misery rapidly through the nations of the earth!—All agreements should be made with consideration, that equity may be established, and contests precluded: and great punctuality should be observed in paying labourers their wages.—Frequently, they are most ingenious in the liberal arts, who are strangers to true godliness; and many are employed *about* the church of God, who have no interest in its blessings. (*Notes, Ps.* lxxxvii. 4—7. *P. O.*) The meanest office in his service is honourable and profitable, if cordially performed: and millions of us poor Gentiles, who in ourselves were devoted to destruction, have been employed by him.—Our gracious Lord lays no intolerable burdens on any of his people; but in every injunction consults their interest and comfort. Let us then serve him cheerfully, and attend to our proper work: and after his example may we be humane and considerate in all our requisitions from our inferiors; that our service, like his, may be loved, and considered as a privilege by those employed in it.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. The use and typical meaning of the temple, and those of the tabernacle, were the same: but the moveable tabernacle suited the state of Israel when wandering in the wilderness, and a magnificent temple was more proper when they were settled in Canaan. (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 8, 9.)—A temple was not indeed essential to the religion of Israel: and therefore the building of it was deferred till four hundred and eighty years, after that people was brought out of Egypt; or four hundred and forty years after they entered Canaan: (*Note, Judg.* xi. 26:) and this temple was destroyed, in less than four hundred and twenty years after it was finished.—Solomon was more than three years, in making the necessary preparations; and in the fourth year of his reign, he laid the foundation. The month *Zif* was the second of the *ecclesiastical* year. Some think that the names of the months, here given, were not in use before the captivity.

V. 2, 3. The temple was a very magnificent building, and immense quantities of gold and silver were used about it: yet, apart from its courts, it was but a small structure,

4 And for the house he made * windows of narrow lights.

5 And † against the wall of the house he [f] built [‡] chambers round about, *against* the walls of the house round about, *both* of the temple and of the [g] oracle: and he made [§] chambers round about.

6 The nethermost chamber *was* five cubits broad, and the middle *was* six cubits broad, and the third *was* seven cubits broad: for without *in the wall* of the house he made [‖] narrowed rests round about, that *the beams* should not be fastened in the walls of the house.

7 And the house, when it was in building, was [h] built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was [i] neither hammer, nor axe, *nor* any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building.

8 The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right * side of the house: and they [j] went up with winding stairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third.

9 So [k] he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house † with beams and boards of cedar.

10 And *then* he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11 ¶ And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying,

12 *Concerning* this house which thou art in building, [l] if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; [m] then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father:

13 And [n] I will dwell among the children of Israel, and [o] will not forsake my people Israel.

14 ¶ So [p] Solomon built the house, and finished it.

15 And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, [‡] both the floor of the house, and the walls of the cieling: *and* he covered *them* on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir.

* Or, *windows broad within, and narrow without; or, skewed and closed. See on* vi. 4.—Cant. ii. 9. Ez. xl. 16. xli. 26.

† Or, *upon, or, joining to.*

f 1 Chr. ix. 26. xxiii. 28. xxviii. 11. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11. Neh. x. 37. xii. 44. xiii. 5—9. Cant. i. 4. Jer. xxxv. 4. Ez. xl. 44. xli. 6—11. xlii. 3—12.

‡ Heb. *floors.*

g 16. 19—21. 31. Ex. xxv. 22. Lev. xvi. 2. Num. vii. 89. 2 Chr. iv. 20. v. 7. 9. Ps. xxviii. 2.

§ Heb. *ribs.*

‖ Or, *narrowings, or, rebatements.*

h v. 18. Prov. xxiv. 27. Rom. ix. 23. 2 Cor. v. 5. Col. i. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

i Is. xlii. 2. Acts ix. 31. Jam. i. 20. iii. 17, 18.

* Heb. *shoulder.*

j Ez. xli. 6, 7.

k 14. 38.

† Or, *the vault beams and the ceilings with cedar.*

l ii. 3, 4. iii. 14. viii. 25. ix. 3—6. 1 Sam. xii. 14, 15. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 17, 18. Ps. cxxxii. 12. Zech. iii. 7. Col. i. 23.

m 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Chr. xxii. 10.

n viii. 27. Ex. xxv. 8. Lev. xxvi. 11. Ps. lxviii. 18. cxxxii. 12, 13. Is. lvii. 15. Ex. xxxvii. 26—28. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. xxi. 3.

o *See on* Deut. xxxi. 6. 1 Sam. xii. 22. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 20.

p 9. 38. Acts vii. 47, 48.

‡ Or, *from the floor of the house, unto the walls, &c.* 16.

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compared with many buildings in ancient and modern times.—It was about a hundred feet long, thirty-three feet wide, and fifty feet high: and it had a porch, on the east end at the entrance, which formed in some respects an ornamental steeple of about two hundred feet high. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* iii. 3, 4.) The tabernacle erected in the wilderness is computed to have been fifty feet long, twelve or thirteen feet wide, and nearly seventeen feet high.

V. 4. The tabernacle had no light from without, and the temple had not much. (*Note, Ex.* xxv. 31—39.) These windows, which are supposed to have been wider on the inside than without, were situated in the spaces between the chambers afterwards mentioned; or, as some think, above them. (*Marg.*)

V. 5, 6. These chambers accommodated the priests, when they were upon duty at the temple: and in them they laid up their clothes, the sacred vessels not in immediate use, and the other treasures belonging to the temple. For the purpose of fixing these chambers, the wall of the temple was made two cubits thicker at the bottom than at the top: and where it was made a cubit less in thickness, a rest was formed on the outside, for the beams of the second story of chambers to lodge upon, and so for the third. By this contrivance the upper stories were larger than the lower; and the wall of the temple was not weakened, either by building, or by repairing the chambers. It is supposed that there was also a gallery round about, by which the priests entered the chambers; and that there were no chambers over the entrance of the temple. (*Notes, Ez.* xli. 5—12.)

V. 7. Every stone was squared, and fitted for its place, at the quarry; so that the temple was erected without noise, or the encumbrance of useless rubbish. Several of these circumstances may shadow forth spiritual things. (*P. O.*)

V. 8. There seems to have been a door, in each of the two upper stories, into a gallery, which communicated with all the chambers; and winding stairs from one story to another.

V. 10. The chambers were five cubits high in each story; and thus they did not go up to the top of the temple, which was thirty cubits high (3). The windows are supposed to have been placed above the top of the chambers. (*Note*, 4.)—The beams of cedar lay on the rests in the wall. (*Note*, 5, 6.)

V. 11—13. This word of the Lord was both an encouragement to Solomon to proceed; and an intimation to him, and to Israel, that neither the service performed in building the temple, nor its continuance with them, could secure to them the Lord's favour, if they were not obedient to his commandments: for both king and people stood upon the same terms with God, as they did before the temple was begun. (*Notes*, ix. 3—6. *Jer.* vii. 3—15.)

V. 15—22. The inside of the walls of the temple were throughout wainscotted with cedar, ornamented with exquisite workmanship; and it was floored with planks of fir, or, as some explain the word, of a very durable kind of cedar: yet both these were covered with plates of solid gold. (*Note, Ez.* xli. 22.) In the same manner and proportion, as the tabernacle had been, this building was

16 And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls, with boards of cedar: he even [q] built *them* for it within, *even* for the oracle, *even* for the most holy *place*.

17 And the house, that *is*, the temple before it, was forty cubits *long*.

18 And the cedar of the house within *was* carved with [*] knops and [†] open flowers: all *was* cedar; there was no stone seen.

19 And [r] the oracle he prepared in the house within, [s] to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

20 And the oracle in the forepart *was* twenty cubits in length, and [t] twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof; and he overlaid it with [‡] pure gold; and *so* covered [u] the altar *which was of* cedar.

21 So Solomon [x] overlaid the house within with pure gold; and he made a partition [y] by the chains of gold before the oracle, and he overlaid it with gold.

22 And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: [z] also the whole altar that *was* by the oracle he overlaid with gold.

23 And within the oracle he made [a] two cherubims *of* [§] olive-tree, *each* ten cubits high.

24 And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub; from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other *were* ten cubits.

25 And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both the cherubims *were* of one measure, and one size.

26 The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was it* of the other cherub.

27 And he set the cherubims within the inner house: [b] and [‖] they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.

28 And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.

29 And he carved all the walls of the house round about with [c] carved figures of cherubims, and [d] palm-trees, and [*] open flowers, within and without.

30 And [e] the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without.

31 And for the entering of the oracle he made [f] doors *of* olive-tree: the lintel *and* side-posts *were* [†] a fifth part *of the wall*.

32 The [‡] two doors also *were of* olive-tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and [§] open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm-trees.

33 So also made he for the door of the temple, posts of olive-tree, [‖] a fourth part *of the wall*.

34 And the two doors *were of* [g] fir-tree: the [h] two leaves of the one door *were* folding, and the two leaves of the other door *were* folding.

35 And he carved *thereon* cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers; and covered *them* with gold fitted upon the carved work.

q 5, 19, 20. viii. 6. Ex. xxv. 21, 22. xxvi. 33. Lev. xvi. 2. 2 Chr. iii. 8. Heb. ix. 3.

* Or, *gourds.*
† Or, *openings of flowers.*

r *See on* 5.—2 Chr. v. 20.
s viii. 6—10. Ex. xl. 20, 21. 2 Chr. v. 7. Heb. ix. 3, 4.

t *See on* 2, 3.

‡ Heb. *shut up.*

u 22. vii. 48. Ex. xxx. 1—3.
x Ex. xxvi. 29. 32. xxxvi. 34. 2 Chr. iii. 7—9.
y 5. Ex. xxvi. 32, 33. 2 Chr. iii. 14—16.

z *See on* 20

a Gen. iii. 24. Ex. xxv. 18—22. xxxvii. 7—9. 2 Chr. iii. 10—13. Ps. xviii. 10. lxxx. 1. Is. xxxvii. 16. Ez. x. 2, &c. Heb. i. 14. 1 Pet. i. 12.
§ Or, *oily.* Heb. *trees of oil.*

b Ex. xxv. 20. xxxvii. 9. 2 Chr. v. 8.
‖ Or, *the cherubims stretched forth their wings.* 2 Chr. iii. 11.

c Ex. xxxvi. 8. 2 Chr. iii. 14. iv. 2—5. Ps. cii. 20. cxlviii. 2. Luke ii. 13, 14. Eph. iii. 10. Rev. v. 11—14.
d Ps. xcii. 12—15. Rev. vii. 9.
* Heb. *openings of flowers.* 18. 32.
e Is. liv. 11, 12. lx. 17. Rev. xxi. 18—21.
f John x. 9. xiv. 6. Eph. ii. 18. Heb. x. 19, 20.
† Or, *five square.*

‡ Or, *leaves of the doors.*

§ Heb. *openings of flowers.*

‖ Or, *four square.*

g v. 8.
h Ez. xli. 23—25.

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divided into two parts. (*Note, Ex.* xxvi. 31—33.) "The "oracle," or "the most holy place," in which was the ark of the covenant, with the mercy-seat, and from whence the Lord delivered his answers to the high priest from above the mercy-seat, was twenty cubits square: it is also said to have been twenty cubits high, though the house was thirty: it was therefore either *built* or *ceiled* lower than the other part of the temple. The veil, which separated the holy of holies, was hung by golden chains on pillars erected for that purpose. (2 *Chr.* iii. 15, 16.)—"The altar, "by the oracle," was the altar of incense without the veil; in the *holy place*, which was twice as long as the *most holy place*.

V. 23—28. These cherubim were the emblems of the angels, as jointly worshipping God our Saviour; and as delighting to contemplate the mysteries of redemption.—They were distinct from, and much larger than, those which covered the mercy-seat and indeed were inseparably united to it. (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 10—22.)—They stood erect with "their faces towards the wall;" (2 *Chr.* iii. 13;) and they covered with their out-stretched wings the whole breadth of the most holy place.—The others were of solid gold; but these of olive-tree covered with gold.

V. 31—35. It is probable, that, besides the veil, there was another partition between the holy of holies and the sanctuary. The veil covered the whole of this: but when that was drawn aside, folding doors, of olive-tree plated with gold, and curiously engraved with cherubim and palm-trees, took up a fifth of the partition, or about four

Ex. xxvii. 9—19. xxxviii. 9—20. 2 Chr. iv. 9. vii. 7. Rev. xi. 2.

36 And he built [1] the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams.

k 1. 2 Chr. iii. 2.

37 ¶ In [k] the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid, in the month Zif:

38 And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which *is* the eighth month, was the house [1] finished [*] throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he [m] seven years in building it.

1 Ezra vi. 14, 15. Zech. iv. 9. vi. 13—15.

* Or, *with all the appurtenances thereof, and with all the ordinances thereof.*

m vii. 1. Ezra iii. 8—13. vi. 15. John ii. 20.

CHAP. VII.

Solomon builds himself an house, 1: and the house of the forest of Lebanon, 2—5: the porch of pillars, 6: the porch of judgment, 7: the house of Pharaoh's daughter, 8. The costly materials of these structures, and of the great court, 9—12. Hiram, a skilful artificer, is fetched from Tyre, 13, 14. He casts two pillars of brass, 15—22: and the brazen sea; with ten bases, and ten lavers, and other vessels for the temple, 23—47. The furniture and sacred vessels of gold are made for the temple, 48—50. The dedicated treasures are brought into it, 51.

cubits.—The doors at the entrance of the sanctuary were rather larger.

V. 36. The inner court, at the entrance of the sanctuary, in which the altar of burnt-offering stood, was principally appropriated to the priests, Levites, and those who brought the sacrifices. (*Notes, Ex.* xxvii. 9—19. *Ez.* xl, xli, xlii.) It was separated from the other courts by a wall of hewn stone: but it is supposed that part of it was built of cedar beams, to leave openings, through which the other worshippers might see the sacrifices offered, and join in the sacred services.

V. 37, 38. The whole time was seven years and a half; but the number of whole years alone is mentioned. This is frequently the case.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

Though God does not delight in outward magnificence, but is present with his poor people who assemble in the meanest place, and accepts their worship: yet he expects that the wealthy should devote their riches to his service. And whatever is liberally expended, out of zeal for his glory, and according to the rule of his word, shall be graciously accepted; though perhaps man may censure the expense, as needless or useless. (*Notes, Matt.* xxvi. 6—13. *John* xii. 1—8.)—Every good work should be done heartily and without procrastination: but it is not needless delay to consult prudent measures, to make requisite preparations, and to remove such obstructions, as might afterwards impede our progress, or divert our attention. Thus, young men, animated with a laudable design to seek the salvation of souls, and impatient to be employed in the work of the ministry, would do well to restrain their ardour, to wait for a proper opening in Providence, and to spend some time in previous study, meditation, and prayer; that they may acquire the wisdom, experience, humility, and steadiness, requisite for so important a work; and afterwards proceed in it without interruption, and to better effect: and a few years spent in this manner will no more be *lost time*, than those which were employed in preparations for the building of Solomon's temple.—Every thing in the church above is conducted in perfect harmony and regularity; every part of that spiritual temple being made ready for its place, before it is conveyed thither: and the more the church on earth resembles it the better.—The true church of God is most glorious within; and the true believer is chiefly employed in attending to the state of his heart.—In all religious matters conveniency must be preferred to splendour; but stability must not be sacrificed even to *apparent* conveniency.—No pompous services will purchase a dispensation from obeying the least of God's commandments. All those things in which men, who allow themselves in sin, confide, will be found as unavailing, as the temple was to the wicked kings and people of Israel: for nothing but unreserved obedience, to the precepts and statutes of God's word, can prove the sincerity of our faith, and our love to the Saviour. But, though numbers of professors apostatize, and whole nations forfeit their peculiar privileges; yet the Lord will dwell in the midst of his true people, and never forsake them: and they will delight in his ordinances and commandments; and be encouraged by being told their duty, as it is a token of the Lord's favour to them.

V. 14—38.

What is begun in the fear and love of God, in dependence on him, and obedience to him, will in due time be accomplished to his glory.—God must be honoured with the best we have: but gold is only meet to be trodden under foot, in comparison with the beauty of holiness, which is the glory and ornament of his spiritual temple.—The human nature of the Redeemer, that true Temple in which God dwells with man, is immaculately holy: the Christian, as united unto Jesus, and "an habitation of "God through the Spirit," is sanctified in his measure: and the church above, where innumerable angels unite with redeemed sinners, in ceaseless worship of God our Saviour, is perfect in this beauty. Let not then the hypocrite, or formal professor of Christianity, who is a stranger to the sanctifying influences of God's Spirit, and who lives in secret or open sin, suppose himself a part of this living Temple.—Yet let sinners come to Jesus, as the living Foundation, that they may be built on him, a part of this spiritual house, consecrated in body and soul to the glory of God. (*Notes, Eph.* ii. 19—22. 1 *Pet.* ii. 4—6.)—If we have good ground to conclude, that we are a part of this living Temple; let us look to it, that our inward part, which is seen by God alone, may be preserved most pure: let us be careful also of our outward conduct, that our blameless conversation may be ornamental to our profession in the sight of man: let us look to Jesus for encouragement and assistance in every service, and as the great exemplar to which we are to be conformed: and let us by faith behold that glorious company whom we hope soon to join; that we may now emulate their praises, imitate their obedience, and thus anticipate their comforts, even in this world of sin and sorrow.

BUT Solomon was building his own house [a] thirteen years, and he finished all his house.

2 He built also [b] the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof *was* an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar-pillars, with cedar-beams upon the pillars.

3 And *it was* covered with cedar above upon the [*] beams, that *lay* on forty-five pillars, fifteen *in* a row.

4 And *there were* [c] windows *in* three rows, and [†] light *was* against light *in* three ranks.

5 And all the [‡] doors and posts *were* square with the windows: and light *was* against light *in* three ranks.

6 And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch *was* [§] before them; and the *other* pillars and the thick beam *were* [‖] before them.

7 Then he made [d] a porch [e] for the throne, where he might judge, *even* the porch [f] of judgment: and *it was* covered with cedar [*] from one side of the floor to the other.

8 And his house where he dwelt *had* [g] another court within the porch, *which* was of the like work. Solomon made also [h] an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken *to wife*, like unto this porch.

9 All these *were of* [i] costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and *so* on the outside toward the great court.

10 And [k] the foundation *was of* costly stones, *even* great stones; stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.

11 And [l] above *were* costly stones, after the measures of hewed stones, and cedars.

12 And the great court round about *was* with [m] three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar-beams, both for the inner court of the house of the LORD, and for [n] the porch of the house.

13 ¶ And king Solomon sent, and fetched [o] Hiram out of Tyre.

14 He *was* [†] a widow's son of the tribe of [p] Naphtali, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, a worker in brass; and [q] he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.

a ix. 10. 2 Chr. viii. 1. Ec. ii. 4, 5. Matt. vi. 33.
b ix. 19. x. 17. 2 Chr. ix. 16. Cant. vii. 4.
* Heb. *ribs* vi. 5. *marg.*
c 5. vi. 4. Is. liv. 12. Ez. xl. 16. 22. 25. 29. 33. 36. xli. 26.
† Heb. *sight against sight.*
‡ Or, *spaces and pillars were square in prospect.*
§ Or, *according to them.*
‖ Or, *according to them.*
d vi. 3.
e x. 18—20. Ps. cxxii. 5. Is. ix. 7.
f iii. 9. 28. Prov. xx. 8.
* Heb. *from floor to floor.*
g 2 Kings xx. 4.
h *See on* iii. 1.—ix. 24. 2 Chr. viii. 11.
i 10, 11. v. 17.
k Is. xxviii. 16. liv. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. Rev xxi. 19, 20.
l Eph. ii. 20—22. 1 Pet. ii. 5.
m *See on* vi. 36.
n John x. 23. Acts iii. 11. v. 12.
o 40. 2 Chr. ii. 13. iv. 11. *Huram.*
† Heb. *the son of a widow woman.*
p 2 Chr. ii. 14.
q Ex. xxxi. 2—6. xxxv. 30—35. xxxvi. 1, 2. 8. Is. xxviii. 26. Dan. i. 17.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. Solomon began the temple first, and was most earnest in expediting it; and therefore it was finished in far less time than his own palace. As he employed twenty years in these buildings; (ix. 10;) it seems he finished the temple before he began his own house; though his numerous workmen might have carried on both together.

V. 2. Some have thought that this palace was built, for retirement, in a beautiful situation near mount Lebanon: but it seems rather to have been erected not far from Jerusalem; and to have been thus called, either from its airy and lofty situation, or from the cedars of Lebanon of which it was built. For Solomon put the shields of gold "in the house of the forest of Lebanon:" yet when Shishak came to Jerusalem he seized on them; and when Rehoboam made brazen ones in their stead, they were carried before him when he went to the house of the Lord, and brought back with him to the great chamber. (x. 17. 2 *Chr.* ix. 16. xii. 9—11.)

V. 6—12. The "porch of pillars" is supposed to have been a covered portico, in which Solomon's guards and attendants waited: and "The porch of judgment," another portico, in which he sat to decide causes. It is not certain, whether "the porch of pillars," belonged to "the house "of the forest of Lebanon," or to the palace in Jerusalem: but it is most probable, that "the porch for the "throne" was at Jerusalem.—The palace seems to have stood within two courts; one nearer to it than "the porch "for the throne," and the other farther off.—The palace for Pharaoh's daughter was placed at some distance, "out "of the city of David:" (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* viii. 11:) but it was built with the same magnificence as the other palaces. The *costly stones* seem to have been large valuable blocks of marble, beautifully squared and polished on every side: and the outer court was surrounded with a wall, like that which separated the court of the temple; so that the people might look through the rows of the cedar-beams, which were placed at proper distances. These buildings, though magnificent, were intended for use, and not merely for ostentation: and no doubt they were finished in the best style of the architecture of those days. The court round Solomon's own house was built in the same manner, as the inner court of the house of the Lord.

V. 13, 14. Hiram's mother is in Chronicles said to have been "of the daughters of Dan;" (2 *Chr.* ii. 14;) and some think, that Dan was the name of her father: but probably, she was originally of the tribe of Dan, and had first been married to a man of Naphtali; and, being by

15 For he * cast r two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high a piece: and a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about.

16 And he made s two chapiters *of* molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapiter *was* five cubits, and the height of the other chapiter *was* five cubits:

17 *And* nets of checker-work, and t wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars: seven for the one chapiter, and seven for the other chapiter.

18 And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one network, to cover the chapiters that *were* upon the top, with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapiter.

19 And the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the pillars, *were* of u lily-work in the porch, four cubits.

20 And the chapiters upon the two pillars *had pomegranates* also above, over against the belly which *was* by the net-work: and the x pomegranates *were* two hundred in rows round about upon the other chapiter.

21 And y he set up the pillars in z the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof † Jachin; and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof ‡ Boaz.

22 And upon the top of the pillars *was* lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished.

23 ¶ And a he made b a molten sea, ten cubits from ‖ the one brim to the other: *it was* round all about, and his height *was* five cubits: and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.

24 And under the brim of it round about *there were* c knops compassing it, ten in a cubit, d compassing the sea round about: the knops *were* cast in two rows when it was cast.

25 It stood upon e twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward.

26 And it *was* f an hand-breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, g with flowers of lilies: it contained h two thousand baths.

27 And he made ten i bases of brass: four cubits *was* the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it.

28 And the work of the bases *was* on this *manner:* they had borders, and the borders *were* between the ledges:

29 And on the borders that *were* between the ledges *were* j lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges *there was* a base above; and beneath the lions and oxen *were* certain additions made of thin work.

30 And every base had four brazen

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him left a widow, had married a Tyrian to whom she bare Hiram, or Huram, who was called by the name of the king of Tyre. This man, uniting, as it were, the Israelite and the Gentile in one person, and being the chief workman in making the furniture of the temple, aptly represented the union of Jews and Gentiles in the Christian church. (*Note, Eph.* ii. 19—22.)

V. 15—22. (*Marg. Ref.*) Each of these pillars being eighteen cubits in height, the two together would measure thirty-six cubits in length: but one cubit is supposed to be allowed for the bases. (2 *Chr.* iii. 15.)—The chapiters are, in one place, said to have been *three* cubits in height: but the upper part, covered with decorations, is thought to be there mentioned separately, and to be here included. (16. 2 *Kings* xxv. 17.)—There were four hundred pomegranates in all; two hundred on each chapiter, in two rows of an hundred each. Perhaps ninety-six of these might be counted on every side; being nearly one half of the whole number on each chapiter: but, as some think, there were ninety-six smaller pomegranates in each row, in four divisions, towards the four quarters of the sky; and four larger pomegranates were placed between these four divisions. (*Jer.* lii. 23.)—A writer, who completely understood such subjects, would scarcely be able, *by words without plates*, to convey any adequate ideas of the ornamental workmanship described in this chapter.—These pillars were intended for ornament and for significancy: "*Jachin*" signifies, *He shall establish:* "Boaz," *In him is strength.* (*Marg.*) And thus the priests and worshippers were reminded to trust only in the Lord, and not in themselves, or in their forms.

V. 23—39. In the tabernacle there had been one laver of brass, at which the priests continually washed themselves, and the sacrifices. (*Note, Ex.* xxx. 18—21.) But now the numbers of the priests and Levites were multiplied, and the sacrifices were proportionably increased.

[k] Ex. i. 16—21. iii. 16. x. 10—13. [k] wheels, and plates of brass; and the four corners thereof had undersetters: under the laver *were* undersetters molten, at the side of every addition.

31 And the mouth of it, within the chapiter and above, *was* a cubit: but the mouth thereof *was* round, *after* the work of the base, a cubit and a half; and also upon the mouth of it *were* gravings with their borders, foursquare, not round.

32 And under the borders *were* four wheels: and the axle-trees of the wheels [*] Heb. *in the base.* *were* [*] *joined* to the base, and the height of a wheel *was* a cubit and half a cubit.

[l] Ez. i. 16. 18. 33 And [l] the work of the wheels *was* like the work of a chariot-wheel; their axle-trees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes, *were* all molten.

34 And *there were* four undersetters to the four corners of one base: *and* the undersetters *were* of the very base itself.

35 And in the top of the base *was there* a round compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base, the ledges thereof, and the borders thereof, *were* of the same.

36 For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he [m] graved cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the [†] proportion of every one, and additions round about.

[m] 29. vi. 29. 32. 35. Ez. xl. 31. 37. xli. 18—20. 25, 26.

[†] Heb. *nakedness.*

37 After this *manner* he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, *and* one size.

[n] Ex. xxx. 17—21. 28. xxxviii. 8. xl. 11, 12. 2 Chr. iv. 6. Zech. xiii. 1. Heb. ix. 10. x. 22. John i. 7. Rev. vii. 14.

38 Then made he [n] ten lavers of brass: one laver contained forty baths; *and* every laver was four cubits: *and* upon every one of the ten bases one laver.

39 And he put five bases on the right [‡] side of the house, and five on the left side of the house; and [o] he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward, over against the south.

[‡] Heb. *shoulder.*

[o] 2 Chr. iv. 6. 10

40 ¶ And [§] Hiram made [p] the lavers, and [q] the shovels, and [r] the basons: [s] so Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made king Solomon for the house of the LORD:

[§] Heb. *Hirom. See on* 13.

[p] *See on* 28.—2 Kings xxv. 14, 15. 2 Chr. iv. 8. 11—16. Jer. lii. 18, 19.

[q] 45.

[r] Ex. xxiv. 6.

[s] Ex. xxxix. 32—43.

41 The [t] two pillars, and the *two* bowls of the chapiters that *were* on the top of the two pillars; and the [u] two net-works, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars;

[t] *See on* 15—22. 2 Chr. iv. 12.

[u] 17, 18.

42 And four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, *even* two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that *were* upon [‖] the pillars;

[‖] Heb. *the face of the pillars.*

43 And the [x] ten bases, and ten lavers on the bases;

[x] 27—39.

44 And [y] one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea;

[y] *See on* 23—26.

45 And [z] the pots, and the shovels, and the basons: and all these vessels, which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the LORD, *were of* [*] bright brass.

[z] Ex. xxvii. 3. xxxviii. 3. Lev. viii. 31. 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. iv. 16. Ez. xlvi. 20—24. Zech. xiv. 21.

[*] Heb. *brass made bright,* or, *scoured.*

46 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in [†] the clay-ground between [a] Succoth and [b] Zarthan.

[†] Heb. *the thickness of the ground.*

[a] Gen. xxxiii. 17.

[b] iv. 12. *Zartanah.* Josh. iii. 16. *Zaretan.* 2 Chr. iv. 17. *Zeredathah.*

47 And Solomon left all the vessels *unweighed,* [‡] because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass [§] found out.

[‡] Heb. *for the exceeding multitude.* 2 Chr. iv. 18.

[§] Heb. *searched.* 1 Chr. xxii. 14. 16.

Therefore Solomon prepared this brazen sea; and ten lavers besides, at which the sacrifices were to be washed. These were constantly supplied with water by the Nethinim, or the Gibeonites, who were servants to the priests. (*Note, Josh.* ix. 27.) The brazen sea was a very large reservoir, capable of holding three thousand baths, or about four hundred and fifty hogsheads; though no more than two thousand were generally put into it.—The *knops* are supposed to have been in the form of an ox's head, (2 *Chr.* iv. 3,) and some think that the water flowed out at the mouths of them, or of some of them.—The oxen on which it was placed, might be intended as a protest against the absurd idolatry of worshipping God under an image in that form.—The ten lavers, though generally placed in two rows, in the inner court of the temple, were fixed upon bases, which ran on wheels, that they might be removed as conveniency required.—The description given of these bases, is very difficult: many of the original words are but seldom used, if at all, elsewhere: and it would be impossible to give a satisfactory explanation of each particular, without labour and prolixity, disproportioned to its importance to us.—The likeness of lions, oxen, &c. we shall hereafter find to be undeniably emblematick of the boldness, patience, diligence, and heavenly-mindedness of the ministers of Christ. (*Notes, Ez.* i. 5—14. *Rev.* iv. 6—8.) *Oxen* and *cherubim* are both mentioned (29), which shews they were not the same figures. (*Note, Ez.* x. 14.)

V. 40—47. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* 15—39.—*In the plain of Jordan.* (46) The place chosen for casting all these vessels of brass, or copper, was doubtless selected for

c Ex. xxv. 1—5. xxxvii. 25—28. xxxix. 38. xl. 26. 2 Chr. iv. 19.
d Ex. xxv. 23—30. xxxvii. 10—16. xxxix. 36. xl. 22, 23. Lev. xxiv. 5—9. 2 Chr. iv. 8. Ez. xl. 39. 42. xli. 22. xliv. 16. Mal. i. 12. 1 Cor. x. 21.
e Ex. xxv. 31, &c. xxxvii. 17, &c. xxxix. 37. xl. 24, 25. 2 Chr. iv. 7. Zech. iv. 1—3. 11—14. Matt. v. 14—16. Rev. i. 20. ii. 1.
f See on 2 Chr. iv. 20.
g Ex. xxv. 38. Num. iv. 9.
h Ex. xxv. 29. Num. vii. 86.

48 ¶ And Solomon made all the vessels that *pertained* unto the house of the LORD: [c] the altar of gold, and [d] the table of gold, whereupon the shewbread *was;*

49 And [e] the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right *side,* and five on the left, [f] before the oracle with the flowers, and the lamps, and [g] the tongs *of* gold;

50 And the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the [h] spoons, and the [*] censers, *of* pure gold; and the hinges *of* gold, *both* for the doors of the inner-house, the most holy *place, and* for the doors of the house, *to wit,* of the temple.

* Heb. *ash-pans.* ‘Lev. xvi. 12. 2 Chr. iv. 21, 22.

51 So [i] was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the LORD. And Solomon brought in the [†] things [k] which David his father had dedicated; *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the LORD.

i Ex. xl. 33. Ezra vi. 15. Zech. iv. 9.
† Heb. *holy things of David.*
k 2 Sam. viii. 7—11. 1 Chr. xviii. 7, 8. 10, 11. xxvi. 26—28. xxviii. 11—18. xxix. 2—8. 2 Chr. v. 1.

convenience, and as best suited for the purpose: and, being at a considerable distance from Jerusalem, that city would be preserved from the smoke and noxious vapours necessarily occasioned by the process: and all the vessels brought ready for use to the court of the temple. (vi. 7.)

V. 48—51. There were ten tables; (2 *Chr.* iv. 8;) but perhaps one was much larger than the rest, and the shewbread was chiefly placed upon it. Every thing was made new for the temple, even the altar for burnt-offering; (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* iv. 1;) except the ark of the covenant with the mercy-seat and cherubim: for this was the peculiar symbol of the Lord's presence with his people, as reconciled in Jesus Christ, the one Mediator between God and man. (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 10—40. xxvii. 1—8. xxx. 1—8. *Ez.* xl. 38—44. xli. 22. xliii. 13—17.) Thus under the gospel-dispensation, externals of worship are altogether changed, but the way of access and acceptance with God is the same. —Most things were multiplied, or enlarged above what they had been in the tabernacle; but there was but one altar of burnt-offering, and one altar of incense as before. Thus the New Testament dispensation is suited to the promulgation of the gospel, through all nations: but the multiplication of atonements and intercessors is antichristian.—Solomon, having plenty of materials, prepared great quantities of all requisite utensils for the service of the sanctuary, for the benefit of those who should come after him: and he deposited the remainder of the consecrated treasures in the house of the Lord, for the same purpose in future times. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—12.

Princes and nobles may be allowed, without censure, to build their houses, and to lay out their estates, as it is suitable to their rank, conveniency, or inclinations: yet they should be reminded that Solomon found it, and they will at length find it, all a mere vanity. (*Notes, Ec.* ii. 9—11.) They should also be cautioned, not to expend too much in that manner, lest they should be straitened in their ability of doing good to others, and glorifying God: (*Notes* and *P. O. Luke* xvi. 1—12:) and likewise not to suffer such cares and contrivances to take up their time, or to draw their thoughts and affections off from communion with God, and the care of their souls: for peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and the lively hope of a heavenly inheritance, are the choicest comforts; the beauties of holiness are the most valuable ornaments; and distinguished usefulness is the most honourable and durable testimony to a man's character.—When, however, men begin first with the service of God, and are not by other employments taken off from it, or rendered negligent in it, and still return to it for satisfaction; and when in all their undertakings, they have an eye to the peculiar duties of their stations, as well as to general conveniency and utility; we may hope, that the multiplicity of their engagements will not materially injure them: but they are treading on perilous ground, and have need of peculiar circumspection, watchfulness, and earnestness in prayer.

V. 13—51

It is well when great ingenuity unites with equal integrity; when entire confidence is proved to have been well placed; and when every one abounds in the work of the Lord, in proportion as his abilities are enlarged. Yet, in all our services, and after them, we need washing from the guilt and pollution of sin, which defiles us and all we do. Let us therefore bless God for "the Fountain" which he has "opened for sin and for uncleanness;" and which by the preaching of the gospel and the written word, may be conveyed to every part of the earth.—In him also is *Strength,* and he will *establish* all who trust in him. Those who depend on their own resolutions, wisdom, or works; who trust in riches, honour, prosperity, or powerful friends; who worship other gods, or depend on other intercessors; and who presume upon their notions, creeds, or external forms; can never be established, but will at length sink and perish. But the power of Christ rests upon the humble believer; his arms uphold him; his grace establishes his heart in hope and love; he is his Stability in every trial, and his Sufficiency for every service; and is both able, and willing "to keep him from falling, and to "present him faultless before the presence of his glory, "with exceeding joy." He indeed is both the Temple and the Builder; the Altar and the Sacrifice; the Light of our souls, and the Bread of life; and is every way adequate to the largest and most numerous wants of the millions, who have applied, and shall in faith apply to him. External images cannot describe, words cannot express, the heart cannot conceive, his preciousness or his love. Let us come to him, and wash away our sins in his blood; let us seek for the purifying grace of his Spirit; let us walk in the light of his instructive word, and observe his kind directions; let us feed upon him daily 'in our hearts by faith 'with thanksgiving,' maintain communion with God the

CHAP. VIII.

Solomon assembles the elders and princes; and the priests carry the ark into the most holy place, 1—9. The glory of the Lord fills the house, 10, 11. Solomon blesses Israel; and praises God for performing his word to David, 12—21. He prays, that God would answer the supplications of Israel, and of strangers, in all ages, and in all cases, in which they should call upon him, towards this his holy temple, 22—53. He again praises God, and blesses the people, 54—61. He offers very numerous sacrifices, keeps the feast fourteen days; and dismisses the people, who return home joyful and thankful, 62—66.

THEN [a] Solomon [b] assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the [*] chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, [c] that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [d] out of the city of David, which *is* Zion.

2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon [e] at the feast, in the month Ethanim, which *is* the seventh month.

3 And all the elders of Israel came, and [f] the priests took up the ark.

4 And they brought up the ark of the LORD, [g] and the [h] tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

5 And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him, *were* with him before the ark, [i] sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

6 And [k] the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto [l] his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy *place*, *even* [m] under the wings of the cherubims.

7 For the cherubims spread forth *their* two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

8 And they [n] drew out the staves, that the [†] ends of the staves were seen out in the [‡] holy *place* before the ora-

a 2 Chr. v. 2.
b Josh. xxiii. 2. xxiv. 1. 1 Chr. xxviii. 1. 2 Chr. xxx. 1. Ezra iii. 1.
* Heb. *princes.* Num. vii. 3.
c 2 Sam. vi. 1, 2. 12. 1 Chr. xiii. 1—5. xv. 3. 25.
d xii. 16. 2 Sam. v. 7—9. vi. 12—17. 1 Chr. xi. 7. xv. 29. xvi. 1. Ps. ix. 11. cii. 21. Is. xxviii. 16. xlvi. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 6.
e Lev. xxiii. 34. Num. xxix. 12, &c. Deut. xvi. 13. 2 Chr. v. 3. vii. 8—10. Ezra iii. 4. Neh. viii. 14—18. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John vii. 2. 37, 38.

f Num. iv. 15. Deut. xxxi. 9. Josh. iii. 3. 6. 14, 15. iv. 9. vi. 6. 1 Chr. xv. 2. 11—15. 2 Chr. v. 5—8.
g iii. 4. 2 Chr. i. 3.
h *See on* Ex. xl. 2—38.
i 62, 63. 2 Sam. vi. 13. 1 Chr. xvi. 1.
k 4. 2 Chr. v. 7.
l vi. 19. Ex. xxvi. 33, 34. xl. 20, 21
m vi. 27. Ex. xxv. 20—22. xxxvii. 9. 1 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 2. Ps. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1. Is. xxxvii. 16. Ez. x. 5.
n Ex. xxv. 14, 15. xxxvii. 4, 5. xl. 20.
† Heb. *heads.*
‡ Or, *ark.* 2 Chr. v. 9.

Father, through his intercession, and yield up ourselves and all we have to his service. Thus being "strong in "the Lord, and in the power of his might," we shall be accepted, useful, and happy; and shall be enabled to do our own work, in our proper places, with fidelity, in a manner consistent with our profession, and to the glory of his name.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 1, 2. 1 *Chr.* xiii. 1—4.) The temple was in a peculiar manner the residence of JEHOVAH in the midst of Israel, when the ark of the covenant was placed in it: and the want of the ark, after the Babylonish captivity, in the temple then built, intimated that that dispensation was ready to vanish away. Solomon's undertaking therefore was incomplete, and the temple lacked its chief glory, (notwithstanding all its gold and exquisite workmanship,) until the ark was removed thither, and fixed in the most holy place. This therefore he took care to perform, according to the law, and in the most publick and solemn manner.—Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, was near to the city of David, on mount Zion where the ark was before placed; but was distinct from it. (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xxi. 18—30. xxii. 1. 2 *Chr.* iii. 1, 2.)

V. 2. This was about eleven months after the temple was completed. The intervening time was doubtless employed in getting every thing ready for the solemnity; and the time which was chosen coincided with the feast of tabernacles, which ensured the presence of multitudes of the most zealous and pious Israelites, along with the elders and chief persons. (2 *Chr.* vii. 8, 9. *Note,* 63—65.)

V. 3. The Levites of Kohath's family were appointed to carry the ark; and the priests were of that family: on the most solemn occasions, therefore, the priests performed this service. (*Notes, Num.* vii. 4—9. *Josh.* iii. 3, 4. 2 *Sam.* vi. 12, 13. 1 *Chr.* xv. 15. 2 *Chr.* v. 2—5.)

V. 4. It is probable, that both the ancient tabernacle which Moses had made, and that which David had formed at Jerusalem, were brought up to the temple, and, with all their vessels and furniture, deposited in its treasuries. 'to avoid all danger of superstition and idolatry; and that 'no worship might be performed any where, but only at 'this house of God, which he' (Solomon) 'now dedicated 'to him.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note,* 2 *Kings* xviii. 4.) Thus the Mosaick dispensation afterwards resigned up all its honours to the Christian: and thus the knowledge and grace of the church on earth will be absorbed and lost in the vision and glory of heaven.

V. 5. The altar of burnt-offering, which Solomon had prepared, seems to have been covered with sacrifices, without any fire under them: and when Solomon had ended his prayer, the fire came down from heaven and consumed them. (*Note, Lev.* ix. 24. 2 *Chr.* vii. 1—3.) But there might also be other sacrifices on the former altar, and likewise temporary altars erected, with all suitable preparations for so extraordinary an occasion. (*Note,* 63—65.)

V. 6. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Oracle*] דְּבִיר, (from דָּבַר *to speak;*) because from above the mercy-seat the Lord *spake,* when the rulers enquired of him by the high priest.

V. 7—9. The cherubim, here mentioned, do not mean

cle, and they were not seen without: and there they are [o] unto this day.

9 *There was* [p] nothing [q] in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses [r] put there at Horeb, [*] when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

10 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*, that [s] the cloud filled the house of the LORD,

11 So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: [t] for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

12 Then spake Solomon, [u] The LORD said that he would dwell in [v] the thick darkness.

13 I have [x] surely built thee an house to dwell in, [y] a settled place for thee to abide in for ever.

14 And the king turned his face about, and [z] blessed all the congregation of Israel, and [a] all the congregation of Israel stood;

15 And he said, [b] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, [c] which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and [d] hath with his hand fulfilled *it*, saying,

16 Since [e] the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, [f] I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that [g] my name might be therein; but [h] I chose David to be over my people Israel.

17 And [i] it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

18 And the LORD said unto David my father, [k] Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart.

19 Nevertheless [l] thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.

20 And the LORD [m] hath performed his word that he spake; and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

21 And [n] I have set there a place for the ark, wherein *is* [o] the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Josh. iv. 9. Matt. xxviii. 15.
p Ex. xxv. 21. Deut. x. 2. 2 Chr. v. 10.
q Ex. xvi. 33. Num. xvii. 10. Heb. ix. 4.
r Ex. xl. 20. Deut. x. 5. xxxi. 26.
* Or, *where*.
Ex. xxiv. 8. xxxiv. 27, 28. Deut. iv. 13.
s Ex. xiii. 21. xiv. 24. xvi. 10. xxiv. 16—18. xl. 34, 35. Lev. xvi. 2. Num. ix. 15. 2 Chr. v. 13, 14. vii. 1—3. Ez. x. 4. Rev. xv. 8.
t Lev. ix. 6. 23. Ez. xliii. 2. 4, 5. xliv. 4. John i. 14. Acts vii. 55. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6. Rev. xxi. 11. 23.
u Deut. v. iv. 11. 2 Chr. vi. 1, 2. Ps. xviii. 8—11. xcvii. 2.
v Ex. xx. 21. Deut. v. 22. Heb. xii. 18.
x 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 12. xxii. 10, 11. xxviii. 6. 10. 20. 2 Chr. vi. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14. John iv. 21—23. Acts vi. 14. Heb. viii. 5—13. ix. 11, 12. 24.
y 55, 56. Josh. xxii. 6. 2 Sam. vi. 18. 1 Chr. xvi. 2. 2 Chr. vi. 3. xxx. 18—20. Ps. cxviii. 26. Luke xxiv. 50, 51.
z 2 Chr. vii. 6. Neh. viii. 7. ix. 2. Matt. xiii. 2.
b 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20. 2 Chr. vi. 4. xx. 26. Neh. ix. 5. Ps. xli. 13. lxxii. 18, 19. cxv. 18. cxvii. 1, 2. Luke i. 68. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
c 2 Sam. vii. 25. 28, 29. 1 Chr. xvii. 12. Is. i. 20. Luke i. 70.
d Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 15, 16. Ps. cxxxviii. 2. Matt. xxiv. 35. Luke i. 54, 55. 72.

e *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 6, 7.—2 Chr. vi. 5.
f 1 Chr. xvii. 5, 6. Ps. cxxxii. 13.
g *See on* 29.—xi. 36. 2 Kings xxiii. 27. Neh. i. 9. Jer. vii. 12. Dan. ix. 19.
h 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 2 Sam. vii. 8. 1 Chr. xxviii. 4. Ps. lxxviii. 70. lxxxix. 19, 20.
i 2 Sam. vii. 2, 3. 1 Chr. xvii. 1, 2. xxii. 7. xxviii. 2.
k 2 Chr. vi. 7, 8. 2 Cor. viii. 12.
l v. 8—5. 2 Sam. vii. 5. 12, 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 4. 11, 12. xxii. 8—10. xxviii. 6.
m *See on* 15.—Neh. ix. 8. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxix. 10. Ez. 29. Ez. xii. 25. xxxvii. 14. Mic. vii. 20. Rom. iv. 21. Phil. i. 6.
n *See on* 5, 6.
o 9. Ex. xxxiv 28. Deut. ix. 9. 11.

those made of solid gold, in the days of Moses, shadowing the ark, which were inseparable from the mercy-seat; (*Note, Ex.* xxv. 10—21;) but those which Solomon had just prepared in the most holy place. (*Note*, vi. 23—28.) The ends of the staves might be seen in the holy of holies, but not in the outer sanctuary. The ark now came to its resting place, and it continued in the same situation, when this history was written.—Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, and the copy of the law, were *by*, but not *within*, the ark. (*Note, Heb.* ix. 1—5.)

V. 10—14. All the priests and Levites attended the removal of the ark, and sang solemn praises upon the occasion, with the sound of trumpets and instruments of musick. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* v. 11—13.) But when the ark, as the symbol of JEHOVAH's presence, had taken possession of the temple, the cloud filled the whole of it, so that the priests could no longer continue in it. The "thick darkness" represented the comparative obscurity and terror of that dispensation; and the darkness, which in this world rests upon all our enquiries into the things of God and of eternity. "God indeed is LIGHT, and with him is "no darkness at all:" but we sinners cannot approach or endure that light, except as seen in the person of Jesus Christ. (*Marg. Ref.* u, v. *Notes, 2 Cor.* iv. 5, 6. 1 *Tim.* vi. 13—16. 1 *John* i. 5—7.) This thick darkness, whilst it terrified others, assured Solomon of the divine favour, and that the temple which he had built would be the residence of the ark, and the centre of the worship of Israel, for generations to come: and with these assurances he encouraged the people; he congratulated them on this renewed token of the Lord's former favours to Israel; and he pronounced a solemn and affectionate blessing on them. (*Note, 2 Sam.* vi. 18, 19.)—Similar evidences of the Lord's gracious presence, and of his awful glory, had been vouchsafed, when the tabernacle was erected: (*Notes, Ex.* xl. 34, 35. *Lev.* xvi. 2;) and it is not easy to distinguish with accuracy between the cloud, and the glory of God which filled the house. It may, however, be observed, that at the close of Solomon's prayer, the fire burst forth from the cloud and consumed the sacrifices on the altar. (*Note, 2 Chr.* vii. 1—3.)

V. 15—21. In this introductory address, while Solomon adored and blessed God, with lively gratitude, for performing his promises; he also reminded the people of several particulars, which were well suited to affect their hearts, and prepare them to unite with understanding in the solemn services of that interesting occasion. The Lord had by Moses declared his purpose of selecting one place for his sanctuary, where he might "record his name," and meet and bless his worshippers: but hitherto no temple

22 ¶ And Solomon [p] stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and [q] spread forth his hands toward heaven;

23 And he said, [r] LORD God of Israel, *there is* [s] no god like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, [t] who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that [u] walk before thee with all their heart;

24 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: [x] thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

25 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, [y] keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, [*] There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel: [†] so that [z] thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.

26 And now, [a] O God of Israel, [b] let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.

27 But [c] will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold [d] the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded.

28 Yet [e] have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to [f] hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day;

29 That [g] thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even* toward the place of which thou hast said, [h] My name shall be there; that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make [‡] toward this place.

30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, [i] when they shall pray [§] toward this place: [k] and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, [l] forgive.

p 2 Kings xi. 14. xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 12, 13.
q Ex. ix. 29. 33.—*See on* 2 Chr. vi. 12.—Ezra ix. 5. Job xi. 13. Ps. xxviii. 2. lxiii. 4. Is. i. 15. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
r Gen. xxxiii. 20. Ex. iii. 15.
s Ex. xv. 11. 1 Sam. ii. 2. 2 Sam. vii. 22. Ps. xxxv. 10. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6—8. cxiii. 5. Is. xl. 18. 25. Jer. x. 6. 16. Mic. vii. 18.
t Deut. vii. 9.
u Neh. i. 5. ix. 32. Ps. lxxxix. 3—5. Dan. ix. 4. Mic. vii. 19, 20. Luke i. 72.
x ii. 4. iii. 6. vi. 12. Gen. xvii. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3.
y *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 12. 2 Chr. vi. 14, 15.
z ii. 4. 2 Sam. vii. 27—29. 1 Chr. xvii. 23—27. Luke i. 68—72.
* Heb. *There shall not be cut off unto thee a man from my sight.* Jer. xxxiii. 17—26.
† Heb. *only if.*
a 23. Ex. xxiv. 10. 1 Sam. i. 17. Ps. xli. 13. Is. xli. 17. xlv. 3.
b 2 Sam. vii. 25—29. 2 Chr. i. 9. Jer. xi. 5. Ez. xxxvi. 36, 37.
c 2 Chr. vi. 18. Is. lxvi. 1. John i. 14. Acts vii. 48, 49. xvii. 24. 2 Cor. vi. 16. 1 John iii. 1.
d Deut. x. 14. 2 Chr. ii. 6. Ps. cxiii. 4. cxxxix. 7—16. Jer. xxiii. 24. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4.
e 2 Chr. vi. 19. Ps. cxli. 2. Dan. ix. 17—19. Luke xviii. 1. 7.
f Ps. iv. 1. v. 1. lxxxvi. 3. 6, 7. lxxxviii. 1, 2.
g 52. 2 Kings xix. 16. 2 Chr. vi. 20. 40. vii. 15. xvi. 9. Neh. i. 6. Ps. xxxiv. 15. Dan. ix. 18.
h 16. 43. *Marg.* xi. 36. Ex. xx. 24. Deut. xii. 11. xvi. 2. 6. xxvi. 2. 2 Kings xxi. 4. 7. xxiii. 27. 2 Chr. vi. 5, 6. 20. vii. 16. xx. 8. xxxiii. 4. 7. Neh. i. 9. John xiv. 13, 14.
‡ Or, *in this place.* Dan. vi. 10.
i 2 Chr. xx. 8, 9. Neh. i. 5, 6.
§ Or, *in this place.*
k 34—36. 39. 49. 2 Chr. vi. 21. Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14. cxii. 5, 6. cxxiii. 1. Ec. v. 2. Is. lvii. 15. Matt. vi. 9.
l 34. 36. 39. 2 Chr. vii. 14. Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. Dan. ix. 19. Matt. vi. 12.

had been built, and the tabernacle and ark had been removed from one place to another. (*Notes, Ex.* xx. 21—25. *Deut.* xii. 5—7. *2 Sam.* vii. 5—16.)—David, his chosen king, was indeed accepted in his design of erecting a temple; yet he was not allowed to accomplish his purpose. But at length, according to the promise of God to him, his son had completed the temple, and had brought the ark into the most holy place.—The tables of the law are called the *covenant*, because the covenant with Israel at Sinai was grounded on them. (*Note, Ex.* xxv. 10—22.)

V. 22. A scaffold had been prepared in the court of the temple: and on this Solomon *stood up* to bless and instruct the people, and then he kneeled down upon it, to offer the following most copious and comprehensive prayer. (*2 Chr.* vi. 13.) To this reverential posture he also added the spreading forth of his hands towards heaven, as expressive of the fervour of his heart, and the largeness of his expectations, in this act of worship. (*Marg. Ref.* q.)—The king of Israel never looked more glorious than on this occasion. Doubtless his personal performance of this service gave it a peculiar solemnity, and greatly affected the people: (*Note, 2 Kings* xxiii. 2:) but he was also a type of Christ, who is at once our King and our Intercessor.—It is most probable, that he prayed from a full heart, without any precomposed form of words; but not without having seriously and fully considered the various blessings for which he should pray.

V. 23, 24. Solomon, in opening his prayer, addressed the Lord, with reference to his essential perfections, and relations to all his rational creatures; and, as the God of Israel, the sole object of their worship, the Author of their peculiar mercies, a God in covenant with them, and the eternal Portion of his believing obedient people. Other nations had their imagined deities, whom they worshipped and confided in; but they were not like the God of Israel, who had evidently performed all his covenant-engagements to his "servants, that walked before him with all their "heart;" especially in his recent dealings with David and his family. (*Marg. Ref.* s, t.—*Notes, Ex.* xv. 11. *Deut.* xxxiii. 26—28. *2 Sam.* vii. 8—16.)

V. 25, 26. As the Lord had thus far performed his promises to David, in placing his son on his throne, and in enabling him to build him a house; Solomon took occasion to plead for the accomplishment of the other promises, respecting the perpetuity of the succession in his posterity: but this was conditional; and his petition *implied* a prayer, that they might be directed and inclined to walk before God, as David had done, and in such a manner as might ensure that event. (*Notes, 1 Chr.* xxviii. 7—9. xxix. 10—19. *Ps.* lxxxix. 19—37.)

V. 27. Solomon was deeply sensible, and he would have the people seriously consider, that the most magnificent temple was no meet habitation for the infinite God. The ark might abide in it, and the Lord might thence display his gracious presence with his worshippers; which, contrasting his majesty, purity, and justice, with their meanness, guilt, and pollution, was a condescension that could not be sufficiently admired: but "the heaven of "heavens," the glorious mansion of angels and archangels, could not *contain*, or *circumscribe*, his essential presence. (*Notes, Is.* lvii. 15, 16. lxvi. 1, 2. *John* i. 1—3. 14. *Acts* vii. 44—50. *Eph.* ii. 19—22. *Col.* ii. 8, 9. *Rev.* xxi. 1—4.)

V. 28—30. The Lord was not *essentially* more present in the temple than elsewhere; and the full displays of his

31 ¶ If any man [m] trespass against his neighbour, and [*] an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and [n] the oath come before thine altar in this house:

32 Then [o] hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, [p] condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and [q] justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

33 ¶ When thy people Israel be [r] smitten down before the enemy, [s] because they have sinned against thee, and shall [t] turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and [u] pray, and make supplication unto thee [†] in this house:

34 Then hear thou in heaven, and [x] forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land, [y] which thou gavest unto their fathers.

35 ¶ When [z] heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; [a] if they pray toward this place, and [b] confess thy name, and [c] turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that [d] thou teach them [e] the good way wherein they should walk, and [f] give rain upon thy land which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

37 ¶ If there be [g] in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, *or* if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their [‡] cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness *there be;*

38 What [h] prayer and supplication soever be *made* by any man, *or* by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man [i] the plague of his own heart, and [j] spread forth his hands toward this house:

m 2 Chr. vi. 22, 23.
* Heb. *he require an oath of him.* Ex. xxii. 8—11. Lev. v. 1. Prov. xxx. 9.
n Num. v. 16—22.
o *See on* k. 30.
p Num. v. 27. Deut. xxv. 1. Prov. i. 31. Is. iii. 10, 11. Ez. xviii. 13. 30. Rom. ii. 6—10.
q Ex. xxiii. 7. Prov. xvii. 15. Ez. xviii. 20.
r Lev. xxvi. 17. 25. Deut. xxviii. 25. 48. Josh. vii. 8. 2 Chr. vi. 24. 25. Ps. xliv. 10.
s Josh. vii. 11, 12. Judg. vi. 1, 2. 2 Kings xvii. 7—18. xviii. 11, 12. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14—17.
t Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Neh. i. 9. Jon. iii. 10.
u Ezra ix. 5, &c. Neh. ix. 1—3, &c. Is. lxiii. 15—19. lxiv. &c. Dan. ix. 3, &c.
† Or, *toward.* 30.
x *See on* 30.—Ezra i. 1—6. Ps. cvi. 47. Jer. xxxi. 4—9. 27. xxxii. 37, xxxiii. 10—13. Dan. ix. 2. 19. 25. Am. vii. 2.
y Gen. xiii. 15. Ex. vi. 8. Josh. xxi. 43.
z xvii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 19. Deut. xi. 17. xxviii. 12. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. Jer. xiv. 1—7. Ez. xiv. 13. Mal. iii 10. Luke iv. 25. Rev. xi. 6.
a 33. 2 Chr. vi. 24. 26. Rom. x. 9. xv. 9.
b 29, 30. Joel i. 13—20. ii. 15—17.
c 33. Is. i. 15, 16. ix. 13. Ez. xviii. 30—32. Hos. xiv. 1.
d Ps. xxv. 4, 5. 12. xxvii. 11. xxxii. 8. xciv. 12. cxix. 33. cxliii. 8. Is. xxxv. 8. Mic. iv. 2.
e 1 Sam. xii. 23. 2 Chr. vi. 26, 27. Is. xxx 21. Jer. vi. 16 xlii. 3. Matt. xxii. 16.
f xviii. 1. 27—40. 45. Ps. lxviii. 9. Jer. xiv. 22. Jam. v. 17, 18.
g Lev. xxvi. 16. 25, 26. Deut. xxviii. 21, 22. 25. 38—42. 52—64. 2 Kings vi. 25—29. 1 Chr. xxi. 12. 2 Chr. vi. 28—31. xx. 9. Ps. cv. 34, 35. Jer. xxxii. 2. xxxiv. 1—3. Ez. xiv. 21. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25, 26.
‡ Or, *jurisdiction.*
h 2 Chr. xx. 5—13. Ps. l. 15. xci. 15. Is. xxxvii 4. 15—21. Joel ii. 17. Am. vii. 1—6.
i 2 Chr. vi. 29. Job vii. 11. Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. xlii. 6. 9. 11. lxxiii.
j *See on* 22.—Is. 21, 22. cxliii. 3—5. Prov. xiv. 10. Rom. vii. 24. Phil. iv. 6. i. 15.

glory were made in heaven, his throne and his dwelling-place: yet he had "recorded his name" in the temple; and it was a peculiar type of the human nature of Christ, in whom the divine perfections are revealed, as harmonizing in the salvation of believers; and, in whom "God is "reconciling the world to himself," dwelling among men, and accepting the services and answering the prayers of all true believers.—The sacrifices continually offered, the incense burnt, and the whole service performed at the temple, were typical of the Redeemer's offices, oblation, and intercession. The temple therefore, must be continually adverted to in all their prayers.—Accordingly, the Israelites, when far distant from Jerusalem, were accustomed to turn their faces towards it, as expressive of their dependence on the services there performed by the priests, and of their communion with the worshippers of JEHOVAH: and when they were near it, they resorted thither to present their supplications. (*Marg. Ref.* g, h.—*Notes, Dan.* vi. 10, 11. *Jon.* ii. 3, 4.)—Thus Solomon besought God, that in answer to the prayer which he that day offered, he would in all future ages regard the temple with his peculiar favour, and hear the prayers of all who should present them *towards it,* wheresoever they were, or whatever were their distresses. (*Luke* i. 8—10.) Under one word, "forgive," he comprised all that he could ask in behalf of his people: for, as all misery springs from sin; forgiveness of sin must prepare the way for the removal of every evil, and the communication of every good; and without it, no deliverance can eventually prove a blessing. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxii. 1, 2. *Rom.* iv. 6—8.)

V. 31, 32. In case a man should be accused of defrauding or robbing his neighbour; and decisive evidence being wanting to prove whether he were or were not guilty; an appeal should be made by oath, at or towards the altar, before the temple, to the heart-searching God, that he was innocent; or in any other case in which this solemn appeal was made; Solomon prayed, that the Lord would interpose, in some evident manner, to discover and punish the guilty, and to clear up the character and recompense the integrity of the innocent. (*Notes, Ex.* xxii. 7—15. *Num.* v. 22—31. *Matt.* xxiii. 16—22.)

V. 33, 34. The Israelites would not be "smitten down," or *taken prisoners,* by their enemies, except they sinned against God: and, notwithstanding their temple, altar, and sacrifices, they could not expect deliverance, or restoration from captivity or bondage, without repentance and turning to the Lord; without confessing their relations and obligations to him, and their sins against him; and without offering their supplications towards the temple, to him who dwelt upon a mercy-seat between the cherubim. (*Notes, Josh.* vii. 10—18. *Dan.* ix. 2—20.)

V. 35, 36. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* xvii. 1. xviii. 36—40. *Jer.* xiv. 1—6.—*That thou,* &c. (36) In addition to all the teaching of the written word, and the instructions of the priests, Levites, and prophets, Solomon intreated the Lord himself to teach the people to profit by their advantages, and their chastisements: for this would make way for forgiveness, and consequently for returning plenty and prosperity.—The *same words* are rendered in Chronicles, "When thou hast taught them the good way in which they "should walk." (2 *Chr.* vi. 26, 27.)—The divine teaching particularly respects this "good way in which we ought "to walk," and not merely notions and speculations.

V. 37. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 38. *The plague,* &c.] That is, "His own sore, and "his own grief." 2 *Chr.* vi. 29. (*Note, Prov.* xiv. 10.) The former petitions particularly respected publick judgments and distresses; but this passage related to private afflic-

39 Then [k] hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and [l] give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for [m] thou, *even* thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

40 That they may [n] fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

41 ¶ Moreover, concerning [o] a stranger that *is* not of thy people Israel, but [p] cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

42 (For [q] they shall hear of thy [r] great name, and of [s] thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm;) [t] when he shall come and pray towards this house:

43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; [u] that all people of the earth may know thy name, to [x] fear thee, as *do* thy people Israel; and that they may know that [*] this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.

44 ¶ If thy people [y] go out to battle against their enemy, [z] whithersoever thou shalt send them, and [a] shall pray unto the LORD [†] toward [b] the city which thou hast chosen, and *toward* the house that I have built for thy name:

45 Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their [‡] cause.

46 ¶ If they sin against thee, (for [c] *there is* no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver

k *See on* 32. 36.
l Ps. xviii. 20—26. xxviii. 4. Jer. xvii. 10. xxxii. 19. Ez. xviii. 30. Rev. xxii. 12.
m 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vi. 30. Ps. xi. 4, 5. John ii. 25. xxi. 17. Acts i. 24. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
n Gen. xxii. 12. Ex. xx. 20. Deut. vi. 2. 13. 1 Sam. xii. 24. Ps. cxv. 13. cxxx. 4. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. Hos. iii. 5. Acts ix. 31. x. 2. Heb. xii. 28, 29. Rev. xv. 4. xix. 5.
o x. 1, 2. Ruth i. 16. ii. 11. 2 Chr. vi. 32. Is. lvi. 3—7. Matt. viii. 5. 10, 11. xv. 22—28. Luke xvii. 18. John xii. 20. Acts x. 1—4.
p x. 1, 2. Ex. xviii. 8—12. 2 Kings v. 1—7. 16, 17. Is. lx. 1—10. Matt. ii. 1. xii. 42. Acts viii. 27, &c.
q Ex. xv. 14. 15. Deut. iv. 6. Josh. ii. 10, 11. ix. 9, 10. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 28. iv. 37.
r Ex. iii. 13—16. xxxiv. 5—7. Josh. vii. 9. Ps. lxxxvi. 8, 9. Ez. xx. 9.
s Ex. iii. 19, 20. ix. 15, 16. xiii. 14. Deut. iii. 24. xi. 2, 3. 2 Kings xvii. 36. Ps. lxxxix. 13. cxxxvi. 12. Is. li. 9. lxiii. 12. Jer. xxxi. 11. xxxii. 17.
t Is. lxvi. 19, 20. Jer. iii. 19. Zech. xiv. 16. Acts viii. 27.

u 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 15. 2 Chr. vi. 33. Ps. xxii. 27. lxvii. 2. lxxii. 10, 11. lxxxvi. 9. Is. xi. 9. Rev. xv. 15.
x Ps. cii. 15. cxvii.
* Heb. *thy name is called upon this house.* 29.
y Deut. xx. 1—4. xxxi. 3—6. Josh. i. 2—5. 2 Chr. vi. 34.
z Num. xxxi. 1, &c. Josh. vi. 2—5. viii. 1, 2. Judg. i. 1, 2. iv. 6. vi. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 3. 18. xxx. 8. 2 Sam. v. 19. 23.
a 2 Chr. xiv. 9—12. xviii. 31. xx. 6—13. xxxii. 20.
† Heb. *the way of the city.*
b *See on* 16.—Ps. lxxviii. 67—69. cxxxii. 13, 14. Dan. ix. 17—19.
‡ Or, *right.* Gen. xviii. 25. Ps. ix. 4. Jer. v. 28.
c 2 Chr. vi. 36. Job xiv. 4. xv. 14—16. Ps. xix. 12. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Prov. xx. 9. Ec. vii. 20. Is. liii. 6. lxiv. 6. Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 22. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.

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tions and trials, and whatever should fill the heart and conscience of any individual with anguish and dismay.—This interpretation doubtless includes, though it is not confined to, that meaning which is very frequently given to the expression, "the plague of his own heart;" namely, the prevalence of indwelling sin, which as a *plague* or pestilential disease, is the grief and sore of every true believer; and in connexion with the guilt which in consequence accumulates upon his conscience, brings him day by day, to offer his fervent prayers and supplications before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God.

V. 39. (*Notes, John* ii. 23—25. *Heb.* iv. 12, 13. *Rev.* ii. 20—23. *v.* 23.) The Lord, "who only knoweth the hearts of the "children of men," could exactly distinguish betwixt the hypocrite, and the upright penitent believer: and would deal with each, according to the covenant of mercy and grace through the promised Saviour, forgiving and doing all good to the one, and leaving the other under condemnation.

V. 40. As "there is no man that sinneth not" (46), so no man could worship a holy God, "if there were not "forgiveness with him." (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 11, 12. *Ps.* cxxx. 3, 4.) Unless this was clearly revealed, that reverential fear, which unites with hope, and leads men to repent and seek the Lord, would be extinguished, when sinners became acquainted with their own character and state, and with the perfections and holy laws of God; and that slavish fear alone would remain, which unites with enmity and despair, and drives men further and further from God and his worship. (*Note, Jam.* ii. 19, 20.)—It is very instructive to compare the several parts of this prayer, with the preceding prophecies, and the subsequent history; which may in good measure be done by consulting the marginal references.

V. 41—43. Solomon was persuaded that the heathen nations would hear of the name, perfections, and wonderful works of JEHOVAH; and would come and worship him at this temple, as the God of Israel, who dwelt among his people by the ark of his strength, and was propitious to them through the sacrifices there offered. (*Notes, John* xii. 20—22. *Acts* viii. 26—31.) He therefore interceded for them also, that they might be accepted, and obtain the same blessings with the native Israelites: and he desired and hoped, that all the nations of the earth might know, fear, and worship the God of Israel. (*Notes, 1 Sam.* xvii. 45—47. *2 Kings* xix. 14—19. *v.* 19. *Ps.* xxii. 27, 28. *Jer.* xvi. 19—21. *Matt.* vi. 13.) Accordingly there was a court built, called 'the court of the Gentiles,' which was appropriated to the use of those, who came from other nations to worship the God of Israel, but who were not circumcised, and did not observe the ceremonial law.—The prejudices of the Jews, in the days of Christ, against the admission of the Gentiles into the church, arose from ignorance of the Scriptures, connected with national prejudices, pharisaical pride, and bigotry; which being early imbibed, were not easily removed even from true believers.

V. 44, 45. (*Marg. Ref.*) *Thou shalt send*, &c. (44) That is, in *any just and necessary war*; for God did not *send* the Israelites, when they were actuated by selfishness to engage in oppressive and unrighteous wars; neither could they reasonably expect his assistance in them. It does not indeed appear from their history, that they were much engaged in such wars: and many circumstances, arising from the tenure of their lands, and other judicial regulations, as well as their religious ordinances, tending to constitute Israel a nation of agriculturists, powerfully counteracted the pernicious natural propensity of fallen man, both rulers and people, to make war their favourite and most honourable employment.

V. 46—53. This concluding part of Solomon's intercession was evidently answered, in the restoration of the Jews after the Babylonish captivity. (*Notes, Lev.* xxvi. 38—45. *Deut.* iv. 29—31. *Neh.* i. 5—11. *Jer.* xxix. 11—14. *Ez.* xxxvi. 25—32.) Though the temple and city lay in ruins; yet when they bethought themselves, and repented, and prayed in the land of Chaldea, towards the land of Israel;

them to the enemy, so that they carry
[d] them away captives [d] unto the land of
the enemy, far or near:

47 *Yet* [e] if they shall [*] bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, [f] saying, We have sinned, and have [g] done perversely, we have committed wickedness;

48 And *so* [h] return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies which led them away captive, and [i] pray unto thee toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, [k] the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:

49 Then [l] hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their [†] cause;

50 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, [m] and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:

51 For they *be* [n] thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of [o] the furnace of iron:

52 That [p] thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them [q] in all that they call for unto thee.

53 For thou didst [r] separate them from among all the people of the earth, *to be* [s] thine inheritance, [t] as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.

54 ¶ And it was *so*, that, [u] when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from [t] kneeling on his knees [u] with his hands spread up to heaven.

55 And he stood, and [v] blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

56 [x] Blessed *be* the LORD, that [y] hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: [z] there hath not [‡] failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

57 The [a] LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us:

58 That he may [b] incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep [c] his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.

59 And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be [d] nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel [§] at all times, [e] as the matter shall require;

60 That [f] all the people of the earth may know that [g] the LORD *is* God, *and that there is* none else.

61 Let your heart therefore be [h] perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

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[d] Lev. xxvi. 34—39. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 36. 64—68. xxix. 28. 2 Kings xvii. 6. 18. 23. xxv. 21. Dan. ix. 7—14. Luke xxi. 24.
[e] Lev. xxvi. 40—45. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 1, 2. 2 Chr. vi. 37. xxxiii. 12. 13. Ez. xvi. 61. 63. xviii. 28. Hag. i. 7. Luke xv. 17.
[*] Heb. *bring back to their heart.*
[f] Ezra ix. 6, 7. Neh. i. 6. ix. 26—30. Ps. cvi. 6. Is. lxiv. 6—12. Dan. ix. 5—11. Zech. xii 10.
[g] Job xxxiii. 27, 28. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Luke xv. 18.
[h] Deut. iv. 29. vi. 5, 6. Judg. x. 15, 16. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. Neh. i. 9. Ps. cxix. 2. 10. 145. Prov. xxiii. 26. Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. iii. 10. xxiv. 7. xxix. 12—14. Dan. ix. 13. Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 10.
[i] *See on* 30.—Dan. vi. 10.
[k] *See on* 44.
[l] *See on* 30.
[†] Or, *right.* 45. 2 Kings xix. 19. Zech. i. 15, 16.
[m] 2 Chr. xxx. 9. Ezra vii. 6. 27, 28. Neh. i. 11. ii. 4—8. Ps. cvi. 46. Prov. xvi. 7. Dan. i. 9, 10. Acts vii. 10.
[n] 53. Ex. xxxii. 11, 12. Num. xiv. 13—19. Deut. ix. 26—29. 2 Cor. vi. 39 Neh. i. 10. Is. lxiii. 16—18. lxiv. 9. *Jer.* li. 19.
[o] Deut. iv. 20. Jer. xi. 4.
[p] *See on* 29.—2 Chr. vi. 40.
[q] Ps. lxxxvi. 5. cxiv. 18.
[r] Ex. xix. 5, 6. xxxiii. 16. Num. xxiii. 9. Deut. iv. 34. vii. 6—8. xiv. 2. xxxii. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
[s] Deut. xxxii. 9. Jer. x. 16. Eph. i. 18.
[t] Deut. xxxiii. 1—3. 28—29.
[u] Luke xi. 1 xxii. 46.
[t] *See on* 2 Chr. vi. 13.—Ps. xcv. 6 Luke xxii. 41. 45. Acts xx. 36. xxi. 5.
[u] *See on* 22.—2 Chr. vi. 12.
[v] *See on* 14.—Num. vi 23—26. 2 Sam. vi. 18. 1 Chr. xvi. 2.
[x] *See on* 15.
[y] Deut. iii. 20. xii. 10—12. Josh. xxi. 44. 2 Chr. xiv. 6. Heb. iv. 3—9.
[z] Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 14, 15. Luke i. 54, 55. 72, 73. xxi. 33.
[‡] Heb. *fallen.* 1 Sam. iii. 19. 2 Kings x. 10.
[a] Deut. xxxi. 6. 8. Josh. i. 5. 9. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Ps. xlvi. 7. 11. Is. viii. 10. xli. 10. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 5.
[b] Ps. cx 3. cxix. 36. Cant. i. 4. Jer. xxxi. 33. Ez. xxxvi. 26, 27. Phil. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21.
[c] *See on* Deut. iv. 1. 45. vi. 1.
[d] Ps. cii. 1, 2. cxli. 2. John xvii. 9. 20—24. 1 John ii. 2.
[§] Heb. *the thing of a day in his day.* Luke xi. 3.
[e] Deut. xxxiii. 25.
[f] *See on* 43.—Josh. iv. 24. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 19.
[g] xviii. 39. Deut. iv. 35. 39. Is. xliv. 6. 8. 24. xlv. 5, 6. 22. Jer. x. 10—12. Joel ii. 27.
[h] xi. 4. xv. 3. 14. Gen. xvii. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Job i. 1. 8. Is. xxxvii. 37. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Phil. iii. 12—16.

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the Lord heard, forgave, and restored them to their own land. (*Notes, Dan.* ix. 1—19.) But it will hereafter receive another more remarkable answer, when the Jews shall be gathered from their present dispersion, become a part of the Christian church, and probably be reinstated in their own country.—All Solomon's arguments, in this plea for his people, were deduced from the Lord's choice of them, his separation of them from other nations to be his inheritance, and the favours which he had already conferred upon them: and all inseparably connecting their returning peace and prosperity, with their deep humiliation, true repentance, conversion, and fervent prayer. (*Note, Zech.* xii. 9—14.)—It appears from Chronicles, that Solomon concluded with a passage taken from one of the Psalms. (*Note, 2 Chr.* vi. 41, 42.)—*There is no man that sinneth not.* (46) *Notes, Ec.* vii. 19, 20. *Rom.* iii. 21—26. *Jam.* iii. 1, 2. 1 *John* i. 8—10. iii. 4—6.

V. 55—61. (*Notes, Josh.* xxi. 43—45. xxiii. 14—16.) *Incline,* &c. (58) No blessing can be expected, whilst men continue wilfully disobedient. No human heart is of itself inclined to obey the call to repentance, faith, and newness of life, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. The first benefit communicated to sinners, through the intercession of him whom Solomon typified, is "the inclining of the heart to this "obedience." 'Lord have mercy upon us and incline our

62 ¶ And [1] the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD.

63 And Solomon offered [k] a sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel [l] dedicated the house of the LORD.

64 The same day did the king [m] hallow the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings: because [n] the brazen altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings.

65 And at that time Solomon [o] held a feast, and all Israel with him, [p] a great congregation, [q] from the entering in of Hamath unto [r] the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, [s] seven days and seven days, *even* fourteen days.

66 On [t] the eighth day he sent the people away: and they [*] blessed the king, and went unto their tents, [u] joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

1 2 Sam. vi. 17—19. 2 Chr. vii. 4—7.

k Lev. iii. 1 Chr. xxix 21. 2 Chr. xv. 11. xxix 32—35. xxx. 24 xxxv. 7—9. Ezra vi. 16, 17. Ez. xlv. 17. Mic vi. 7.

l Num. vii. 10, &c. 84—88 2 Chr. ii. 4. vii 5. Ezra vi. 16, 17 Neh xii. 27. John x. 22.

m 2 Chr. vii. 7.

n 2 Chr. iv. 1.

o 2 Lev xxiii. 34—43. 2 Chr. vii. 8, 9.

p 2 Chr. xxx. 13. Ps. xl. 9, 10.

q iv. 21. 24. Num. xxxiv. 8. Josh. xiii. 5. Judg. iii. 3. 2 Kings xiv. 25. Am. vi. 14.

r Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31. Num. xxxiv. 5. Josh. xiii. 3.

s 2 Chr. vii. 8, 9. xxx. 23.

t 2 Chr. vii. 10. xxxi. 1.

* Or, *thanked.* i. 47.

u Deut. xii. 7. 12. 18. xvi. 11. 2 Chr. xxix. 36. xxx. 26, 27. Neh. viii. 10. Ps. xcv. 1, 2. c. 1, 2. Is. lxi. 3, 10. lxvi. 13, 14. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. Zeph. iii. 14. Zech. ix. 9. 17. Acts ii. 46. Gal. v. 22. Phil. iv. 4.

'hearts to keep this law.' *Communion service.*—'As by thy 'special grace preventing us, thou dost put into our hearts 'good desires.' *Col. for Easter Sunday.*—'We have no 'power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, 'without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that 'we may have a good will, and working with us when we 'have that good will.' *Art.* x. This, therefore, we should beg of God for others, and for ourselves, when we perceive our need of it: for when this is granted all else will follow. Yet Solomon afterwards *exhorted* the people to be "perfect with the LORD, &c." (61): and this is the scriptural method, though to many it appears inconsistent: but the exhortation reminds men of their duty; and the prayer or promise shews how they may be enabled to do it. (*Notes, Ps.* li. 10. cx. 3. *Ez.* xi. 17—20. xviii. 30—32. xxxvi. 25—27. *Phil.* ii. 12, 13.)

V. 63—65. (*Num.* vii.) The sacrifices offered at the dedication of the tabernacle were very few, compared with the immense number here mentioned: but those were proportioned to the circumstances of the princes of Israel in the wilderness, these to the riches and power of king Solomon. (*Marg. Ref.* k.)—It is probable, that altars of earth, or of rough stone, were prepared all over the inner court. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 21—25.)—All these sacrifices were not offered on the same day, but during the whole time of the solemnity: and the immense multitudes assembled feasted on the flesh of the peace-offerings.—The people separated on the twenty-third day of the seventh month, the day after the close of the feast of tabernacles; (2 *Chr.* vii. 9, 10;) so that the dedication of the temple must have preceded. And, as the great day of atonement was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month, it is not improbably conjectured, that the seven days of the feast of dedication preceded that solemnity; and that the people waited after it, to keep the feast of tabernacles also, before they returned home. (*Notes, Lev.* xvi. 29—31. xxiii. 26—32. 34—36.)—*The brazen altar,* &c. (64) *Note,* 2 *Chr.* iv. 1.—*From the entering in of Hamath,* &c. (65) *Marg. Ref.* q, r.

V. 66. The people departed full of admiration of Solomon's piety, wisdom, magnificence, and liberality; as well as of gratitude to the Lord for all his goodness: and they prayed most fervently for the king, being much enlivened by the sacred ordinance. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

When those in authority heartily and scripturally promote the cause of true religion, increasing numbers will soon be engaged in the cause: thus, the pious designs, which were conceived in a single breast, may, by the blessing of God, be completed with the concurrence and to the benefit of thousands, nay perhaps millions! and what a blessed improvement is this of authority, influence, affluence, and wisdom! Numbers indeed will assist on such occasions, to please their superiors, or to acquire reputation, or from secular motives, who are not cordially attached to the cause, and who will not profit by it themselves; yet, even they may forward such measures as conduce to the good of others.—True wisdom is displayed as much in the well timing, as in the orderly conducting, of important undertakings; and in obtaining the *voluntary* concurrence of others, where folly would deem it sufficient to employ superior power and constraint.—But without the gracious presence of the Lord, every religious observance is an empty form: the written word, the preaching of the gospel, prayer, baptism, and the Lord's supper, orthodox creeds, professions, speculations, and external order, form but a well-proportioned lifeless carcass; a temple without the ark, and without the glory; unless we in these things hold communion with a reconciled God upon a mercy-seat, through the person and work of the Redeemer, and by the influences of his sanctifying Spirit. This is the life and soul of true godliness, which infuses efficacy into every truth, ordinance, or duty; and in all things it should be chiefly attended to. (*Note,* 2 *Cor.* iii. 17, 18.) For, as far as this is attained, we, the believing servants of God on earth, hold fellowship with the church above; and, with all the company of angels and archangels, we worship the name of God our Saviour, with acceptance, and to his glory.

V. 10—21.

When we wait upon the Lord in the ways of his appointment, we shall surely receive tokens of his special favour:

CHAP. IX.

God appears again to Solomon, and makes a covenant with him, 1—9. Transactions between Solomon and Hiram, 10—14. Solomon builds or rebuilds several cities, 15—19. He subjects the remnant of the Canaanites to bond-service, and employs the Israelites in more honourable offices, 20—23. Pharaoh's daughter removes to her house, 24. Solomon sacrifices thrice every year, 25. His navy fetches gold from Ophir, 26—28.

yet his light is inaccessible to us; and the cloud, with which he veils his insufferable brightness, in his discoveries of himself to us, sometimes obstructs our view of his love, and causes us to tremble for fear of his judgments. The dark dispensations of Providence, the awful declarations of God's word, the apprehensions of his purity and justice, and the consciousness of guilt and pollution, often induce the awakened sinner to say, "Depart from me, for I am a "sinful man, O Lord;" when such views should quicken him in fleeing for refuge to the hope of the gospel. (*Note, Luke* v. 1—11. *P. O.* 1—15, *conclusion.*) On these occasions, those who are stronger in faith, and more advanced in knowledge and experience, should encourage their weaker brethren, and explain such things to them, as needlessly alarm them: for the established believer can deduce comfort, and motives for thankful obedience, from that very darkness which dismays and confounds the inexperienced Christian. However, blessed be God, in the person of our Emmanuel, and in his complete redemption, "the "thick darkness," in which JEHOVAH dwells, is greatly dispelled; the *dark cloud is become bright to us;* (*Note, Matt.* xvii. 5—8;) and though, compared with the beatifick vision, we "see through a glass darkly;" yet, following him who "is the Light of the world," "we shall not "abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Yet in the most spiritual frame of heart of the most eminent believers, sacred joy, gratitude, and love, will be mixed with deep humility and reverential fear; and conscious guilt and pollution will connect self-abhorrence and godly sorrow, with their most fervent praises and adorations.—We all are bound by the strongest obligations to use our utmost exertions for the honour of God: yet the most zealous believer will be conscious, that he has lost opportunities of service, through infirmity, temptation, and encumbrances. But when the Lord is not pleased to employ us in any work, which we sincerely design and vigorously attempt, he will notice and recompense the intention, even as much as if it had been accomplished. Let us then persevere in devising, and endeavouring to execute, plans of usefulness, though we be often baffled and unsuccessful; for it shall at last be declared, that we "did well that "it was in our heart:" and let sinners remember, that they also are accountable to God, and will be punished, for all the wickedness which was conceived in their hearts, though they were restrained in Providence, left destitute of the power, or deterred by the fear of man; and therefore did not actually commit it.—When the Lord's time arrives for any work to be done, all opposition will die away, all difficulties vanish, and all things concur in forwarding its completion: and whatever good work we have been employed in, and enabled to effect, we should consider it as a performance of his promises, and as an occasion afforded of celebrating his praises, to whom alone all the glory belongs.

V. 22—30.

The service of God is the highest honour of the greatest of men; and to lead others in prayer and praise, to animate and assist them in worshipping the Lord, forms the noblest employment on earth, and most resembles that of the angels in heaven. But indeed, the most exalted adorations of the noblest creatures are beneath the notice of his infinite majesty, and only accepted through his unspeakable condescension. With what internal awe, and external indications of reverence, should we, worthless sinners, prostrate ourselves before his glorious and holy majesty! How should we approach his mercy-seat with admiring, adoring gratitude, and humble expectation of his invaluable and much needed benefits! and how should faith and love exalt our souls above all external objects, and raise them to heaven, his dwelling place, where He displays his glory, who fills immensity, and "inhabiteth "eternity!"—But behold, he dwells in human nature, as in his temple! there sinners may see his glory and live: and when we pray in his name, directing our faith towards that sacred residence of the Deity, he will assuredly hear, and forgive our sins, and save our souls. His "name is "Emmanuel:" "God is in Christ reconciling the world "unto himself."

V. 31—45.

It is a debt we owe to our brethren, neighbours, friends, and strangers, yea, to our enemies, to intercede for them as their cases may require. Having therefore such a multiplicity of persons, cases, and wants to spread before the Lord, our hearts should frequently be enlarged to pray *copiously*, as well as *fervently*: and we shall not be condemned for long prayers, if they be not *formal*, and rendered tedious by vain, unmeaning repetitions.—It is also a comfort to the believer to reflect, how many prayers of parents, ministers, and pious friends, are laid up before God on his behalf; and how many are now praying for him in one place or other. All these shall, in due time, be answered in blessings unnumbered: nay, even whole nations, through successive generations, have reaped the benefits of the fervent supplications of a single true believer. Such intercessors form the unseen strength and bulwark of kingdoms: may the Lord increase their numbers, and may we be found among them!—Yet the prayers of all the subjects would be unavailing, did not the King, our Prince of Peace, the Builder of the Spiritual Temple, intercede for them. His pleading is always prevalent, and gives efficacy to all the rest: yet, neither the prayers of godly friends, nor even the Saviour's intercession, will benefit those who are never brought to pray earnestly for themselves. For he intercedes for those alone, who eventually are led to "believe in his name," and "who come "to God by him:" and the prayers of his people, for such as continue impenitent and unbelieving, return into their own bosom. (*Note, John* xvii. 6—10. 20, 21.)

V. 46—66.

We are alas! all sinners, and sin is the cause of all calamitites publick and personal; and unless forsaken and for-

AND [a] it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of [b] the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and [c] all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do;

2 That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, [d] as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

3 And the LORD said unto him, [e] I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: [f] I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, [g] to put my name there for ever: and [h] mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

4 And [i] if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my statutes and my judgments:

5 Then [k] I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.

6 *But* [l] if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments *and* my statutes which I have set before you, but [m] go and serve other gods, and worship them:

a vi. 37, 38. vii. 1. 51. 2 Chr. vii. 11.
b 2 Chr. viii. 1—6. Ec. ii. 4.
c II. 19. Ec. ii. 10. vi. 9.
d iii. 5. xi. 9. 2 Chr. i. 7—12. vii. 12.
e 2 Kings xx. 5. Ps. x. 17. lxvi. 19. cxvi. 1. Dan. ix. 23. John xi. 42. Acts x. 31.
f viii. 10, 11. Ex. xx. 11. Num. xvi. 38. Matt. vi. 9.
g *See on* viii. 29. —Deut. xii. 5. 11. 21. xvi. 11.
h Deut. xi. 12. 2 Chr. vi. 40. vii. 15, 16. Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14. Cant. iv. 9, 10. Jer. xv. 1.
i iii. 14. viii. 25. xi. 4. 6. 38. xiv. 8. xv. 5. Deut. xxviii. 1. 2 Chr. vii. 17, 18. Job xxiii. 11, 12. Ps. xv. 2. xxvi. 1. 11. Prov. xx. 7. Zech. iii. 7. Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.
k ii. 4. vi. 12. viii. 15. 20. 2 Sam. vii. 12. 16. 1 Chr. xvii. 10. Ps. lxxxix. 28—39. cxxxii. 11, 12.
l 1 Sam. ii. 30. 2 Sam. vii. 14—16. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 19—22. xv. 2.
m xi. 4—10. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16.

given, it must terminate in final misery. But when the vilest transgressor bethinks himself, and examines his heart and life; when he is humbled before God, and penitently confesses that he has sinned, has done peversely, and committed wickedness; when he returns to the Lord with his whole heart, and prays unto him, in the Saviour's name: then he has begun to receive the benefit of his intercession, and the Father will hear in heaven his supplication, and maintain his cause. Then, whatever be his grief, his burden and terror, and "the plague of his own "heart," the guilt of his conscience, the depravity of his nature, his evil habits, the force of temptation, or the pressure of affliction, he will bring it, and spread it in secret before a heart-searching and merciful God: thus he will obtain pardon and peace, and learn to love and fear the Lord all his days. In this manner the Israel of God is established and sanctified, and the backslider is recovered and healed; the stranger is brought nigh, and the mourner comforted; the name of God is glorified, and numbers are added to the church of such as shall be saved. Often did offending Israel in this way prove the mercy of God, when they sought him under their distresses; and there failed not one good word of all that he had promised them. But at length they wearied out his patience, and all his threatenings were accomplished: yet, even in their present dispersion, they will at length bethink themselves, and turn to God, as dwelling in his true Temple, and then they shall be numbered among his people. Oh, may they speedily be restored, that their conversion may be "as life "from the dead" to all nations, "that all the people of the "earth may know," and worship our God and Saviour! "May the Lord our God be again with them, as he was "with their fathers,... and incline their hearts unto him to "walk in all his ways!"—By the example of Israel other nations should be warned and instructed: no war ought to be engaged in, which cannot be conducted in a spirit of faith and prayer: princes and nobles should set the example in the worship of God, and act accordingly: publick calamities should excite to national repentance, reformation, and prayer: and these things would best secure publick peace and prosperity. The same should be the conduct of churches, families, and individuals.—May "the "Lord then incline our hearts unto him, that we may walk "in all his ways, and keep his commandments and sta-"tutes;" may we abound in his work, and stir up others to do the same: may we love the Lord, and do good to and pray for one another, and rejoice together for all the goodness, that the Lord has done for us and for his people! Then shall we enjoy some of the days of heaven upon earth, and be continually preparing for that world, where the feast of holy love and joy will be unalloyed and eternal.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. Solomon did not finish his other buildings, till above twelve years after the dedication of the temple; (10. *Note*, vii. 1;) and it is exceedingly improbable, that this gracious appearance of God to him was delayed so long. Some expositors therefore render these verses, "And it was, that thus Solomon finished," &c.—"And the LORD appeared," &c.—The two subjects are kept entirely distinct in Chronicles. (2 *Chr.* vii. 11, 12.)—The encouragement given Solomon, while building the temple, (*Note*, vi. 11—13,) was either sent by a prophet, or given in an answer by the high-priest; for this was only the *second* appearance of God to him. (*Note*, iii. 5—14.)

V. 3. The Lord favourably accepted the temple, which Solomon had built and consecrated to him; and set it apart as holy, for the residence of his ark, the centre of his worship, the place of his altar and sacrifices, and the visible pledge of his gracious presence with Israel, so long as they adhered to his ordinances and commandments. (*Notes*, *Deut.* xii. 2—7.) And he promised, "that his eyes and "his heart should be there perpetually:" (*Notes*, *Deut.* xii. 12. *Ps.* xxxiv. 15—17. *Jer.* xv. 1:) that is, he would regard it with peculiar attention and favour, and delight in doing good to those, who worshipped at, or towards, that holy place. (2 *Chr.* vii. 12—16.) And had not the national sins of Israel forfeited the blessing, this would uninterruptedly have been the case until the coming of Christ.

V. 4—6. Solomon and his posterity, and Israel in that and future ages, were alike concerned in these promises and warnings. The obedience intended in all such declarations, is the *unreserved*, though *imperfect*, obedience of a

7 Then [n] will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and [o] this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and [p] Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people:

8 And at [q] this house, *which* is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, [r] Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?

9 And they shall answer, [s] Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.

10 ¶ And it came to pass [t] at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD, and the king's house,

11 (*Now* [u] Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then [v] king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land [x] of Galilee.

12 And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and [*] they pleased him not.

13 And he said, What cities *are* these which thou hast given me, [y] my brother? And he called them the land of [†] Cabul unto this day.

14 And Hiram [z] sent to the king six-score talents of gold.

15 ¶ And this *is* [a] the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for [b] to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and [c] Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and [d] Hazor, and [e] Megiddo, and [f] Gezer.

16 *For* Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a present unto his [g] daughter, Solomon's wife.

17 And Solomon built Gezer, and [h] Beth-horon the nether,

18 And [i] Baalath, and [k] Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land,

n Lev. xviii. 24—28. Deut. iv. 26. xxix. 26—28. 2 Kings xvii. 20—23. xxv. 9. Jer. vii. 15. xxiv. 9. Ez. xxxiii. 27—29. Luke xxi. 24.
o *See on* 3.—2 Kings xxv. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 20. xxxvi. 19. Jer. vii. 4—14. xxvi. 6. 18. liii. 13. Lam. ii. 6, 7. Ez. xxiv. 21. Mic. iii. 12. Matt. xxiv. 2. Luke xxi. 24.
p Deut. xxviii. 37. Neh. iv. 1—4. Ps. xliv. 14. Is. lxv. 15. Jer. xxiv. 9. Lam. ii. 15, 16. Joel ii. 17.
q 2 Chr. vii. 21. Is. lxiv. 11. Jer. xix. 8. xlix. 17. l. 13. Dan. ix. 12.
r Deut. xxix. 24. Jer. xxii. 8, 9. 28.
s Deut. xxix. 25—28. 2 Chr. vii. 22. Jer. ii. 10—13. 19. v. 19. xvi. 10—13. l. 7. Lam. ii. 16, 17. iv. 13—15. Ez. xxxvi. 17—20.
t 1. vi. 37, 38. vii. 1. 2 Chr. viii. 1.
u *See on* v. 6—10. 2 Chr. ii. 8—10. 16.
v 2 Chr. viii. 2.
x *See on* Josh. xx 7.
* Heb. *were not right in his eyes.* Num. xxii. 34. Judg. xiv. 3. *margins.*
y v. 1, 2. Am. i. 9.
† That is, *Displeasing*, or, *dirty.* Josh. xix. 27.
z 11. 28. x. 10. 14. 21.
a 21.—*See* on v. 13.
b 10. vi. 38. vii. 1. 2 Chr. viii. 1.
c 24. xi. 27. Judg. ix. 6. 20. 2 Sam. v 9. 2 Kings xii. 20.
d Josh. xi. 1. xix. 36. Judg. iv. 2. 2 Kings xv. 29.
e iv. 12. Josh. xvii. 11. Judg. v. 19. 2 Kings ix. 27. xxiii. 29, 30. 2 Chr. xxxv. 22. Zech. xii. 11.
f 16, 17. Josh. x. 33. xvi. 10. xxi. 21. Judg. i. 29. 1 Chr. vi. 67. xx. 4.
g *See on* 24. iii. 1.
h Josh. xvi. 3. xxi. 22. 2 Chr. viii. 5, 6.
i Josh. xix. 44.
k 2 Chr. viii. 4.

penitent believer; by which he evidences his cordial acceptance of unmerited mercies, and aims to glorify the God of his salvation. (*Notes, Matt.* vii. 24—27. *John* xiv. 21—24. *Rom.* ii. 7—11.)—The words "if ye shall at all "turn," &c. certainly mean, "if ye altogether turn," &c. (*2 Chr.* vii. 19:) and indeed not every sin, but national idolatry or apostasy, sanctioned by the example of the prince, or rulers, or tolerated by them, was intended: for this especially violated the national covenant, and forfeited all the covenanted blessings.

V. 7—9. These denunciations were remarkably fulfilled during the Babylonish captivity; but the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the state of the Jews to this very day, are the most extraordinary accomplishment of them. (*Notes, Deut.* xxix. 21—25. *2 Kings* xxv. 8—10. *Jer.* xl. 2, 3. *Lam.* i. 8—11. ii. 15, 16. iv. 13—16.)

V. 11—14. Hiram had furnished Solomon with timber, not only for building the temple, but also for his own house, and his many other magnificent works: and he likewise "had sent him a hundred and twenty talents of gold;" for that seems to be the proper construction of the fourteenth verse. Solomon therefore was indebted to Hiram, beyond the corn and wine and oil agreed upon: (*Note*, v. 11:) and he gave him twenty cities in Galilee as a compensation. They seem to have been small towns in the vicinity of Tyre, beyond the boundaries of the land, as divided by Joshua, and lately taken from the ancient inhabitants. Probably they lay in ruins.—Hiram, however, was not satisfied with them, and "called them the land of "Cabul." (*Marg.*)—Perhaps, being accustomed to magnificence, and to acquire wealth by commerce, he had not the turn of mind for cultivating land: and finding the roads bad, the houses mean, and the country depopulated, he was not aware of the advantage which might be made of them. Solomon afterwards rebuilt them, and the Israelites dwelt in them; and probably Hiram was satisfied with some equivalent.

V. 15. *The reason*, &c.] That is, the *occasion* which there was for the levy, in order to accomplish so many great and magnificent works: or, the *method* in which it was raised. (*Note*, v. 13—18.)

V. 16, 17. The Canaanites kept possession of Gezer, a city in the lot of Ephraim, in the time of Joshua and the judges; but the inhabitants paid tribute to Israel. (*Judg.* i. 29. *Note, Josh.* xvi. 10.) It seems that they had continued in this state, till Pharaoh destroyed them, and burned the city: but on what account this was done, we know not. And he gave the site of the city, and the suburbs, to his daughter: some think, at the time of her marriage to Solomon. Solomon, however, rebuilt the city, with several others, which probably were in a ruinous condition.

V. 18. *Tadmor in the wilderness.*] This is supposed to have been the same with the city Palmyra, the magnificent ruins of which, in the midst of widely extended plains of barren sands, attract the attention, and excite the admiration, of modern travellers and antiquarians. But the architecture of these ruins, being evidently *Grecian*, does

19 And all [l] the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and [*] that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

20 *And* all the people, *that were* [m] left of the [n] Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel;

21 Their children [o] that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were [p] not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon [q] levy a tribute [r] of bond-service unto this day.

22 But [s] of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: [t] but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen.

23 These *were* the [u] chief of the officers that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.

24 But [x] Pharaoh's daughter came up out of [y] the city of David unto her house which *Solomon* had built for her: then did he build [z] Millo.

25 And [a] three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and [b] he burnt incense [†] upon the altar that *was* before the LORD. [c] So he finished the house.

26 ¶ And king Solomon [d] made a navy of ships in [e] Ezion-geber, which *is* beside [f] Eloth, on the [‡] shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

27 And Hiram sent in the navy [g] his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.

28 And they came to [h] Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, [i] four hundred and twenty talents, and brought *it* to king Solomon.

l iv. 26—28. Ex. i. 11.

* Heb. *the desire of Solomon which he desired.* See ver. 1. Ec. ii. 10. vi. 9.

m 2 Chr. viii. 7, 8.

n Gen. xv. 19—21. Ex. xxiii. 23. 28—33. xxxiv. 11, 12. Deut. vii. 1—3.

o Judg. i. 21. 27—35. ii. 20—23. iii. 1—4. Ps. cvi. 34—36.

p Josh. xv. 63. xvii. 12. 16—18.

q 15. v. 13. Judg. i. 28. 35.

r Gen. ix. 25, 26. Ezra ii. 55—58. Neh. vii. 57. xi. 3.

s Lev. xxv. 39.

t iv. 1—27. 1 Sam. viii. 11, 12. 2 Chr. viii. 9, 10.

u v. 16. 2 Chr. ii. 18. viii. 10.

x 16. iii. 1. vii. 8. 2 Chr. viii. 11.

y 2 Sam. v. 9.

z 15. xi. 27. 2 Chr. xxxii. 5.

a Ex. xxiii. 14—17. xxxiv. 23. Deut. xvi. 16. 2 Chr. viii. 12, 13.

b Ex. xxx. 7. 1 Chr. xxiii. 13. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—21. xxix. 11. xxxiv. 25.

† Heb. *upon it which was before.*

c vi. 38. 2 Chr. viii. 16.

d 2 Chr. viii. 17, 18.

e xxii. 48. Num. xxxiii. 35. Deut. ii. 8.

f 2 Kings xiv. 22.

‡ Heb. *lip.*

g v. 6. 9. xxii. 49. 2 Chr. xx. 36, 37.

h x. 11. Gen. x. 29. 1 Chr. xxix. 4. 2 Chr. viii. 18. ix. 10. Job xxii. 24. xxviii. 16. Ps. xlv. 9. Is. xiii. 12.

i 2 Chr. viii. 18.

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not allow us to suppose that they are the remains of buildings erected by Solomon; for they must be of much later date.

V. 19. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, iv. 26.) Perhaps the levy of service raised for the building of these cities, gave occasion to the complaint of the people after his death. (*Note*, xii. 4.)

V. 20—22. It is probable, that these remains of the Amorites, and the other devoted nations, had submitted to Israel, and renounced idolatry; and so were spared on terms, not dissimilar from those formerly granted to the Gibeonites. (*Notes, Josh.* vii. 2. ix. 3—5. 7. 19—27.)—They and their posterity seem to have been afterwards called "Solomon's servants," and thus to have been distinguished from the *Nethinim*. (*Note, Ezra* ii. 55—58.)—By employing them in these laborious services, Solomon was enabled to exempt the native Israelites from all but the more honourable employments. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23. *Notes*, v. 13—18. 2 *Chr.* viii. 10.

V. 24. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 2 *Chr.* viii. 11.

V. 25. Solomon observed the three great festivals with peculiar solemnity: yet he sacrificed at other times also; and "burned incense," not personally, but by the priests. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxvi. 16—23.)

V. 26—28. Solomon, possessing Ezion-geber, a seaport upon the Red sea, (*Marg. Ref.* e,) which communicates with the Indian ocean; united with Hiram, whose subjects were skilled in navigation and commerce, and probably traded to some part of the East Indies: and this is perhaps as ancient and authentick an account of the East India trade, as any that is extant. (*Note*, x. 22.) Ophir is by many supposed to have been the island now called Ceylon: though various other opinions are advanced concerning it. (*Marg. Ref.* h.)—Four hundred and fifty talents are mentioned in Chronicles: but perhaps thirty talents were divided among the officers and seamen; so that only four hundred and twenty were paid into the treasury.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The Lord is ever ready to hear the prayers which we make before him, and to manifest his acceptance of our upright services: and when we present ourselves, in body and soul, to be consecrated as the temples of the Holy Spirit, to his glory, he will hallow and sanctify us by his grace, and render us meet to be a holy habitation for himself; though before we were altogether polluted. (*Note*, *Eph.* ii. 19—22.) In and through Jesus Christ, his eyes and his heart are always upon every true believer, to watch over him, and to rejoice in doing him good; yet it is only at intervals, that he manifests his presence, and lifts up the light of his countenance upon him: but in heaven we shall always behold his face, and be filled with unalloyed, uninterrupted felicity.—After all the services which we can perform, we stand upon the same terms with the Lord as before: nothing can purchase for us an exemption from obedience, or a dispensation to sin, in any case whatever: nor would the true believer desire such a licence. Rather, in the integrity and uprightness of his heart, he longs for the entire mortification of every lust, and the increase of grace in his soul: and in his calmest moments would rather choose to be severely rebuked and "chastened of the "Lord;" and thus kept from sin, or recalled from his wanderings, than be allowed to transgress with impunity and prosperity. As for those, who merely call themselves Christians, of every sect and creed, who make their forms and notions an excuse for breaking God's commandments, they will ere long be exposed to universal and everlasting

CHAP. X.

The queen of Sheba comes to visit Solomon and to propose hard questions to him, 1, 2. He answers her questions: and she greatly admires his piety, wisdom, and magnificence, 3—9. Their presents to each other, 10—13. Solomon's yearly revenue, 14, 15. His golden targets and shields, 16, 17. His throne of ivory, 18—20. His rich vessels, and lucrative commerce; and the presents brought him, by such as came to hear his wisdom, 21—25. His chariots and horsemen, 26. The plenty of silver and cedar in his time, 27. Horses, chariots, and linen-yarn, brought out of Egypt, 28, 29.

AND [a] when the queen of [b] Sheba [c] heard of the fame of Solomon [d] concerning the name of the LORD, she came [e] to prove him with hard questions.

2 And she came to Jerusalem with [f] a very great train, with camels that bare [g] spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she [h] communed with him of all that was in her heart.

[a] 2 Chr. ix. 1. Matt. xii. 42. Luke xi. 31.
[b] Gen. x. 7. 28. xxv. 3. Job vi. 19. Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. Is. lx. 6. Jer. vi. 20. Ez. xxvii. 22, 23. xxxviii. 13.
[c] iv. 31. 34.
[d] Job xxviii. 28. Prov. ii. 3—6. John xvii. 3. I Cor. i. 20, 21.
[e] Judg. xiv. 12—14. Ps. xlix. 4. Prov. i. 6. Matt. xiii. 11. 35. Mark iv. 34.
[f] 2 Kings v. 5. 9. Is. lx. 6—9. Acts xxv. 23.
[g] Ex. xxv. 6. 2 Kings xx. 13.
[h] Gen. xviii. 33. Job iv. 2. Ps. iv. 4. Luke xxiv. 15.

contempt. For none will be so despised and miserable, either in this world or the next, as those who have continued wicked under the means of grace, who have apostatized from a religious profession, or who have made the truths and ordinances of God the cloke or the occasion of their iniquitous practices.—The conduct of individuals, of churches, and nations, who are exposed to great calamities, when carefully considered, will always sufficiently answer the enquiry, "Why hath the LORD done this unto "them?" Nay, even infidels and profligates frequently justify God in the punishment of unrighteous professors of religion, though not without casting unwarrantable scoffs and insults upon them.—Parents, who set their children good examples and give them good instructions, are warranted to hope, that their prayers for them will be answered, and the blessings of the covenant entailed upon them. (*Note, Gen.* xviii. 18, 19.) But the examples of those, whose sins are recorded in their punishment, may be equally instructive.—The present dispersed and despised state of the Jews is both a demonstration of the truth of the Scriptures, and a daily instruction and warning to us, not to trust in outward privileges, not to trifle with the commandments of God, and not to neglect the salvation of the gospel. We have indeed a better covenant, founded on better promises, than that made with the nation of Israel: but let us see to it, that it is really made *with us;* and that the law of God is written in our hearts, as the proof that our iniquities are forgiven. If this be the case, our persevering obedience, as well as our faith in the Saviour, is provided for; and the Lord "will put his fear into "our hearts that we may never depart from him." (*Note, Jer.* xxxii. 38—41.)

V. 10—28.

In the world, and in the church, we all have need of each other, and should endeavour, according to our ability, to equal or to exceed the kindness of others to us: but we should not be surprised or discouraged, if our attempts be not acceptable even to our brethren. For men are, and will be, of different judgments and dispositions; and they may be allowed to differ in all temporal matters, and in some things which pertain to the worship of God: but as all believers come to the mercy-seat of their reconciled Father, by Christ the living Way, and through his propitiation, and intercession; and as they all choose and delight in the same spiritual excellency of heavenly things; in these respects, they must and will be of one mind and of one judgment.—High stations furnish abundant employment for men's hands and hearts; and it is wonderful, if those who fill them are not "careful and troubled about "many things," to the neglect of "the one thing need-"ful:" yet at last, all their magnificence and splendid achievements are vanity and vexation of spirit. Nothing is truly valuable, but in proportion as it is useful: and that is most valuable which promotes the salvation of souls. They however, who begin with the service of God, regulate their worldly employments according to the precepts of his word, and still adhere to his worship and ordinances, take the best measures for obtaining all desirable success in their undertakings. Their activity and ingenuity may be beneficial to others, and they may perhaps escape material harm themselves; yet it is hard to persevere in such a course: few can resist the fascinating temptations of great prosperity; it gradually fosters pride and sensual indulgence, and eats out the life and power of godliness: and most of those, who have risen to great honour and affluence, after having given satisfactory evidence of real godliness, have evidently shewn that their souls were losers in proportion. Let the rich and prosperous, then, "rejoice "with trembling," and take heed lest they forget the Lord; and let the poor and obscure be thankful for their safer condition! (*P. O. Deut.* viii, *latter part. Notes,* 1 *Tim.* vi. 6—10. 17—19. *Jam.* i. 9—11.)

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. Cush, the son of Ham, had a descendant called Seba, and it is probable, that he settled in Africa, to the south of Egypt. (*Note, Gen.* x. 6, 7.) Eber also had a descendant called Sheba; and Abraham, a grandson by Keturah, called by the same name. (*Gen.* x. 28. xxv. 1—3.) On these and other accounts, it has been controverted, whether the queen of Sheba came from some part of Ethiopia in Africa, or from the most remote region of Arabia, near the Indian ocean, in Asia.—Tradition favours the former opinion, but then it is blended with manifest falsehoods. Our Lord says, "The queen "of the south, came from the uttermost part of the earth, "to hear the wisdom of Solomon:" and Ethiopia is more distant from Jerusalem than any part of Arabia; but at the same time it does not so well answer the description, "the "uttermost part of the earth." (*Matt.* xii. 42.) Learned men are therefore now generally of opinion, that Sheba lay in the most southern part of Arabia Felix, between the Red sea and the Indian ocean; that the queen of Sheba was descended from Abraham by Keturah, and retained

3 And Solomon [1] told her all her * questions: there was not *any* thing [j] hid from the king, which he told her not.

4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all [k] Solomon's wisdom, and [l] the house that he had built,

5 And [m] the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the [†] attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his [‡] cup-bearers, and his [n] ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD, [o] there was no more spirit in her.

6 And she said to the king, It was a true [§] report that I heard in mine own land of thy [‖] acts and of thy wisdom.

7 Howbeit [p] I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it:* and behold, the half was not told me: [*] thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

8 Happy *are* thy men, [q] happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom.

9 [r] Blessed be the LORD thy God, which [s] delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: [t] because the

1 2 Chr. ix. 2. Prov. i. 5. 6. xiii. 20. Is. xlii. 16. Matt. xiii. 11. John vii. 17. 1 Cor. i. 30. Col. ii. 3.
* Heb. *words.*
j *See on* i.—iii. 12. 2 Sam. xiv. 17. 20. Dan. ii. 20—23. Heb. iv. 12, 13.
k iii. 28. iv. 29—31. 2 Chr. ix. 3, 4. Ec. xii. 9. Matt. xii. 42.
l vi. vii.
m iv. 22, 23.
† Heb. *standing.*
‡ Or, *butlers.*
n 2 Kings xvi. 18. 1 Chr. ix. 18. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13. Ez. xliv. 3. xlvi. 2.
o Josh. v. 1. 2 Chr. ix. 4.
§ Heb. *word.* 2 Chr. ix 5, 6. *marg.*
‖ Or. *sayings.*
p Is. xiv. 4. Zech ix. 17. Mark xvi. 11. John xx. 25—29. 1 Cor. ii. 9 1 John iii. 2.
* Heb. *thou hast added wisdom and goodness to the fame.*
q 2 Chr. ix. 7, 8. Prov. iii. 13, 14. viii. 34. x. 21. xiii. 20. Luke x. 39—42. xi. 28. 31.
r *See on* v. 7.—Ps. lxxii. 17—19.
s Ps. xviii. 19. xxii. 8. Is. xlii. 1. lxii. 4.
t Deut. vii. 8. 1 Chr. xvii. 22. 2 Chr. ii 11.

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some traditional fragments of true religion; and that she had heard the fame of Solomon from the mariners of the fleet to Ophir, which had put into some of her ports: and indeed the more general connexion, in which the name Sheba is used, in the subsequent part of Scripture, powerfully confirms this conclusion. (*Marg. Ref.* b.)—Our Lord's testimony, to the motives which influenced the queen of Sheba, sufficiently refutes the disadvantageous surmises which have often been entertained and advanced. She "had heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the "name of the LORD," and she came "to hear his wisdom." The report of his knowledge in the truth and precepts of religion, of his piety and zeal in the worship of JEHOVAH, and of the wisdom given him, peculiarly attracted her attention: and she came to propose many questions to him, which perplexed her mind, upon those important subjects; she could meet with no one, who could clear them up to her; and she desired "to prove him," whether he could or not. This shews that she was used to reflect seriously upon religion; but for want of proper instruction, was not able to obtain satisfactory solutions of her difficulties: and considering her sex and rank, and the magnificence and indulgence in which she might have lived at home; her long journey, undertaken for these purposes, formed a strong proof of a pious and ingenuous mind, which knew the value of true wisdom, and was willing "to buy the "truth" at any price. (*Notes, Prov.* xxiii. 23. *Acts* viii. 26—31.)—Her train and attendance were suited to her high rank; and many think, that the treasures, which she brought, serve also to mark out the region whence she came.—*Hard questions.* (1) חִידוֹת: (from חוד *ænigma loqui vel proponere:*) translated *a riddle; Judg.* xiv. 12—18: *dark saying, Ps.* xlix. 4.—The plural, *dark sayings, Ps.* lxxviii. 2. *Prov.* i. 6.—*Notes, Ps.* lxxviii. 2. *Prov.* i. 6.

V. 3. With the books of holy Scripture, then extant, and the wise and understanding heart which the Lord had given him, Solomon readily answered those questions, that were most difficult to the queen of Sheba. He had prayed, that "all the people of the earth might know the name "of the LORD, to fear him;" (viii. 43;) and he doubtless instructed her fully in those truths, which relate to the being and perfections, the authority, law, and worship of the one living and true God; in the nature, and meaning of the temple, altar, priests, and sacrifices, at Jerusalem; and in every other subject, which was essential to the acceptable worship of JEHOVAH. Her language also indicates that she profited by his instructions; and probably carried home with her the sacred Scriptures, and a large accession of profitable knowledge concerning true religion, for the benefit of her subjects. (*Notes, Acts* viii. 36—40.)

V. 4, 5. *Marg. Ref.—His ascent,* &c. (5) Some understand these words, of a magnificent communication, which Solomon had prepared, between his palace and the courts of the temple, by which he and all his attendants regularly went up to worship the Lord. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xvi. 17, 18. *Ez.* xliv. 1—3. xlvi. 1—3.) Others suppose that they mean the sacrifices which he offered upon the altar: while others explain them of the cheerful and fervent solemnity with which he worshipped, shewing that his heart was much engaged in the sacred service. The first indeed seems the true meaning: but however that may be, Solomon's wisdom and wealth, his magnificence, and his regular and prudent management of his numerous concerns, united with his exemplary piety, overpowered the queen's mind with astonishment; so that she was altogether overcome by it.—This event probably took place about the middle of Solomon's reign, at least before he began to turn aside to idolatry.

V. 6—9. Solomon's *wisdom* made a deeper impression upon the mind of the queen of Sheba, than all his prosperity and grandeur. She congratulated, and almost seemed to envy, the felicity of his servants. She had derived such benefit from her occasional conversation with him; that she considered those persons peculiarly favoured, though far her inferiors in rank, who continually enjoyed the advantage of his instructive discourse and wise counsels. She also very fervently praised God, for his love to Solomon and to Israel, in endowing him with such extraordinary wisdom, in raising him to the throne, and in blessing him with peace and prosperity, that he might rule over his people "in justice, and in judgment." These sentiments concerning the sovereignty and providence of God, the Giver of all wisdom and prosperity; his free and unfailing love to his people; the duty of kings; and the happiness of those nations who are favoured with those that do their duty; together with her praising God for his love to his people, in which she cordially rejoiced, prove an understanding and pious mind, and must convince the

LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, [u] to do judgment and justice.

10 And [v] she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of [x] spices very great store, [y] and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

11 And the navy also of Hiram that brought gold from [z] Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of [a] almug-trees, and precious stones.

12 And the king made of the almug-trees [*] pillars for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, [b] harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug-trees, nor were seen unto this day.

13 And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba [c] all her desire whatsoever she asked, beside *that* [†] which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

14 ¶ Now the weight of gold, that came to Solomon in one year, [d] was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold;

15 Besides *that he had* of the merchantmen, and of the traffick of the spice-merchants, and of [e] all the kings of Arabia, and of the [‡] governors of the country.

16 And king Solomon made [f] two hundred targets *of* beaten gold: six hundred *shekels* of gold went to one target.

17 And *he made* three hundred shields *of* beaten gold: three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them [g] in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

18 ¶ Moreover the king made [h] a great throne of [i] ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold.

19 The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round [§] behind: and *there were* [‖] stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays.

20 And twelve [k] lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not [*] the like made in any kingdom.

21 And all king Solomon's [l] drinking vessels *were of* gold, and all the vessels of [m] the house of the forest of Lebanon *were of* pure gold; [†] none *were of* silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

22 For the king had at sea a navy of [n] Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of

[u] 2 Sam. viii. 15. xxiii. 3. Ps. lxxii. 2. Prov. viii. 15, 16. Is. ix. 7. xi. 4, 5. xxxii. 1, 2. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Rom. xiii. 3, 4.
[v] *See on* 2. ix. 14. —Matt. ii. 11.
[x] Gen. xliii. 11. Ex. xxx. 34.
[y] Prov. iii. 13—15. xx. 15. Rev. xxi. 11.
[z] *See on* ix. 27, 28. —2 Chr. viii. 18. Ps. xlv. 9.
[a] 2 Chr. ii. 8. ix. 10, 11. *algum.*
[*] Or, *rails.* Heb. *a prop.*
[b] 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1, &c. Ps. xcii. 1—3. cl. 3—5. Rev. xiv. 2, 3.
[c] 2. ix. 1. Ps. xx. 4. xxxvii. 4. Matt. xv. 28. John xiv. 13, 14. Eph. iii. 20.
[†] Heb. *which he gave her, according to the hand of king Solomon.*
[d] *See on* ix. 28.
[e] 2 Chr. ix. 13, 14. Ps. lxxii. 10. Is. xxi. 13. Gal. iv. 25.
[‡] Or, *captains.*
[f] xiv. 26—28. 2 Chr. ix. 15, 16. xii. 9, 10.
[g] *See on* vii. 2.
[h] 2 Chr. ix. 17—19. Ps. xlv. 6. cx. 1. cxxii. 5. Heb. i. 3. 8. Rev. xx. 11.
[i] 22. xxii. 39. Ps. xlv. 8. Ez. xxvii. 6. Am. vi. 4. Rev. xviii. 12.
[§] Heb. *on the hinder part thereof.*
[‖] Heb. *hands.*
[k] Gen. xlix. 9. Num. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9. Rev. v. 5.
[*] Heb. *so made.*
[l] 2 Chr. ix. 20—22.
[m] 17. vii. 2.
[†] Or, *there was no silver* in them.
[n] xxii. 48. Gen. x. 4. 2 Chr. ix. 21. xx. 36, 37. Ps. xlviii. 7. lxxii. 10. Is. ii. 16. xxiii. 1. 6. 10. lx. 9. lxvi. 19. Ez. xxvii. 12. Jon. i. 3. *Tarshish.*

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reflecting reader that she returned home much benefited by her journey.

V. 11, 12. It is not known what kind of wood is intended by the words *almug-trees*, or *algum-trees*: but the specimen brought from Sheba would remain to posterity in the pillars, or rails, and the musical instruments, made of it. (2 *Chr.* ii. 8. ix. 10, 11.)

V. 13. (*Marg. Ref.*) Besides the munificent presents, which Solomon, no doubt, unsolicited, conferred on the queen of Sheba; he also gave her all those things, which she particularly requested: being, probably, such productions of Judah and the adjacent regions, as she had not seen in her own country. These would keep in her remembrance, when she arrived in her own kingdom, what she had seen and heard at Jerusalem.

V. 14, 15. Perhaps the kings of Arabia were induced, by the queen of Sheba's report and example, to pay court to Solomon and send him presents.

V. 16, 17. These targets and shields seem to have been intended principally for magnificence, and to be carried before the king on special occasions. (*Notes*, vii. 2. xiv. 25—28.)

V. 18—20. Ivory is not mentioned in Scripture till the time of Solomon, who doubtless imported it from India.—It cannot be supposed, that the ivory was entirely covered with gold; but rather inlaid with it, so as to add to its beauty.—The lions seem to have been intended not only for ornament, but as emblems of the courage and resolution, requisite in the impartial administration of justice; and they denoted that magistrates should be a terror to evil-doers, and the protectors of those who peaceably submit to their authority. Judah was compared by Jacob to a young lion; and our Lord is called "the Lion of the "tribe of Judah." (*Notes, Gen.* xlix. 8, 9. *Rev.* v. 5—7.)

V. 22. Many learned men have endeavoured to shew that Tharshish was a city in Spain, called Tartessus; and some think that this navy, which Solomon had with the navy of Hiram, was distinct from that which traded to Ophir, and was fitted out from some port on the Mediterranean: and they account for the length of time taken up in each voyage, by supposing that a great part of it was employed in selling and buying, or bartering, the several articles of commerce.—But, whatever gold might be, ivory, apes, and peacocks, (or *parrots*, as some render the word,) do not seem to have been articles of trade in any of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean.—"Jehoshapha "made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but "they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-

Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, * ivory, and apes, and ° peacocks.

23 So king Solomon [l] exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.

24 ¶ And all the earth sought [t] to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, [m] which God had put in his heart.

25 And they brought [n] every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, °and mules, [p] a rate year by year.

26 And [q] Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed [r] in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.

27 And [s] the king [‡] made silver *to be* in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he *to be* as the sycamore-trees that *are* in the vale, for abundance.

28 And [§] Solomon had [t] horses brought out of Egypt, [u] and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

29 And a chariot came up and went [u] out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty; and so for all [x] the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring *them* out by [‖] their means.

* Or, *elephant's teeth.* 1 K. x. 22. Am. iii. 15.
° Job xxxix. 13.
l iii. 12, 13. iv. 30, 31. 2 Chr. ix. 22, 23. Ps. lxxxix. 27. Eph. iii. 8. Col. ii. 18, 19. ii. 2, 3.
† Heb. *the face of.*
m *See on* iii. 9. 12. 28.—Prov. ii. 6. Dan. i. 17. ii. 21, 23. v. 11.
n 10. Judg. iii. 15. 1 Sam. x. 27. 2 Sam. viii. 2, 10. 2 Chr. xxvi. 8. Job xlii. 11. Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. Is. xxxvi. 16. Matt. ii. 11.
o i. 33. xviii. 5. Gen. xxxvi. 24. Ezra ii. 66. Esth. viii. 10. 14. Is. lxvi. 20. Ez. xxvii. 14.
p 2 Kings xvii. 4. 2 Chr. ix. 24.
q *See on* iv. 26.—2 Chr. i. 14. ix. 25. Is. ii. 7.
r 2 Chr. ix. 25.
s 2 Chr. i. 15—17. ix. 27. Job xxii. 24, 25.
‡ Heb. *gave.*
§ Heb. *the going forth of the horses which was Solomon's.*
t Deut. xvii. 16. 2 Chr. i. 16, 17. ix. 28. Is. xxxi. 1—3. xxxvi. 9.
u Gen. xli. 42. Prov. vii. 16. Is. xix. 9. Ez. xxvii. 7.
x Josh. i. 4. 2 Kings vii. 6.
‖ Heb. *their hand.* Hos. xii. 10. Mal. i. 1. *margins.*

"gaber."—"He joined himself with Ahaziah to make "ships to go to Tharshish, and they made the ships in "Ezion-gaber. ... And the ships were broken, that they "were not able to go to Tharshish." (*Note*, xxii. 48, 49. 2 *Chr.* xx. 35—37.) These passages, being decisive proofs that the ships of Tharshish, ships to go to Tharshish, were built at Ezion-gaber on the Red sea, the learned Bishop Lowth, (having adopted the opinion, that Tharshish was Tartessus in Spain,) says, 'Tharshish is celebrated in 'Scripture for the trade, which Solomon carried on thither 'in conjunction with the Tyrians. Jehoshaphat attempted 'afterward to renew that trade; and from the account 'given of that attempt, it appears, that this fleet was to 'sail from Ezion-gaber on the Red sea, and must there-'fore have designed to sail round Africa, as Solomon's 'fleet probably had done before: for it was a three years' 'voyage; and they brought gold from Ophir, probably 'from the coast of Arabia, silver from Tartessus, and ivory, 'apes, and peacocks, from Africa.—It is certain, that 'under Pharaoh-necho, about two hundred years after, 'this voyage was made by the Egyptians,' &c. *Bp. Lowth on Is.* ii. 13—16.—But, with all deference to so eminent a writer, it must be allowed extremely improbable, that in regular voyages, for *commerce*, (not *discovery*, for which Pharaoh-necho's extraordinary expedition doubtless was undertaken,) such a circuitous course should be chosen; when, as far as we can learn, it was not then known that Africa was a peninsula! To fit out one navy at Ezion-gaber, for Ophir, whether in Arabia, or the East Indies, which might coast some parts of Africa; and to fit out another navy to Spain from some Mediterranean port, would be an obvious and compendious measure: but that the same ships should attempt the whole, and after taking in the far richest part of their freight, comparatively near home; should with it attempt to sail round Africa, in order to add silver, and some other articles of inferior value, at Tartessus, must strike every reflecting person as a most unparalleled proceeding.—To sail round Africa at that time, would be immensely more formidable, than a voyage round the world at present: and a single glance at a map must convince any person, acquainted with commerce, that no man of common prudence would ever think of such a voyage for lucrative purposes.—Tharshish seems indeed, in some places, to mean Tartessus, or Tarsus, or some place connected with the Mediterranean: for Jonah embarked for Tharshish at Joppa; and Joppa is situated on the Mediterranean. Ships of Tharshish seem also sometimes to mean any large ships fitted out for long voyages. But in this place, and some others referred to, if the text be not corrupted, (which there is not the least reason to suppose,) Tharshish must mean some place in the East Indies, or bordering on the Indian Ocean. (*Note, 2 Chr.* ix. 13—21, *v.* 21.)

V. 24—27. (*Notes*, iii. 5—14. iv. 26—34.) These particulars were recorded, to shew the faithfulness of God, to the promises which he had made to David and to Solomon, whose reign typified the kingdom of the Messiah, in its peace and prosperity, and in the submission and willing services of princes and nations.—But Solomon was doubtless culpable in several respects, and his mind was gradually corrupted from its simplicity to excessive luxury and ostentation, which prepared the way for the awful departure from God recorded in the ensuing chapter. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xi. 1—5.)

V. 28, 29. Solomon and Pharaoh seem to have traded together, by their merchants, to the exclusion of other persons. The price of the linen yarn, according to its quality, was fixed by contract. The price of a good chariot-horse also was fixed at about nineteen pounds sterling, and that of a chariot at seventy-five: and, in a contract, there is no absurdity in supposing that, the quality being described, a certain sum should be given for each, one with another. Besides those, which were brought for the king's use, numbers were sold again, at a great profit doubtless, to the neighbouring princes: for Pharaoh reserved to his son in law the exclusive advantage of this lucrative trade. Some indeed suppose the stipulated sums to have been an exorbitant tax, laid by Pharaoh on all chariots, or horses, which were exported: but the other seems the more probable way of explaining the passage. (*Marg. Ref.* t, u. *Notes, Deut.* xvii. 16. *Is.* xxxi. 1—3.)

CHAP. XI.

Solomon, having taken very many wives and concubines, even strange women, is in his old age seduced by them into idolatry, 1—8. The Lord threatens to rend the greater part of the kingdom from his family, 9—13. Solomon finds an adversary in Hadad the Edomite, who had been entertained in Egypt, 14—22: and in Rezon, who reigned in Damascus, 23—25: and in Jeroboam, to whom Ahijah foretold that he should reign over ten tribes, and whom Solomon in vain attempts to kill, 26—40. Solomon dies and is buried, and Rehoboam succeeds him, 41—43.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

Wisdom and piety are exceedingly valuable, and render men truly honourable: and those, who form a due estimate of their worth, will think no expense or labour too great to obtain them.—When we first attend seriously to religion, we shall meet with many "hard questions," which we cannot resolve, and which will often perplex and distress our minds, especially if at a distance from proper instructions. But "then shall we know, if we follow on to know the "LORD." By waiting and prayer, by practising what we have learned, by diligently searching the Scriptures, and by consulting wise and experienced Christians, we shall be delivered from our difficulties, and a clearer light will shine upon our path. (*Notes, Prov.* iv. 18, 19. *Is.* xlii. 13—17. *Hos.* vi. 1—3. *John* vii. 14—17.)—Those who possess wisdom and knowledge, ought to be courteous and accessible, and glad to communicate them for the good of others; even as the rich should be to impart their wealth.—Great wisdom and piety, in the midst of singular prosperity and grandeur, are very uncommon, and therefore excite the higher admiration. A good understanding will also be displayed, in the orderly and prudent regulation of domestick and secular concerns; so that propriety, and consistency with a man's station and circumstances, will be visible to the attentive spectator; but our greatest diligence, constancy, seriousness, and cheerfulness, should be manifested, in attending on the ordinances of God; that our example may influence others to "serve him in reve-"rence and godly fear." This gives a lustre to wisdom, learning, wealth, or greatness: but alas. how few are ambitious of this honour that cometh from God! how little of this is seen in our princes, and nobles, and great men!

V. 6—13.

The reports which we hear concerning the achievements and excellences of our fellow-creatures, or concerning any earthly glory, are seldom verified when we become acquainted with them. But there is a spiritual excellency in heavenly things, and in consistent Christians, to which no reports can do justice: and the better they are known, the more they will be esteemed and relished.—Those who delight in the company of wise men will become wise: and they are highly favoured, who have continual opportunity of conversing with persons of this character: yet frequently, such as have occasional interviews with them get more benefit, than those do who are always with them.—All our comforts and prospects spring from the Lord's love to us: he delights in the fruits of his own Spirit; and he communicates many good gifts to magistrates, ministers, and private Christians, out of love to his people, that they may be serviceable to them; and happy are they, who are governed and instructed by those, "in whom the Lord de-"lighteth." This indeed has hitherto been a very uncommon case; and many are ready to conclude that it never can become general: but the scriptures assure us, that at length it shall be the privilege and felicity of every nation under heaven.—Whatever our station and endowments be, they are connected with correspondent duties: and we should take it kindly to be reminded of them, and excited to perform them with diligence and fidelity.—Reciprocal kindnesses cement friendship; and the wealthy should not willingly be outdone in generosity: but neither the company of God's people, nor the ordinances of his house, should detain us from our proper place and employments, but should send us to them, prepared and disposed to discharge them with greater wisdom and conscientiousness.—Thus the awakened sinner, oppressed with perplexing difficulties, discouraging objections, and distressing fears, hears the report of the Saviour's acts and wisdom, of his unsearchable riches and unfathomable love; but can scarcely believe the report. With trouble, self-denial, and the forsaking of many earthly things, he resorts by faith and prayer unto him, and is graciously encouraged, and entertained: the Lord's effectual teaching dispels his darkness and distress; he shews him his glory and grace, he satisfies him with the provisions of his house, and enriches him from his treasures of "wisdom, righteousness, sanc-"tification, and redemption." The rejoicing believer no longer glories in himself, and his own attainments: nor is he terrified, though humbled, with the consciousness of his own guilt and pollution. The person, the character, the love, of Jesus attract and engross his admiring attention, while they confirm his lively hopes of salvation: and he finds by experience, that the half was not told him of his excellency and preciousness. He now congratulates the felicity of the meanest servant of the Redeemer, but especially that of those above, who always behold his face and do his will.—He blesses the Lord for his love to Israel, in giving them such a Prince and Saviour, and yields up himself both to be ruled and saved by him: and though Jesus needs not, and is not enriched by, all that he can render to him; yet he devotes his riches and talents to his service, and they are graciously accepted, and recompensed with all that he can desire: yea, of his royal bounty, our Prince of Peace gives more than any petitioner is able to "ask or think." The believer, who has thus been with Jesus, will return to his station in society, to discharge his duty, with new alacrity, from purer motives, and to nobler purposes: yet, he will still look forward to the day, when, being "absent from the body, he shall be present with the "Lord;" and when his transient glimpses of the Saviour's glory, which overpower him with admiration, shall be exchanged for uninterrupted vision, with faculties enlarged, and strengthened to endure and delight in that ineffable refulgency. But who can express or conceive aright of that state of felicity? Every enraptured spirit will then confess, that the thousandth part of what is there enjoyed never reached his ear, nor was thought of in his most de-

[a] 8. Gen. vi. 2—5. Deut. xvii. 17. Neh. xiii. 23—27. Prov. ii. 16. v. 3—20. vi. 24. vii. 5. xxii. 14. xxiii. 33.

[*] Or, *besides.* iii. 1. Lev. xviii. 18.

[b] Ex. xxiii. 32, 33. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3, 4. Josh. xxiii. 12, 13. Ezra ix. 12. x. 2, &c. Mal. ii. 11.

[c] xvi. 31—33. Num. xxv. 1—3. Judg. iii. 6, 7. 2 Chr. xxi. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16.

[d] Gen. ii. 24. xxxiv. 3. Judg. xvi. 4—21. 2 Chr. xix. 2. Ps. cxxxix. 21. Rom. i. 32. xii. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 33. Rev. ii. 4.

[e] Judg. viii. 30, 31. ix. 5. 2 Sam. iii. 2—5. v. 13—16. 2 Chr. xi. 21. Ec. vii. 28.

[f] 42. vi. 1. ix. 10. xiv. 21.

[g] *See on* c. 2.—Deut. vii. 4. xvii. 17. Neh. xiii. 26, 27

BUT king Solomon [a] loved many strange women, [*] together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites:

2 Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, [b] Ye shall not[*] go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* [c] surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: [d] Solomon clave unto these in love.

3 And he had [e] seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

4 For it came to pass, [f] when Solomon was old, *that* [g] his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and [h] his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of David his father.

[h] 6. 38. vi. 12, 13. viii. 61. ix. 4. xv. 3, 14. 2 Kings xx. 3. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. xxix. 19. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. xxv. 2. xxxi. 20, 21. xxxiv. 2.

5 For Solomon went after [i] Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after [k] Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

[i] 33. Judg. ii. 13. x. 6. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. xii. 10. 2 Kings xxiii. 13. Jer. ii. 10—13.

[k] 7. Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2—5. *Molech.* Zeph. i. 5. *Malcham.*

6 And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [†] went not fully after the LORD, as *did* David his father.

[†] Heb. *fulfilled not after.* Num. xiv. 24. Josh. xiv. 8, 14. *Heb.*

7 Then did Solomon [l] build an high place for [m] Chemosh, the [n] abomination of Moab, in [o] the hill that *is* before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.

[l] Lev. xxvi. 30. Num. xxxiii. 52. 2 Kings xxi. 2, 3. xxiii. 13, 14. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Ez. xx. 28, 29.

[m] Num. xxi. 29. Judg. xi. 24. Jer. xlviii. 13.

[n] Deut. xiii. 14. xvii. 3, 4. xxvii. 15. Is. xliv. 19. Ez. xviii. 12. Dan. xi. 31. xii. 11. Rev. xvii. 4, 5.

8 And likewise did he for [p] all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

[o] 2 Sam. xv. 30. Zech. xiv. 4. Matt. xxvi. 30. Acts i. 9. 12.

[p] *See on* l.—Ez. xvi. 22—29. Hos. iv. 11, 12. Cor. x. 11, 12. 20—22.

lightsome moments upon earth.—Oh, may the writer, and every reader of these observations, aspire after that unutterable felicity, and at length rejoice in it together! "Be-"hold a greater than Solomon is here." Even upon earth he is present in his word, his ordinances, and on his throne of grace; and will be found of all who seek him uprightly. —But "the queen of the south will rise up in judgment "with the men of this generation" also. "She came "from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wis-"dom of Solomon;" but they will not arise from their beds, or go out of their houses, or even open their Bibles, to learn the wisdom of the Son of God! they will not put themselves to the least inconvenience to receive his instructions, and seek his salvation! (*Note, Matt.* xii. 41, 42.) Yea verily, this example shames every one of us; for we are all guilty of undervaluing our mercies, and of slackness in attending on the means of grace. Let then the careless and the infidel take warning, for evil is before them: let the negligent "strive to enter in at the strait gate," lest he should be found without when the door is shut: let the drooping enquirer be encouraged, for poor sinners of the Gentiles are welcome to Christ: and let us all sit at his feet, hear his word, and wait for his salvation; and, by reporting his praises, and doing his will, let us endeavour to recommend him to our fellow sinners on every side.

V. 14—29.

They have the most comfort in worldly things, (though seldom the largest shâre of them,) who expect least from them, and decidedly prefer wisdom and grace, and who devote the best of all which they have to the Lord: for his largest promises, general and particular, shall surely be performed to those who trust and serve him. But alas! what are worldly wealth and prosperity? They can only procure luxuries, embellishments, and curiosities, which add nothing to the real enjoyment of life: abundance creates satiety, and what is had in plenty is *nothing accounted of.* Such possessions always multiply cares and temptations: and they generally undermine humility and heavenly-mindedness; and eat out the life of religion, by leading to sensual indulgence, avarice, ostentation, or the pride of life. But the spiritual peace, riches, and abundance of the Redeemer's kingdom, are of another nature: they satisfy, but never satiate; while they sanctify the soul, and strengthen it to resist temptation, and to mortify every fleshly lust.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—8. We have not a more melancholy and astonishing instance of human depravity, in the sacred Scriptures, than that recorded in these verses. He, who was named "Jedidiah," *Beloved of the LORD,* and who early in life is declared to have "loved the LORD:" (*Notes,* iii. 2, 3. *2 Sam.* xii. 24, 25:)—he, who had been favoured with such special tokens of God's favour, and had received such answers to his prayers:—he, who had been honoured to build the temple, and was so enlarged in supplication when it was dedicated:—he, who was renowned throughout the earth for his wisdom and piety, as well as his wealth and prosperity:—he, who was employed as an inspired writer, whose name is affixed to a part of the oracles of God; who had given such excellent counsels and warnings to others, and was so illustrious a type of Christ:—even he apostatized, and became a publick and shameful worshipper of abominable idols, to the disgrace of his understanding, as well as the scandal of his profession!—It is probable, that his declension was gradual: he was perhaps elated with spiritual pride, as well as induced by his prosperity to indulge in luxury and ostentation: or perhaps, he deemed it unnecessary for one of his wisdom and ability, and of his rank and authority, to restrict himself by those rules, which were needful or salutary to inferior persons, as if he were secure from those evils which they were intended to prevent! He first multiplied horses, and caused the people to go down into Egypt for that purpose; then he *greatly* multiplied gold and silver, contrary to the law of Moses; (*Notes,* x. 24—29. *Deut.* xvii. 16, 17;) not as his father

9 ¶ And the LORD was [q] angry with Solomon, because [r] his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, [s] which had appeared unto him twice,

10 And had [t] commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

11 Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this * is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, [u] I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

12 Notwithstanding [v] in thy days I will not do it [x] for David thy father's sake: *but* [y] I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

13 Howbeit [z] I will not rend away all the kingdom; *but* will give [a] one tribe to thy son [b] for David my servant's sake, and [c] for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

[q] Ex. iv. 14. Num. xii. 9. Deut. iii. 26. ix. 8. 20. 2 Sam. vi. 7. xi. 27. 1 Chr. xxi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 58—60. xc. 7, 8.
[r] *See on* 2, 3.—Deut. vii. 4. Prov. iv. 23. Is. xxix. 13, 14. Hos. iv. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 10.
[s] iii. 5. ix. 2.
[t] vi. 12, 13. ix. 4—7. 2 Chr. vii. 17—22.
* Heb. *is with thee.*
[u] 31. xii. 15, 16. Num. xiv. 28. 35. 1 Sam. ii. 30—32. xiii. 13, 14. xv. 26—28. 2 Sam. xii. 9—12.
[v] xxi. 29. 2 Kings xx. 19.
[x] ix. 4, 5.—Gen. xii. 2. xix. 29.
[y] *See on* Ex. xx. 5
[z] 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. 1 Chr. xvii. 13, 14. Ps. lxxxix. 33—37.
[a] 35, 36. xii. 20.
[b] *See on* xi. 12. 32.—Deut. ix. 5. 2 Kings xiii. 23. xix. 34. Ps. lxxxix. 49. cxxxii. 1. 17. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 17—26. Luke i. 32, 33.
[c] Deut. xii. 5. 11. 2 Kings xxi. 4. xxiii. 27. Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xiv. 32. lxii. 1. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16.

had done, for the service of the sanctuary, but for the increase of his own splendour. Thus, the barrier was broken through, and the fervour of his piety abated.—After the example of his father, he married several women, and added one to another, more and more rapidly, till he had got together an immense number of wives and concubines. And he doubtless might argue, that if it was lawful to have two wives, why not many? and in his case, who could maintain them all, they might not be inexpedient, and would add to his magnificence and royal dignity. Probably, Pharaoh's daughter, whom he first married, was a real convert; (for we find no temples built to the gods of Egypt;) and this might induce him to take more wives of the heathens, flattering himself, that his wisdom and example would prevail with them also to embrace the worship of JEHOVAH. Thus he proceeded, till perhaps persons were employed to collect from every part of his kingdom, but especially from the subjected nations, every beautiful woman whom they found, without regard to her religion. Those of superior rank seem to have been numbered among his wives, and styled princesses; while the inferiors were his concubines, with inferior privileges. (*Note, Gen.* xxv. 5, 6.) Towards the close of his life, when he was above fifty years of age, he grew more addicted to his women than before: and, spending much time in their company, he doubtless in a degree neglected both the worship of God, and the affairs of his kingdom: and perhaps the enormous expense, which their extravagance occasioned, rendered those burdens requisite, of which the people afterwards complained. (*Note,* xii. 4.) But the evil did not stop here: for his women gained still greater ascendancy over him, and gradually prevailed with him to connive at their idolatries, to oblige them by building idolatrous temples, and at length to join with them in their abominable worship! When one had been thus gratified, there could be no peace, unless the others were obliged in the same manner; and therefore he did thus for all his strange wives.—Those who have noted in history, or in society, the effects of the influence of inveigling women over the greatest and wisest of men, will readily perceive that matters were speedily in a train; and that it was almost impossible, without an immediate divine interposition, that Solomon should stop short of this extreme folly and wickedness, when he had once suffered himself to be entangled in the fatal net. (*Notes, Judg.* xvi. 4—21.) The inspired historian, therefore, quotes the prohibition of marrying strange women, with the annexed consequence, "Surely they will turn away your heart after their gods:" to shew that no eminency of wisdom, or firmness of resolution, will secure any man; when in a careless or self-confident spirit he presumes to violate God's commandments, and thus to run into temptation. Of this, Solomon formed a most striking proof. (*Marg. Ref.* b, c.—*Notes, Ex.* xxxiv. 11—17. *Josh.* xxiii. 11—13. *Neh.* xiii. 23—30.)—David had committed several heinous sins, but he had repented, and humbled himself for them: and he had still adhered to the worship of JEHOVAH, and never in the smallest instance set the people an example of idolatry, or given any connivance to that greatest of all abominations, that open treason against the King of heaven, and violation of the national covenant with Israel. But Solomon's heart was not *thus* "perfect with the LORD his God;" and "he went not fully after the LORD!" (*Marg. Ref.* h.)

V. 9—11. The Lord had twice appeared unto Solomon, in the most condescending and encouraging manner: and on the last occasion he had solemnly warned him of the consequences of disobedience, especially of idolatry. (*Notes,* iii. 5—14. vi. 11—13. ix. 3—9.) This aggravated his offence: and it is probable, that God sent this awful message by a prophet; as refusing to appear again to him, after his ingratitude for his former gracious appearance to him.

V. 12, 13. The sentence, however, should not be executed during his life, but immediately after his death. (*Note,* xxi. 27—29.) Benjamin was so connected with Judah, that together they were but as one tribe, and therefore it is not here particularly mentioned. As a punishment of Solomon's sin, the other ten tribes would be rent from his son: (*Notes,* 29—32. xii. 19, 20. 1 *Sam.* xv. 27, 28:) but in performance of the promises made to David, and in a gracious recompence for his obedience; and to maintain the worship of JEHOVAH at Jerusalem, which he had chosen, God would continue the tribe of Judah under the government of Solomon's posterity.—Even the mitigations of the sentence were suited to *humble* and afflict Solomon. Nothing was done for his sake, but all for his father's. (*Notes, Gen.* xix. 27—29. 1 *Sam.* ii. 30.) It is very probable, that this message brought him to himself, and led him to repentance. 'This was enough 'to astonish any man, to hear that all his splendour shoul- 'be so soon eclipsed, if he were not perfectly stupified. 'and it is likely it did make him reflect on his folly; and, 'as many think, moved him to write the book of Ecclesi- 'astes.' *Bp. Patrick.*

14 ¶ And [a] the LORD stirred up [e] an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he *was* of the king's seed in Edom.

15 For it came to pass, [f] when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, [g] after he had smitten [h] every male in Edom;

16 (For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom;)

17 That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; [i] Hadad *being* yet a little child.

18 And they arose out of [k] Midian, and came to [l] Paran; and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land.

19 And Hadad [m] found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of [n] Tahpenes the queen.

20 And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes [o] weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

21 And when Hadad [p] heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, * Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country.

22 Then Pharaoh said unto him, [q] But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, [†] Nothing: howbeit [r] let me go in any wise.

23 ¶ And [s] God stirred him up *another* adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord [t] Hadadezer king of Zobah:

24 And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them *of Zobah;* and they went to [u] Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.

25 And he was an adversary to Israel [x] all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad *did:* and he [y] abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

26 ¶ And [z] Jeroboam the son of Nebat, [a] an Ephrathite of Zereda, [b] Solomon's servant, whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow-woman, even he lifted up *his* hand against the king.

27 And this *was* the cause that he [c] lifted up *his* hand against the king: [d] Solomon built Millo, *and* [‡] repaired [e] the breaches of [f] the city of David his father.

28 And the man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he [§] was industrious, [g] he made him ruler over all the [‖] charge of [h] the house of Joseph.

d xii. 15. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. x. 5. 26. xiii. 17.
e 2 Sam. viii. 14. Ps. lxxxix. 30—34.
B. C. 1040.
f 2 Sam viii. 14. 1 Chr. xviii. 12, 13. Ps. lx. *title.* cviii. 10.
g Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 40. Num. xxiv. 18, 19. Mal. i. 2, 3.
h Num. xxxi. 17.
i Ex. ii. 1—10. 2 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Kings xi. 2. Matt. ii. 13, 14.
k Gen. xxv. 2. 4. Num. xxii. 4. xxv. 6. 14. 18.
l Gen. xiv. 6. xxi. 21. Num. x. 12. Deut. i. 1. xxxiii. 2. Hab. iii. 3.
m Gen. xxxix. 4 21. Acts vii. 10. 21.
n Jer. xliii. 7—9.
o Gen. xxi. 7, 8. 1 Sam. i. 24.
B. C. 1055.
p ii. 10. Ex. iv. 19. Matt. ii. 20.
* Heb. *Send me away.* Gen. xlv. 24. Josh. ii. 21. 1 Sam. ix. 26. 2 Sam. iii. 21.
q Jer. ii. 31. Luke xxii. 35.
† Heb. *Not.*
r 2 Sam. xviii. 22, 23. Ps. xxxvii. 8. Mark xiv. 31.
s *See on* 14.—2 Sam. xvi. 11. Ezra i. 1. 5. Is. xiii. 17. xxxvii. 26. xlv. 5. Ex. xxxviii. 16.
t 2 Sam. viii. 3. x. 15—18. 1 Chr. xviii. 3—9. xix. 6. 16—19. *Hadarezer.* Ps. lx. *title.*
u xix. 15. xx. 34. Gen. xiv. 15. Acts ix. 2.
x v. 4. 2 Chr. xv. 2.
y Gen. xxxiv. 30. Deut. xxiii. 7. 2 Sam. xvi. 21. Ps. cvi. 40. Zech. xi. 8.
z 11. 28. xii. 2. 20, &c. xiii. 1, &c. xiv. 16. xv. 30. xvi. 3. xxi. 22.
a Gen. xxxv. 16. Ruth i. 2. 1 Sam. i. 1. xvii. 12. 1 Chr. ii. 19.
b ix. 22. 2 Chr. xiii. 6.
c 2 Sam. xx. 21. Prov. xxx. 32. Is. xxvi. 11.
d *See on* ix. 15. 24.
‡ Heb. *closed.* Am. ix 11.
e Neh. iv. 7. Ps. lx. 2. Is. xxii. 9. Ez. xiii. 5.
f *See on* 2 Sam. v. 7.
§ Heb. *did work.* Prov. xxii. 29.
g v. 16.
‖ Heb. *burden.* Deut. i. 12. Is. xiv. 25. Matt. xi. 30.
h Josh. xviii. 5. Judg. i. 22, 23. 2 Sam. xix. 20. Am. v. 6. Zech. x. 6.

V. 14. As the opposition which Hadad made to Solomon accorded to the Lord's secret design of punishing him, and was over-ruled for that purpose, he is said to have "stirred him up;" though it is evident Hadad was instigated by his own ambition and resentment. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxvi. 17—19. 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1, 2. *Jam.* i. 13—15.)

V. 15, 16. These particulars are not recorded in the preceding history. (*Marg. Ref.* f.)—As the Edomites afterwards continued a people, either some particular district only was treated with this severity, or numbers escaped from Joab and his men.—Unless some very peculiar cause required it, this military execution cannot be justified.—*To bury the slain.* (15) The Israelites, who had been slain in the contest, as many think.

V. 17—22. (*Marg. Ref.*) After the death of David and Joab, Hadad returned to Idumea, in hopes to excite disturbances before Solomon's authority was established: but he seems to have been disappointed and restrained, till after Solomon's idolatry; when he perhaps attempted to seize the kingdom of Edom, and molested Solomon all the rest of his reign.

V. 23—25. When David had defeated Hadadezer, Rezon collected a company, over whom he became a captain; and it is probable, that for a long time they lived by plunder: for "David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus:" (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* viii. 3—8:) but at length Rezon found an opportunity of seizing Damascus, and usurping the kingdom of Syria.—He had indeed abhorred Israel from the first; but probably he did not openly appear as Solomon's adversary, or do him any injury, till Solomon had provoked the Lord by his idolatries. (*Note, Prov.* xvi. 7.)

V. 26—28. (ix. 15. 24. *Notes, Judg.* ix. 16—20, *v.* 20. 2 *Sam.* v. 9.) Jeroboam, having been employed in superintending the builders at Jerusalem, so distinguished himself by capacity and industry, that Solomon preferred him to a post of considerable authority and influence. He either placed him over the tribute collected from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, or made him superintendant of the

29 And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet [i] Ahijah the [k] Shilonite found him in the way: and he had clad himself with a new garment; [l] and they two *were* alone in the field:

30 And Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and [m] rent it *in* twelve pieces:

31 And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces; for [n] thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

32 (But [o] he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and [p] for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)

33 Because that [q] they have forsaken me, and have worshipped [r] Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do *that which is* right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father.

34 Howbeit [s] I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes:

35 But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and [t] will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes.

36 And unto his son will I give one tribe, that [u] David my servant may have a * light alway before me in Jerusalem, [x] the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

37 And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign, [y] according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel.

38 And it shall be, [z] if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; [a] that I will be with thee, and [b] build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee.

39 And I will for this [c] afflict the seed of David, but [d] not for ever.

i xii. 15. xiv. 2. 2 Chr. ix. 29.
k Josh. xviii. 1.
l Gen. iv. 8. 2 Sam. xiv. 6.
m 1 Sam. xv. 27, 28. xxiv. 4, 5.
n See on 11, 12.
o See on xii. 20.
p See on 13.
q 9. iii. 14. vi. 12, 13. ix. 6—7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. xv. 2. Jer. ii. 13.
r See on 5—8.
s See on 12, 13. —Job xi. 6. Ps. ciii. 10. Hab. iii. 2.
t xii. 15—17. 20. 2 Chr. x. 15—17.
u xv. 4. 2 Sam. vii. 16. 29. xxi. 17. 2 Kings viii. 19. 2 Chr. xxi. 7. Ps. cxxxii. 17. Jer. xxxiii. 17—21. Am. ix. 11, 12. Luke i. 69, 70. 78, 79. Acts xv. 16, 17.
* Heb. *lamp*, or *candle*.
x See on 13. ix. 3. —Gal iv. 25, 26. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xxi. 10.
y 26. Deut. xiv. 26. 2 Sam. iii. 21.
z iii. 14. vi. 12. ix. 4, 5. Ex. xix. 5. Deut. xv. 5. Zech. iii. 7.
a See on Deut. xxxi. 8. Josh. i. 5.
b xiv. 7—14. 2 Sam. vii. 11. 16. 26—29. 1 Chr. xvii. 10. 24—27.
c xii. 16. xiv. 8. 25, 26. Ps. lxxxix. 38—45. 49—51.
d See on 36.—Is. vii. 14. ix. 7. xi. 1—10. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Luke i. 32, 33. ii. 4. 11.

levy sent from them by courses to assist in his works. (*Note*, v. 13—18.)—This advancement, probably from a low situation, opened vast prospects to his ambitious mind: and he seems to have excited and encouraged the discontent of the people, on account of the burdens laid on them. Perhaps he was plotting an open revolt; at least he joined the disaffected party: and thus he might be said to "lift up his "hand against the king;" though his designs were not carried into effect till after Solomon's death.

V. 29—32. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Acts* xxi. 7—14.) The meaning of the emblematical action, here recorded, seems to imply, that "the new garment" belonged to the prophet, not to Jeroboam; though many expositors suppose the contrary. The division of the kingdom took nothing from Jeroboam, but gave the dominion over ten tribes to him. (*Note*, 12, 13.)—Some think that the rending of the garment, into twelve pieces, represented also the subsequent divisions and distractions which prevailed in Israel.

V. 33. Induced by Solomon's example, and to obtain his favour, it seems that the people had generally joined in his idolatry; and the punishment inflicted on him and his posterity involved them in manifold and heavy calamities.

V. 34—36. (*Notes*, 12, 13. *Gen.* xviii. 18, 19. xxvi. 2—5.) 'This was an admonition to Jeroboam not to mo-'lest Solomon in his life-time, by raising rebellion against 'him; and also to walk in God's way, as David did, and 'not to fall into idolatry.' *Bp. Patrick.*

A light, &c. (36) It was the purpose of God that David's family should still continue illustrious; and be the instruments of preserving the light of true religion in Jerusalem; as well as types of Christ "the Light of the "world." (*Notes*, xv. 4, 5. *Ps.* lxxxix. 19—37. cxxxii. 17. *Is.* ix. 6, 7.)

V. 37. *Thy soul desireth.*] It is probable, from this expression, that Jeroboam secretly aspired to the kingdom. But neither the designs of God nor this declaration by the prophet excused his ambition and rebellion. David, long after he had been anointed to the kingdom, was faithful to Saul, and was not driven by persecution to attempt ought against him: nor would he even seize the vacant throne, till called to it by the voice of the people. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 4—7. xxvi. 8—12. 2 *Sam.* ii. 4. v. 1, 2. 2 *Kings* viii. 14, 15.)

V. 38. *And build thee*, &c.] *Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 8—16. Distrusting this express conditional promise, Jeroboam endeavoured to establish his authority by disobedience; and thus he forfeited the kingdom as to his posterity, and brought ruin upon them, and incalculable mischiefs on Israel. (*Notes*, xii. 26—31. xiv. 5—16. 2 *Chr.* xiii. 4—12.)

V. 39. Three alleviations of the denounced judgments are mentioned. They would not happen in Solomon's days; therefore Jeroboam ought by no means to have attempted any thing against him: the whole kingdom was not to be taken from Solomon's posterity; therefore Jeroboam must not expect to subject Judah and Benjamin:

40 Solomon [e] sought therefore to kill Jeroboam; and Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto [f] Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

41 And [g] the rest of the [*] acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, *are* they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon.

42 And the [†] time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* [h] forty years.

43 And Solomon [i] slept with his fathers, and was [k] buried in the city of David his father: and [l] Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

e 2 Chr. xvi. 10. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. xiv. 24—27. xlvi. 10. Lam. iii 37.
f xiv. 25, 26. 2 Chr. xii. 2—9.
g 2 Chr. ix. 29, 30.
* Or, *words*, or, *things*.
† Heb. *days*.
h ii. 11.
i i. 21. xiv. 20. xv. 8. 24. xvi. 6. Deut. xxxi. 16. 2 Kings xvi. 20. xx. 21. xxi. 18.
k ii. 10. xiv. 31. 2 Kings xxi. 18. 26. 2 Chr. xxi. 20. xxvi. 23. xxviii. 27. Jer. xxii. 19.
l 1 Chr. iii. 10. 2 Chr. ix. 31. xiii. 7. Matt. i. 7. *Roboam.*

and the affliction was not to be for ever; which seems especially to refer to Christ and his everlasting kingdom.

V. 40. There is nothing in the original for *therefore;* it is simply "And Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam." It does not appear that he did this because of *Ahijah's prophecy*, which would have been an instance of most infatuated rebellion against God, and utterly inconsistent with repentance; but because of *Jeroboam's subsequent misconduct*, who perhaps divulged and boasted of the promise, and "lifted up his hand against Solomon;" which implies an attempt to raise rebellion in his life-time (26).—It is probable that Shishak was the successor of Pharaoh, whose daughter Solomon had married: but perhaps of another family and interest. He is the only king of Egypt hitherto called by his proper name; all before him being known by the general title of Pharaoh. He is also thought to have been the Sesostris of pagan history. (*Notes*, xiv. 25—28. 2 *Chr.* xii. 2—11.)

V. 41. *In the book*, &c.] Some annals, or records, of Solomon's life and reign, more copious than the account here given; from which such extracts were made, as were needful for edification. (*Preface to* 1 *Kings*. *Notes*, xiv. 19. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 29, 30.)

V. 42, 43. Solomon was the only king, who reigned so long as forty years over all Israel: yet he was not above sixty years of age when he died, and perhaps he had injured his constitution by indulgence.—We are not here informed, whether he repented before his death, or not: and this silence is a warning to every one of us, not to yield to temptations, lest we should leave the world in uncertainty, and be condemned as hypocrites in the consciences of God's people. But this silence in the book of Kings no more *proves* that Solomon did not repent, than the silence of the book of Chronicles *proves* that he did not commit idolatry. I would not indeed decide upon so controverted a point with unhesitating confidence: yet the book of Ecclesiastes seems fully to shew, that he repented, and publickly declared that repentance before his death. (*Note, Ec.* vii. 23—28.) We are not however much interested in the solution, as some suppose: for the doctrines of Christianity must be proved by "the sure testi-"mony of God," and not by particular examples: for we are not sufficiently acquainted, either with the real character of men, or with their final doom; to decide on this ground. If Solomon did not repent, he doubtless perished, notwithstanding all his previous zeal, important services, and eminent endowments: for no part of scripture gives reason to suppose that any who die in unrepented wickedness are saved. Many indeed think that this supposition would prove all his profession of religion to have been hypocritical; and this conclusion does not well accord to his name *Jedidiah*, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit, that he "loved the LORD." (*Notes, Ez.* iii. 20, 21. *Heb.* x. 35—39.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

We are repeatedly reminded, by the examples of the most eminent men, that no abilities or endowments; that no illustrious services, fervent affections, or vigorous resolutions; that nothing inherent in man, forms in itself any security against the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of his heart, or may be depended on as sufficient to preserve him from the commission of the most atrocious crimes.—Men of superior understanding find it far easier to lay down excellent rules for the conduct of others, than to reduce them to practice in the constant tenour of their own lives. (*Notes, Prov.* i—ix.) For alas! they often fall into the same pit, and are caught in the same snare, against which they have repeatedly warned others; and sometimes are guilty of things as absurd and foolish as they are wicked. Nay, old age itself will not eradicate from the heart any evil propensity. The habit of indulgence in fleshly lusts will more than counterbalance the effect of nature's decay: and if our sinful passions be not crucified and mortified by the grace of God, they will never die of themselves, but will subsist and rage when every opportunity of gratification shall be taken away.—Thus we are taught to "cease from man," and to watch and be sober: for our's is a dangerous warfare in an enemy's country, while the worst of our foes are the traitors which occupy our own hearts.—We all *naturally* desire prosperity and pre-eminence; yet in general these operate as fatal poisons to the soul. And when we allow of one inordinate or inexpedient indulgence, we give energy to all our passions, and to every temptation of Satan. Not only will the same inclination grow more importunate; but others also, like humoured children, will expect to be gratified in their turn: while self-government, even the authority of reason and conscience over the inferior faculties, is weakened by every concession. Our safety and comfort therefore consist in resolutely requiring them all to obey, and, though we cannot extinguish our passions, in rigorously confining them within the bounds of what is lawful and expedient.—Indulged luxury, or the pride of life, generally introduces greater licentiousness, where a man's affluence is equal to his inclinations. But the history of the world and of the church demonstrates, that the love of women is one of the most dangerous passions of the human heart. When once the divine original appointment concerning marriage is violated, the unbridled propensity will know no bounds: nor can the wisest or the most determined say to it, "Thus far shalt thou go, and "no further:" but, like a descending weight, the progress

CHAP. XII.

The Israelites, assembled at Shechem to make Rehoboam king, with Jeroboam now returned from Egypt, demand redress of their grievances, 1—5. Rehoboam, rejecting the counsel of the old men, and following that of the young, answers them roughly, 6—15. Ten tribes revolt, stone Adoram, and make Jeroboam king, 16—20. Rehoboam raises an army to subdue them; but is forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah, 21—24. Jeroboam builds Shechem and Penuel, 25: and to establish his kingdom, he sets up the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan, 26—33.

is from bad to worse with accelerated rapidity. The designing objects of a sensual and roving affection will employ, by turns, all the arts of persuasion, dalliance, flattery, or upbraidings, to prevail over a man's resolution, and to induce his compliance with the most unreasonable and pernicious requests: till shame and conscience are surmounted, reputation and interest sacrificed, every barrier is broken down, and a perfect infatuation takes place. (*P. O. Judg.* xvi.)—Parents, and those who are in reputation for piety, should be peculiarly careful what practices they sanction by their examples: for such as do not imitate them in their best actions, will be encouraged to copy and to exceed them in their mistakes and misconduct. Those who have made the boldest profession of godliness, and have been most serviceable to its interests, may expect to be assaulted by the strongest temptations from the great enemy of souls; and should always entertain a jealous fear, lest, being overcome in an unguarded hour, they should after all become a scandal to religion, a stumbling block to the prejudiced, an encouragement to hypocrites and infidels, or a snare and evil precedent to the unstable and injudicious. They should therefore be peculiarly watchful against the incursions of spiritual pride; or the fatal persuasion, that *they* are superior to those rules and cautions, which are needful for weaker persons. They should always meditate with seriousness on their danger of falling, and the wide spreading fatal effects of their misconduct; and prefer any affliction, or even death, to thus dishonouring God and his truth.—The fond hope, which numbers indulge, who marry with ungodly persons, of being instrumental to their salvation, stands exposed throughout the Scripture, but especially in this chapter: the wisest and best of men are more likely to be corrupted by the converse of a beloved ungodly companion, than to bring such a one to a sense of serious religion. Considering the state of human nature, the case is as desperate, as that of a healthy person associating with those that have got the plague, who is far more likely to be infected himself, than to recover them: and the Lord's prohibition of such marriages declares them to be means, which he does not allow of, and will seldom use, for that purpose.—The slaves of fleshly lusts are meet worshippers of abominable idols; but not of the God of Israel, who is holy, and whose worshippers must be holy too.—Those who connive at the wickedness which they ought to punish, will soon join in committing it, and in inducing others to do the same: but all this proceeds from the heart not being fully devoted to the Lord; for when the love of him occupies the affections, and the soul is satisfied with the earnests and hopes of his favour, all inferior desires, however lawful, will be moderated, regulated, and subordinated; and all unlawful inclinations will be hated and crucified.

V. 9—25.

The Lord is very angry even with the objects of his special love, when their hearts are for a season, or in a measure, turned from him; and the peculiar tokens of his favour, his answers to their prayers, and their comfortable communion with him in times past, will aggravate their guilt and increase his displeasure: nor can there be any peace, or assurance of acceptance, without an unreserved persevering obedience to his commandments. Yet, in punishing transgressors, he will not dishonour his own faithful promises, desert the cause of true religion, or fail to honour the memories of those who have uprightly walked in his ways: and for the sake of Jesus, and his people whom he hath chosen, he will not suffer his whole displeasure to arise. It is grievous indeed to leave heavy judgments for our sins to our posterity; yet it is a mercy to have peace and truth in our days. But when the Lord is become an Adversary, he will give power, courage, and capacity to other adversaries, and thus render those formidable, who before appeared contemptible: and we should always observe his righteous hand, even in those sufferings which come upon us from the wickedness of others.—Unnecessary severity excites resentments, which may long after create us or our's disturbance and grief: and it is best, as far as we can, to exercise lenity to all men, and "to "overcome evil with good."—But, if the abundance and pleasure of a court, and the friendship of a king, could not detain Hadad from his own desolate and subjected country; what earthly prosperity should take off a believer's affections from his glorious inheritance in heaven, or make him reluctant to remove thither?—Many abhor the Israel of God, who are not permitted to hurt them: nay, when they seem to succeed in their malice, they are only the instruments of salutary chastisement to them.

V. 26—43.

We often find our worst enemies among those, whom we have most befriended; especially when ingenuity, industry, and resolution, rather than piety, have recommended them to our notice. These qualifications make way for a man's preferment, and every advance enlarges the ambition of a proud, unsanctified mind: and when men of this character come within the attraction of supreme authority, and dare to hope for that dangerous pre-eminence; to "reign according to the desire of their hearts" forms the grand object, and to it every tie of gratitude or duty must be sacrificed.—Providential dispensations to this day, as well as prophetick declarations of old, try men's spirits, whether they will grasp at advantages at all events; or whether they will wait patiently, and use only lawful means of obtaining them, according to the will of God.—Many so believe some parts of God's word, as perversely to take encouragement from them to commit iniquity; instead of so believing the whole, as to expect the blessings proposed in the way of conscientious obedience there prescribed. They are shewn, and seem to understand, that others have forfeited their most valuable interests by sin;

[a] *See on* xi. 43. 2 Chr. x. 1.
[b] Gen. xii. 6. *Sichem.* xxxiii. 18, 19. Josh. xx. 7. xxiv. 1. 32. Judg. ix. 1. Ps. lx. 6. Acts vii. 16. *Sychem.*
[c] *See on* xi. 26—31. 40.—2 Chr. x. 2, 3.

AND [a] Rehoboam went to [b] Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when [c] Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard *of it*, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;)

3 That they sent and called him: and Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,

[d] iv. 7. 20. 22, 23. 25. ix. 22, 23. 1 Sam. viii. 11—18. 2Chr. x. 4, 5. Matt. xi. 29, 30. xxiii. 4. 1 John v. 3.

4 Thy father made [d] our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

5 And he said unto them, Depart yet *for* three days: then come again to me. And the people departed.

6 And king Rehoboam [e] consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

[e] 2 Sam. xvi. 20 xvii. 5. Job xii. 12. xxxii. 7. Prov. xxvii. 10 Jer. xlii. 2—5. xliii. 2.

7 And they spake unto him, saying, [f] If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and [g] speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

[f] 2 Chr. x. 6, 7. Prov. xv. 1. Phil. ii. 7—11.
[g] 13. 2 Sam. xv 8—6. Ec. x. 4. Zech. i. 13.

8 But [h] he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young

[h] 2 Chr. x. 8. xxv 15, 16. Prov. i. 2—5. 25. 30. xix. 20. xxv. 12. Ec. x. 2, 3.

and yet they will seek to seize or to secure their own by similar transgressions! so inconsistent is human nature! —The Lord will not afflict for ever the people of his covenant: but when they grievously offend, he will eclipse all their honour; he will leave obscurity and reproach upon their characters; and perhaps bring them down to the grave in disgrace, discomfort, and uncertainty; distressed concerning the state of their own souls, and about the consequences of their conduct, to their families, to the church, and to the world. May God help us to walk circumspectly; to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear; and to stand with our loins girded, and our lamps burning, prepared for and expecting the coming of our Lord!

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. We read of no son of Solomon except Rehoboam, and his mother was an Ammonitess. (*Notes*, xiv. 21. *Deut.* xxiii. 3—5.)—He had also two daughters. (iv. 11. 15.) That he should have no more children, may be considered as a providential rebuke, for his multiplying wives in so unprecedented a manner.—Solomon seems to have been sensible, that his son was not likely to prove a wise man, or to carry on his designs for the good of Israel, and the establishment of his family; and he appears to have greatly regretted it. (*Note, Ec.* ii. 18—23.) As Rehoboam was the unrivalled heir of so flourishing a kingdom, his natural imprudence and rashness would doubtless be increased by the flattery of the young men, with whom he was brought up. The people in general, upon Solomon's death, appeared disposed to recognise his succession, and convened at Shechem for that purpose. (*Marg. Ref.* b. *Note*, 25.) Yet, it is probable, that this city, which belonged to Ephraim, was chosen, rather than Jerusalem or Hebron, that the tribe of Judah might not have too great influence in the transaction; and Rehoboam was impolitick in consenting to that appointment, if he could have prevented it.

V. 2, 3. Jeroboam, hearing of the death of Solomon, was not inclined to delay to return into the land of Israel, and wait his opportunity of seizing upon the prize, which had been set before his ambition. He was not disposed to wait the Lord's direction to proceed, as David had done when Saul died. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* ii. 1—4.)—The elders of the people also, by sending for him, indicated that they meant to impose strict limitations on Rehoboam.

V. 4. When the scriptural account of Solomon's reign, and the peace, affluence, and prosperity which Israel then enjoyed, are considered, we cannot doubt, but that this charge was either false or greatly exaggerated. (*Notes*, ix. 19. xi. 1—8.) Solomon had never oppressed the people with heavy taxes, or exercised cruelty towards them: and though some hardships might have been experienced in the latter end of his reign, compared with the former years; yet they were not "grievous services," or *heavy burdens*: but, in fact, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." —While they complained of their own grievances and demanded redress, they were silent as to Solomon's idolatry, in which indeed many of them had concurred, and about the more complete re-establishment of the worship of God among them. (*Notes*, xi. 33. 1 *Sam.* viii. 1—5.)

V. 5. This delay of Rehoboam shewed a reluctancy to comply with the demands of the people, and afforded the malecontents time to tamper with the elders of Israel, and to render them evil-affected. It would have been a far more prudent measure to have immediately assured them of a redress of all real grievances; and then to have waited till particulars were enquired into, when the unreasonableness of exorbitant claims would have been detected.

V. 6, 7. The persons, whom Rehoboam first consulted, were the friends and counsellors of Solomon, firmly attached to the interests of his family, and capable of giving safe and prudent advice. Accordingly, they advised him to make all needful concessions to the assembly, to speak fair to them, and to shew a readiness to pay regard to their interests and inclinations: this would have quieted the minds of the well-disposed, and broken all the measures of the malecontents; and when matters were settled, the people in general would have quietly rendered all proper submission to the prince of the house of David. (*Notes*, *Judg.* viii. 1—3. *Prov.* xv. 1. xxv. 15.)

V. 8—15. The wise counsel of the old men did not suit the rash, insolent, and domineering spirit of Reho-

men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him:

9 And he said unto them, [i] What counsel give ye, that we may answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

10 And the young men that were grown up with him, spake unto him, saying, [k] Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, [l] My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 And now, whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, [m] I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with [n] scorpions.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, [o] Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king [p] answered the people [*] roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

14 And spake to them after [q] the counsel of the young men, saying, [r] My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for [s] the cause was from the LORD, [t] that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, [u] What portion have we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: [v] to your tents, O Israel: [x] now see to thine own house, David. [y] So Israel departed unto their tents.

17 But *as for* [z] the children of Israel

i xxii. 6—8. 2 Sam. xvii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. x. 9. xviii. 5—7.

k 2 Sam. xvii. 7—13.

l 2 Chr. x. 10, 11. Prov. x. 14 xviii. 6, 7. xxviii. 25. xxix. 23. Is. xlvii. 6.

m Ex. i. 13, 14. v. 6—9. 18. 1 Sam viii. 18. 2 Chr. xvi. 10. Is. lviii. 6. Jer. xxvii. 11. xxviii. 13, 14.

n 14. Ez. ii. 6. Rev. ix. 3—10.

o 5. 2 Chr. x. 12—14.

p xx. 6—11. Gen. xlii. 7. 30. Ex. v. 2. x. 28. Judg. xii. 1—6. 1 Sam. xx. 10. 30, 31. xxv. 10, 11. 2 Sam. xix. 43. Prov. xv. 1. xviii. 23.

* Heb. *hardly.* Gen. xvi. 6.

q 2 Chr. xxii. 4. Esth. i. 16—21. ii. 2—4. Prov. xii. 5. Is. xix. 11—13. Dan. vi. 7.

r 10, 11. Prov. xiii. 10. xvi. 18. xvii. 14. Ec. vii. 8. Jam. iii. 14—18. iv. 1, 2.

s 24. xxii. 23. Deut. ii. 30. Judg. xiv. 4. 2 Chr. x. 15. xxii. 7. xxv. 16. 20. Ps. v. 10. Am. iii. 6. Acts ii. 23. iv. 28.

t See on xi. 11. 29—38. 1 Sam. xv. 29. 2 Sam. xvii. 14. 2 Kings ix. 26. x. 10. Is. xiv. 13—17. xlvi. 10, 11. Dan. iv. 35. John xix. 23, 24. 28, 29. 32—37. Acts iii. 17. xiii. 27—29.

u See on 2 Sam. xx. 1. 2 Chr. x. 16.

v xxii. 17. 36.

x xi. 13. 34. 36. 39. 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. Ps. ii. 1—6. lxxvi. 10. lxxxix. 29—37. cxxxii. 17. Is. vii. 2, 6, 7. ix. 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 15, 16. 21. Luke xix. 14. 27. xv. 13. xvi. 11.

y Judg. viii. 35. 2 Sam. xx. 1. 2 Chr. x. 16.

z xi. 13. 36. 2 Chr. x. 17. xi. 13—17.

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boam; and he opposed to it the advice of the companions of his youthful pleasures, who would be sure to accommodate themselves to his inclinations. It 'is a frequent 'fault of new kings, who, to shew their power, presently 'change their counsellors, and put in new officers, to 'gratify all their dependents; not considering who are 'wisest, but who have been their companions.' *Bp. Patrick.* They counselled him therefore to speak with authority, and to damp the spirits of the assembly by resolute language, that they might no longer presume to dictate to him. The expressions which they suggested, allowed to the utmost, and even aggravated, the injurious charge brought against Solomon; and yet avowed a resolution of greater oppression and severity! The king was advised to menace them, that "his little finger should be thicker "than his father's loins:" that is, that, as he was much more powerful than Solomon was at the beginning of his reign; so he would certainly let them feel the weight of that power, if they dared to oppose him. Perhaps he thought thus because he came to the throne at a more mature age, than Solomon had done; and had not any brothers to rival him in it. He also declared that he would "add to their yoke," by demanding heavier services and taxes of them: and, if they hesitated to obey, he would chastise them with scorpions, severe punishments as terrible as the sting of a scorpion; or, as some think, a terrible scourge thus called.—Such language as this was not very wise in Pharaoh to the poor enslaved Israelites, but it was not at all likely that it should be endured by a rich, numerous, and free people. (*Notes, Ex.* v. 4—14.) Nothing can be conceived more foolish and exasperating, than such an address in so critical a juncture: but it was adopted, because it coincided with the self-importance and tyrannical temper of Rehoboam; and we may cease to wonder at his extreme infatuation, when we are told, that "the cause "was from the LORD, that he might perform his word." (*Notes,* xi. 29—33. 2 *Sam.* xvii. 7—14. 2 *Chr.* xxv. 14—16. *Prov.* xxi. 30. *Is.* xix. 11—14.)

V. 16. Though Rehoboam had acted very foolishly and wickedly; yet perhaps he might have been brought to a better temper, by proper arguments and expostulations.—The Lord had indeed promised ten tribes to Jeroboam: but he had not commanded the people to revolt from the family of David; nor had he commissioned Jeroboam to wrench these tribes from Rehoboam. His purposes and declarations were not the motive of their conduct, and therefore formed no excuse for it. Their contempt of the memory of David, and ingratitude to him and his son, who had done so very much towards advancing them to their present prosperity, were very criminal: but their language concerning his house, as if the entail of the kingdom to his family, though confirmed to him by the faithful oath and covenant of God himself, would now come to nothing, was extremely profane, and discovered the infidelity of their hearts. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* vii. 12—16. *Ps.* lxxxix. 19—37.) *They* indeed determined to have nothing more to do with the house of David, and he could not see to it himself: but the Lord would take care to fulfil his engagements; and David's family could not be destroyed, though it would be corrected or weakened; for the Messiah was to descend from him. (*Notes,* xi. 12, 13. 36. 1 *Sam.* xxii. 9, 10. 2 *Sam.* xx. 1, 2.)—Indeed the ten tribes themselves were by far the greater losers by the revolt.

V. 17. A considerable part of the priests and Levites, to-

which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent [a] Adoram, who *was* over the tribute; and [b] all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam [*] made speed to get him up to his chariot, to [c] flee to Jerusalem.

19 So [d] Israel [†] rebelled against the house of David [e] unto this day.

20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, [f] and made him king over all Israel: there was [g] none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

21 ¶ And [h] when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, [i] an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

22 But the word of God came unto [j] Shemaiah, [k] the man of God, saying,

23 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

24 Thus saith the LORD, [l] Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; [m] for this thing is from me. [n] They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

25 Then Jeroboam [o] built [p] Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built [q] Penuel.

26 And Jeroboam [r] said in his heart, [s] Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

27 If this people [t] go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, [u] and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

28 Whereupon the king [x] took counsel, and made [y] two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, [z] It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: [a] behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

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a iv. 6. v. 14. *Adoniram.* 2 Sam. xx. 24. 2 Chr. x. 18. *Hadoram.*
b Ex. xvii. 4. Num. xiv. 10. 2 Chr. xxiv. 21. Acts v. 26. vii. 57, 58.
* Heb. *strengthened himself.*
c xx. 18—20. Prov. xxviii. 1, 2. Am. ii. 16.
d 1 Sam. x. 19. 2 Kings xvii. 21. 2 Chr. x. 19. xiii. 5—7. 17. Is. vii. 17.
† Or, *fell away.* Heb. vi. 6.
e *See on* Josh. iv. 9.
f 1 Sam. x. 24. Hos. viii. 4.
g *See on* 17. xi. 13. 32
h 2 Chr. xi. 1—3.
i 1 Chr. xxi. 5. 2 Chr. xiv. 8. 11. xvii. 14—19. Prov. xxi. 30, 31.
j 2 Chr. xii. 5. 7.
k xiii. 1. 4. 5. 11. xvii. 18. 24.—*See on* Deut. xxxiii. 1.—2 Kings iv. 16. 22. 25. 27. 1 Tim. vi. 11.
l Num. xiv. 42. 2 Chr. xi. 4. xxv. 7, 8. xxviii. 9—13.
m *See on* 15. xi. 29—38. — Hos. viii. 4.
n 2 Chr. xxv. 10. xxviii. 13—15.
o ix. 15. 17, 18. xv. 17. xvi. 24. 2 Chr. xi. 5—12.
p *See on* i.—Judg. ix. 1. 45—49.
q Gen. xxxii. 30, 31. Judg. viii. 8. 17.
r Ps. xiv. 1. Mark ii. 6—8. Luke vii. 39.
s xi. 38. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Is. vii. 9. Jer. xxxviii. 18—21. John xi. 47—50. xii. 10, 11. 19. Acts iv. 16, 17.
t viii. 29, 30. 44. xi. 32. Deut. xii. 5—7. xvi. 2. 6.
u Gen. xii. 12, 13. xxvi. 7. Prov. xxix. 25. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.
x *See on* 8, 9.—Ps. i. 10. Is. xxx. 1.
y Ex. xx. 4. Deut. iv. 14—18. 2 Kings x. 29. xvii. 16. 2 Chr. xi. 15. Hos. viii. 4—7. x. 5, 6.
z Is. xxx. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 19.
a *See on* Ex. xxxii. 4. 8.

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gether with the tribe of Benjamin, and many of the Simeonites, dwelt in Judah; (*Note, Josh.* xix. 1—9;) and many others soon after joined them. (*Note, 2 Chr.* xi. 13—17.)

V. 18. It is not certain, whether Rehoboam sent Adoram to demand the taxes of the people, after their dispersion, as a feeble attempt to enforce his imprudent threats; or whether, previously to their departure from Shechem, he sent him to pacify them, with proposals for an accommodation. But, whatever his age, experience, and influence might have been, his *office* alone rendered him a very improper person for this embassy: (iv. 6.—*Note, 2 Sam.* xx. 24:) for the discontents of the people were excited by the tributes or levies over which he presided. Accordingly he lost his life in a popular tumult, and Rehoboam hastily fled to Jerusalem. (*Marg.*) All these measures seem to have been exceedingly impolitick; the result of passion, not of judgment.—This is the first time that we read of a king of Israel riding in a chariot; though no doubt Solomon had generally done so. (*Cant.* iii. 9, 10.)

V. 19, 20. The defection of Israel from Rehoboam is called *rebellion* against the house of David; as no misconduct of either Solomon or Rehoboam was sufficient to justify or even excuse it; and neither the people nor Jeroboam intended to obey God, though they accomplished his purposes, by pursuing their own schemes. They made Jeroboam king, 'without any condition, that we can find: 'though it is likely, he promised to ease them of all their 'burden.' *Bp. Patrick.*—No whole tribe, except Judah, and little Benjamin as united to it, adhered to Rehoboam. (*Note,* xi. 12, 13.)

V. 21—24. The Lord would not allow Rehoboam to recover the ten tribes, nor was it his will that he should lose Judah: and therefore he mercifully prohibited the war, and thus prevented much bloodshed, though both parties deserved punishment for their sins. It was commendable in Rehoboam, that he submitted to the message of God by his prophet, when his loss had been so great, and his preparations were so formidable.—It is probable his more prudent counsellors opposed the war.

Shemaiah, the man of God. (22) One who had been before known and approved as a prophet of the Lord; and not one newly raised up, whom Rehoboam and the people would have been less disposed to regard.

V. 25. (*Marg. Ref.*) Jeroboam repaired and fortified Shechem and Penuel; and perhaps erected palaces, and other publick buildings in them, that they might be the seats of his government, on each side of Jordan. (*Note, 2 Chr.* xi. 5—12.)

V. 26—29. The Lord had promised Jeroboam, that he would give ten tribes to him, and confirm the kingdom over them to his posterity, in case he obeyed his commandments: but he either forgot or despised the word of the Lord; and, leaning to his own understanding, he concluded, that he never could secure the obedience of the

29 And he set the one in [b] Beth-el, and the other put he in [c] Dan.

30 And this thing [d] became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before the one, *even* unto Dan.

31 And he made [e] an house of high places, and made [f] priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.

32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, [g] like unto the feast that *is* in Judah, and he [*] offered upon the altar. So did he in Beth-el, [†] sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and [h] he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made.

33 So he [‡] offered upon the altar, which he had made in Beth-el, the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* [i] in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and [k] he offered upon the altar, [§] and burnt incense.

b Gen. xii. 8. xxviii. 19. xxxv. 1. Hos. iv. 15.
c Gen. xiv. 14. Deut. xxxiv. 1. Judg. xviii. 29—31. xx. 1. 2 Kings x. 29. Jer. viii. 16. Am. viii. 14.
d xiii. 34. 2 Kings x. 31. xvii. 21.
e xiii. 32. Ez. xvi. 25. Hos. xii. 11.
f xiii. 33. Num. iii. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 32. 2 Chr. xi. 14, 15. xiii. 9. Ez. xliv. 7, 8.
g viii. 2. Lev. xxiii. 34, &c. Num. xxix. 12, &c. Ez. xlii. 8. Matt. xv. 8, 9.
* Or, *went up to the altar.*
† Or, *to sacrifice.*
h Am. vii. 10—13.
‡ Or, *went up to*, &c. 32.
i Num. xv. 39. Ps. cvi. 39. Is. xxix. 13. Matt. xv. 6. Mark vii. 13.
k xiii. 1. 1 Sam. xiii. 12. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16.
§ Heb. *to burn incense.* xiii. 1.

people, if they went up to Jerusalem to worship. (*Notes*, xi. 37, 38.) For in case Rehoboam permitted them to come and return in safety, (as it is probable he would have done,) their friendly intercourse with their brethren, their social worship, and mutual kindness, would induce them to return to their submission to David's family, and to purchase Rehoboam's favour by killing his competitor. This might indeed seem natural and reasonable, but it contradicted the truth of God; and Jeroboam's wicked policy violated his commandments. To cover his secret intentions, he pretended, that it was too much trouble for the people to go to Jerusalem to worship; and that they might as acceptably serve God nearer home. (*Notes, Judg.* viii. 27. xvii. 5.) He therefore made two golden calves, in imitation no doubt of the idolatries which he had witnessed in Egypt, and according to the idolatry of Israel in the wilderness: (*Note, Ex.* xxxii. 2—6:) and he placed them at the southern and northern extremities of his kingdom; at Beth-el, afterward called on that account "Beth-aven," or *the house of vanity:* and at Dan, where the Danites had formerly established idolatry. These were also reputed sacred places: the one, for Jacob's vision and vow; and the other, for the customary idolatry which had there prevailed. (*Notes, Gen.* xxviii. 12—22. *Judg.* xviii. 30, 31.) Thus he "made Israel to sin," and introduced the worship of the golden calves, which was perpetuated in the kingdom of Israel, without interruption, till the Assyrian captivity: and the bulk of the people readily concurred in his measures, as suited to their conveniency and inclinations; though the priests, Levites, and many Israelites were honourable exceptions. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xi. 13—17.)—It is evident, that Jeroboam meant this worship for JEHOVAH the God of Israel, "who brought them out of the land of "Egypt:" though it was directly contrary to the law of God, and infinitely dishonourable to his glorious majesty, to be thus represented. Perhaps the people would be less shocked at worshipping the God of Israel, under the similitude of the golden calf, than if they had been at once invited to worship Baal: but it made way for that species of idolatry also. Thus the worship of images of Christ, and similar superstitions, in the ancient Romish church, soon introduced the worship of saints and angels. (*Notes, Ex.* xx. 4—6.)

V. 30. (*Marg. Ref.* d. *Notes*, xiv. 9—16.)—*Even unto Dan.*] The people readily resorted to sacrifice to the appointed places; though sometimes, that might occasion them longer journeys, than if they had gone to Jerusalem. Perhaps they often went from the southern part of the land, even to Dan, to maintain communion with those who worshipped there, who probably would not be backward in repaying their civility.

V. 31. Temples, on high places, were erected for the worship of the calves, at Beth-el and Dan; which were intended to serve the purpose to the religion of the ten tribes, that the temple did to Judah. Some think there were several chapels and altars erected, for the conveniency of the worshippers: and perhaps others were added in different parts of the land. For these he appointed and consecrated priests of the poorest of the people, who would on that account be the more obsequious to him for their own interest. Or rather, as others explain the words, he made priests from every extremity of the land, or from every tribe and family without exception.—Thus he exempted the people from paying tithes to the Levites, whom he drove out of his kingdom, because they would not concur in his idolatry: (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xi. 13—17:) and he paid court to the other tribes, by admitting them to the priesthood, of which many were ambitious: (*Notes, Num.* xvi. 1—4. 8—11:) and in both respects he, no doubt, thought himself, and was considered by others, a consummate politician. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 31. 2 *Chr.* xiii. 4—22. *Job* xii. 13—25. *Prov.* xxi. 30. 1 *Cor.* i. 20—25.)

V. 32, 33. This feast in the eighth month was intended as an imitation of the feast of tabernacles, which was kept in the seventh month, and perhaps it lasted as many days. (*Note, Lev.* xxiii. 31—36. 39—43.) But Jeroboam affected the credit of devising an entirely new system; and perhaps he hoped to draw in those who still went up to Jerusalem, by having his feast at a different time.—He seems himself to have acted as priest, in offering sacrifice and burning incense. (*Note*, xiii. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20.

Many wise and pious men have had the severe affliction of foolish and wicked children: and as the "Lord alone "giveth wisdom," even good instructions will not ensure their prudent and proper conduct. But bad examples generally defeat the effect of wise counsels: and those who are likely to inherit great dignity are commonly so flattered and indulged, that it is almost a miracle, if they are not intoxicated with pride and sensual lusts.—Man is a

CHAP. XIII.

A man of God sent from Judah prophesies to Jeroboam, while burning incense, that Josiah of David's race should defile the altar at Beth-el; and he gives him a sign, 1—3. Jeroboam's hand, stretched forth against him, withers; and the altar is rent, 4, 5. Jeroboam's hand is restored at the prophet's prayer, 6. He refuses entertainment and a reward, and leaves Beth-el, 7—10. He is seduced, and brought back, by the lie of an old prophet, who afterwards denounces the judgment of God against him for his disobedience, 11—22. A lion kills him on his way home, 23—25. The old prophet fetches his body, buries it with lamentations, and confirms his prophecy, 26—32. Jeroboam persists in his evil ways, 33, 34.

discontented being; and while one desire remains ungratified, and one inconvenience unremoved, he is *naturally* more disposed to murmur, than to be thankful either to God or man, for the multiplied unmerited blessings with which he is surrounded. It is true, that rulers are often oppressive, and "make their yoke grievous;" and the people possess liberties and privileges, which they have a right in a regular manner to defend: but it is also true, that the people often complain without cause, and in an improper manner; that they do not make proper allowances for human infirmity, and the arduousness of government; that they expect all the advantages of it, while they grudge the necessary expenses; and are more anxious about their own interests, than about general equity, or the cause of truth and righteousness. Of these unreasonable dissatisfactions, ambitious men are ready to take the advantage, and put themselves in the way to head any formidable opposition to "the powers that be," when it can subserve their own purposes. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* viii. 6—9. 2 *Sam.* xv. 1—6. xx. 1, 2. *P. O.* 2 *Sam.* xv. 1—12.) It requires great wisdom to prevent or defeat these pernicious machinations: and if those, who have not prudence or experience adequate to such emergencies, would follow the counsel of their real friends who are older or wiser than themselves, much mischief would be prevented. But weak men are commonly the most obstinate, and relish no counsel but what flatters their silly pride, and humours their unreasonable prejudices: and when the companions of a prince's pleasures are his select counsellors; his inclinations, however mischievous, will be preferred to the important interests of the whole kingdom. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxiv. 17, 18. *Esth.* ii. 1—4. *Dan.* vi. 12—17.) Yet experience decides that, in general, men best mount by first stooping, prevail by yielding, and rule by becoming serviceable and giving good words: and when this consists with duty, it is in most cases our wisdom and interest. To the haughty indeed it appears degrading and mean: they delight to exert their authority, and shew their courage, by boasting and threatening; without considering whether they have power and abilities, to bear them out against the enraged opposition, which such language and behaviour must excite. By attempting in this manner to domineer, men expose themselves to the contempt of the wise: their enemies are rejoiced, and their friends are grieved by it; and they who have power to resist, will scorn to fear those, who are above seeking to be loved. Thus, fatal contests are excited, and all parties are hurried on to commit many crimes: yet the Lord over-rules the whole to accomplish his own righteous purpose and holy word.—We need not wonder that those persons who forget the mercies of God, and oppose his appointments with ingratitude and contempt, should recompense their earthly benefactors with reproaches, insults, or injuries: but the Lord will take care of the characters, families, and interests of his faithful servants; and they may safely leave their cause in his hand, though they cannot see to it themselves.—But when men are left to their own infatuated counsels, they add one mistake to another: they perceive their folly in some instances, when it is too late; yet in attempting to rectify their errors, they the more entangle themselves, and expose their friends: and those who were most rash and daring, when danger was out of sight, are generally the most cowardly when it seems to approach.

V. 21—33.

It is in vain to attempt to disannul the Lord's counsel: when his revealed will is contrary to our pursuits, they should be relinquished, however great our apparent loss may be; and it is his will, and should be the desire of all in authority, as much as possible to prevent the effusion of human blood.—Unbelieving men judge by appearances, and often conclude, that safety and prosperity can be obtained by those measures alone, which the word of God condemns. They engage in enterprizes, in which they must either succeed or be ruined: success in this case appears the grand object; and the necessity, they suppose, will excuse or justify their deviations from general rules: and thus they regard not what wickedness they commit nor what numbers they involve in the same guilt and condemnation. But faith waits upon God in the path of duty for the performance of his own promises, whatever difficulties may seem to impede it: and it perceives and aims at nobler objects, than the success of any temporal project, or even the preservation of life itself.—The duplicity of politicians often consists, in concealing their selfish purposes, under plausible ostensible pretences: but men frequently conjecture aright in such matters; and God sees and will expose the thought of their hearts, notwithstanding all their disguises.—The benefit of the publick is often the plea; personal impunity for their crimes, the retaining of their dignity, or the increase of their own authority, are the real motives of their conduct. The people, however, are generally willing to gratify their rulers in matters of religion, provided it be easy, cheap, pompous, or sensual: and if a few scruples intervene, the revival of some old superstition, some plea of antiquity, or of liberality of sentiment, or of agreement in the main with more scrupulous persons, though expedient alterations are adopted, will generally conciliate the minds of the majority to any religion, which suits their conveniency, agrees with their interests, and does not disquiet their consciences, or disturb them in gratifying their inclinations.—When persons in authority aim to render religion conducive to their secular purposes, they generally love to bring every thing under their own management. The ceremonies must be of their own devising, and the ministers of their own selecting: and indeed a hireling, ignorant priesthood well suits with an idolatrous or superstitious worship, an usurping tyrannical prince, or a rebellious, apostate

AND, behold, there came [a] a man of God out of Judah, [b] by the word of the LORD, unto Beth-el: and [c] Jeroboam stood by the altar to [*] burn incense.

2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, [d] O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, [e] Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

3 And [f] he gave a sign the same day, saying, This *is* the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out.

4 And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, [g] Lay hold on him. And [h] his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.

5 The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, [i] according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

6 And the king answered and said unto the man of God, [k] Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the [†] LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as *it was* before.

7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and [m] refresh thyself, [n] and I will give thee a reward.

a *See on* xii. 22.—2 Chr. ix. 29.
b 5. 9. 26. 32. xx. 35. Jer. xxv. 3. 1 Thes. iv. 15.
c *See on* xii. 33.—2 Chr. xxvi. 18.
* Or, *offer*. Num. xvi. 40. Jer. xi. 12. xxxii. 29. Mal. i. 11. Rev. viii. 3.
d Deut. xxxii. 1. Is. i. 2. lviii. 1. Jer. xxii. 29. Ez. xxxvi. 1. 4. xxxviii. 4. Luke xix. 40.
e 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2. xxiii. 15—18. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1. 4—7. Is. xlii. 9. xliv. 26—28. xlvi. 10. xlviii. 5—7.
f Ex. iv. 3—5. 8, 9. vii. 10. Deut. xiii. 1—3. 1 Sam. x. 34. 2 Kings xx. 8. Is. vii. 11—14. xxxviii. 6—8. Jer. xliv. 29. Matt. xii. 38—40. 1 Cor. i. 22.
g 2 Chr. xvi. 10. xviii. 25. xxv. 15, 16. Jer. xx. 2. xxvi. 8—11. 20—23. xxxviii. 4—6. Am. vii. 10—13. Matt. xxvi. 57. Mark xiv. 44—46. Acts vi. 12—14.
h Gen. xix. 11. 2 Kings vi. 18—20. Jer. xx. 4—6. Luke iii. 19, 20. vi. 10. John xviii. 6. Acts ix. 4, 5. xiii. 8—11. Rev. xi. 5.
i xxii. 28. 35. Ex. ix. 18—25. Num. xvi. 23—35. Deut. xviii. 22. Jer. xxviii. 16, 17. Mark xvi. 20. Acts v. 1—10.
k Ex. viii. 8. 28. ix. 28. x. 17. xii. 32. Num. xxi 7. 1 Sam. xii. 19. Jer. xxxvii. 3. xlii. 2—4. Acts viii. 24. Rev. iii. 9.
l Ex. viii. 12 13. Num. xii. 13. 1 Sam. xii. 23. Matt. v. 44. Luke vi. 27, 28. xxiii. 34. Acts vii. 60. Rom. xii. 14. 21. Jam. v. 16—18.
† Heb. *face of the LORD*.
m Gen. xviii. 5. Judg. xiii. 15. xix. 21.
n 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8. 2 Kings v. 15. Jer. xl. 5. Mal. i. 10. Acts viii. 18—20. 1 Pet. v. 2.

people. But the pride, arrogance, and enmity of the human heart, never appears more atrocious and odious, than when it presumptuously dares to change the divine appointments, for those "which a man hath devised of his own "heart," and to mould the worship of God into *contrariety to his will;* when ministers, so called, can be found shameless enough to countenance this arrogance; and when whole nations of professing worshippers quietly submit to it. Indeed nothing in such a case, but a torrent of ungodliness, and most awful judgments, can be expected.—But alas! how soon all earthly prosperity is clouded! every remarkable prevalence of true religion on earth, has hitherto been succeeded by lamentable declensions, apostasies, or divisions. May the Lord hasten that time, when our "Prince of Peace" shall set up his kingdom of truth and of righteousness all over the earth, and when his cause shall finally and universally prevail! (*Notes, Rev.* xx. 1—6.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. *To burn incense.*] (*Notes,* iii. 2, 3. xii. 32, 33. 2 *Chr.* xxvi. 16—23.) Jeroboam seems on this occasion to have officiated himself; and to have burned incense at the same altar, on which the sacrifices had been offered. As the typical meaning of these institutions was not at all understood, and as the divine appointment was entirely disregarded, every kind of innovation was made without scruple.

V. 2. We are not informed of this prophet's name; but he came from Judah, in the name of JEHOVAH, whose worship at the temple Jeroboam and Israel had forsaken (1): and he predicted the prevalency of the house of David, whose authority they had rejected. With holy boldness and great earnestness he cried against the altar, while Jeroboam and his attendants were performing their religious rites. As the destruction of this newly instituted worship was to be expressly foretold, and the stupidity of the idolaters themselves to be severely reproved, he addressed himself to the altar, and not to the worshippers. (*Marg. Ref.* d.)—This prediction was delivered considerably more than three hundred years before Josiah was born; yet during all those years no one of the house of David gave his son this name, or attempted to fulfil the prophecy, until the appointed time was arrived; and then Amon, a wicked prince, named his son Josiah. (*Note, 2 Kings* xxiii. 15—20.)—This extraordinary prophecy was a plain declaration, that the family of David would continue, and be honoured as the supporters of true religion, when the kingdom of the ten tribes should be incapable of resisting them.—The burning of men's bones upon the altar was the greatest contempt of it imaginable: and the offering of the priests themselves upon it, the greatest mark of God's abhorrence of their crimes. (*Marg. Ref.* e.)

V. 3—6. The judgment immediately inflicted upon Jeroboam, and the rending of the altar as it had been foretold, intimidated him, so that he did not venture to attempt any thing further against "the man of God," whose message was thus divinely attested. In this emergency he had no confidence in his idols, his newly constituted priests, or his self-invented sacrifices; but he expected help from the prayers of the prophet. He therefore begged him to intreat the *face* (or the *favour*) of the Lord his God for him: but he neither acknowledged his guilt, nor desired instructions from the prophet, nor sought forgiveness of his sins, nor desisted from his idolatry. He merely desired the removal of the divine judgment, which the prophet readily prayed for and obtained. (*Notes, Ex.* ix. 30. *Acts* viii. 18—24.)

V. 7—10. Jeroboam neither repented, nor returned thanks to God for the restoration of his withered hand: but he was willing to entertain and reward the prophet for

8 And the man of God said unto the king, [o] If thou wilt give me half thine house, [p] I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

9 For [q] so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, [r] Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

11 ¶ Now there dwelt [s] an old prophet in Beth-el; and his [*] sons [t] came and told him all the works, that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father.

12 And their father said unto them, What way went he? for his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah.

13 And he said unto his sons, [u] Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass, and he rode thereon,

14 And went after the man of God, and found him [x] sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, [y] *Art* thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I *am*.

15 Then he said unto him, Come home with me and eat bread.

16 And he said, [z] I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:

17 For [†] it was said to me [a] by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.

18 He said unto him, I *am* a prophet also as thou *art*; and [b] an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread, and drink water. [c] *But* he lied unto him.

19 So [d] he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

o Num. xxii. 18. xxiv. 13. Esth. v. 3. 6. vii. 2. Mark vi. 23.
p 2 Kings v. 16. 26, 27. Mark vi. 11. 2 Cor. xi. 9, 10.
q *See on* 1. 21, 22. —1 Sam. xv. 22. Job xxiii. 12. John xiii. 17. xv. 9, 10. 14.
r Num. xvi. 26. Deut. xiii. 13—18. Ps. cxli. 4. Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 11. Eph. v. 11. 2 John 10, 11. Rev. xviii. 4.
s 20, 21. Num. xxiii. 4, 5. xxiv. 2. 1 Sam. x. 11. 2 Kings xxiii. 18. Ez. xiii. 2. 16. Matt. vii. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 16.
* Heb. *son.*
t 1 Tim. iii. 5.
u 27. Num. xxii. 21. Judg. v. 10. x. 4. 2 Sam. xix. 26.
x xix. 4. John iv. 6. 34. 1 Cor. iv. 11, 12. 2 Cor. xi. 22. Phil. iv. 12, 13.
y *See on* 1.
z 8, 9. Gen. iii. 1—3. Num. xxii. 13. 19. Matt. iv. 10. xvi. 23.
† Heb. *a word* was.
a *See on* b. 1.—xx. 35.
b Num. xxii. 35. Judg. vi. 11, 12. xiii. 3.
c Gen. iii. 4, 5. Is. ix. 15. Jer. v. 12. 31. xxiii. 14. 17. 32. xxviii. 15, 16. Ez. xiii. 9, 10. 22. Matt. vii. 15. xxiv. 24. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 13—15. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 1 John iv. 1. Rev. xix. 20.
d 9. Gen. iii. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19.

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it; perhaps supposing that he was ready to do any thing for hire, like his own priests. (*Notes*, xxi. 8—14. 1 *Sam.* ix. 6—10. 2 *Kings* v. 20—25. *Is.* lvi. 9—12. *Am.* vii. 12, 13.) But the Lord had prescribed to his servant a different conduct. As a solemn protestation against the idolatry of Beth-el, he was forbidden to eat or drink in that city, whatever hardship he might endure. God would not accept their most costly sacrifices: nor would he allow his servant to accept of any entertainment from its inhabitants; or to do any thing which had the appearance of having fellowship with the men, whose works of darkness he was sent to reprove. Nay, the more fully to express his abhorrence of their apostasy, and his determination not to make himself in any way familiar with them, or ought belonging to them, he was ordered to return by another road. And when solicited by the king himself, and promised a royal recompence; (though probably he was poor, as well as hungry and weary;) he thus far obediently observed his instructions.

V. 11—19. This old prophet continued to reside at Beth-el, after the priests and Levites had been driven away, and after idolatry was publickly established there: yet he entered no protest against it; and his sons were present at the idolatrous sacrifice, and made no secret of it. *One* old prophet: (Heb.) if any others had lived there, they had ere this left the place. These circumstances, joined to his conduct on this occasion, are convincing proofs, that though called *a prophet* he was not a really godly man. Perhaps he had been educated in the schools of the prophets, and had been favoured with the Spirit of prophecy. (*Note*, *Num.* xxii. 5.) This had acquired him the reputation of a prophet, and he had maintained it in the days of Solomon when religion was respected. But when the change took place under Jeroboam, being a carnal man, he preferred ease and interest to his religion, and made no direct opposition to the prevailing party: perhaps satisfying his conscience with holding his own sentiments privately, and not actually joining in the idolatry. Yet he was still desirous of the reputation of a prophet, as far as he could safely retain it: and this appears to have been his leading motive, in enticing the prophet of Judah back again; and not, as has been conjectured, either real kindness to him, or malice against him. Many would doubtless applaud the resolution and disinterestedness of the man of God, who at last was not injured by Jeroboam: and perhaps this old prophet was afraid of being censured for his cowardice, connivance, and selfishness. (*Note*, *Acts* v. 1—11.) He might hope to avert this disgrace by shewing kindness to the man of God; and he found he could do it, without incurring Jeroboam's displeasure. He therefore followed him, and found him sitting under a tree, weary and in need of refreshment, which would add much energy to his temptation: and when he perceived that he was decided against eating bread at Beth-el; he assured him that he also was a prophet, and came by commandment from God to bring him back; thus imposing upon him by speaking lies in the name of the Lord! (*Notes*, *Gen.* iii. 1—6. *Is.* ix. 13—17. *Matt.* iv. 1—4.) And the man of God perhaps supposed that he might refresh himself at the house of a prophet in Beth-el, though not in the house of an idolater. But as the commandment of God to him had been immediate and express; and he had only this man's

20 And it came to pass, as they sat
e Num. xxiii. 5. 16. xxiv. 4. 16—24. Matt. vii. 22 John xi. 51. 1 Cor. xiii. 2.
at the table, that [e] the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back:

21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying,
f 17. Gen. iii. 7. Esth. vi. 13 Jer. ii. 19. Gal. i. 8, 9.
[f] Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as
g Lev. x. 3. Num. xx. 12. 24. 1 Sam. iv. 18. xiii. 13. xv. 19 22—24. 2 Sam vi. 7. xii. 9—11. xxiv. 13. Rev. iii. 19.
[g] thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee,

22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which *the LORD* did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water;
h xiv. 13. 2 Chr. xxi. 19, 20. Is. xiv. 19, 20. Jer. xxii. 19.
[h] thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

23 ¶ And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

i xv. 26. 2 Kings i. 24. Am. v. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.
24 And when he was gone, [i] a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the carcase.

25 And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

26 And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard *thereof*, he said, *It is* [k] the man of God who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath [*] torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD which he spake unto him.

k Lev. x. 3 2 Sam. xii. 10. 14. Ps. cxix. 120. Prov. xi. 31. Ez. ix. 6. 1 Cor. xi. 30. Heb. xii. 28, 29. 1 Pet. iv. 17.

* Heb. *broken.*

27 And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him.*

28 And he went, and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: [l] the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor [†] torn the ass.

l xvii. 4. 6. Lev. x. 2. 5. Job xxxviii. 11. Ps. cxlviii. 7, 8. Jer. v. 22, 23. Dan iii. 22. 27, 28. vi. 22—24. Acts xvi. 26. Heb. xi. 33, 34.

† Heb. *broken.*

29 And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city to mourn, and to bury him.

30 And he laid his carcase in his own grave: and they [m] mourned over him, *saying*, Alas, my brother!

m xiv. 13. Jer xxii. 18. Acts viii. 2.

31 And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God *is* buried; [n] lay my bones beside his bones:

n Num. xxiii. 10. Ps. xxvi. 9. Ec. viii. 10. Luke xvi. 22, 23.

32 For [o] the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against all [p] the houses of the high places which *are* [q] in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.

o 2. 2 Kings xxiii. 16—19.
p xii. 29. 31. Lev. xxvi. 30.
q xvi. 24. 2 Chr. xxv. 13. Ezra iv. 10. John iv. 4, 5.

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own word for it, that he was a prophet, or that the Lord had spoken to him by an angel; his conduct was very criminal, and calculated to weaken the effect of his message upon the consciences of Jeroboam, and his other auditors; and doubtless his judgment was on this occasion bribed by his inclinations.

V. 20—22. As the Lord inspired Balaam, contrary to his intentions, to pronounce blessings, and to utter, though doubtless with the greatest reluctance, prophecies concerning Israel: (*Num.* xxiii. 7, 8. xxiv. 1—13:) so was this prophet constrained to pronounce sentence against the man of God, whom he had seduced into disobedience; and thus to publish the shame of his own most impious imposture, which also implied against himself a far more dreadful doom, except he repented.—The sentence was direct, that the prophet of Judah should not die in peace at home, to be buried in his own sepulchre: but the time and circumstances of his death were not specified.

V. 23—32. The old prophet did not accompany the prophet of Judah, perhaps apprehensive of some divine judgment overtaking him: but some think, that he supplied him with the ass on which he rode, and that he had come on foot. The lion, commissioned by God, slew the prophet, but did not devour his body; and he neither hurt nor frighted away the ass: nay, he behaved so tamely, that travellers ventured past him, perhaps at a distance! And even the old prophet ventured, and was allowed without molestation, to take away his body for burial! 'Here is 'a cluster of miracles; that the lion, contrary to his na- 'ture, did not eat the carcase, nor kill the ass, nor med- 'dle with the travellers that passed by, nor with the old 'prophet and his ass: and that the ass stood so quietly, 'and was not frighted at the sight of the lion, and betake 'itself to flight. And more than this, the lion stood by 'the carcase a long time, till this strange news was carried 'into the city; ... which made the miracle the more illus- 'trious, and plainly shewed that this did not happen by 'chance.' *Bp. Patrick.* All these miraculous circumstances marked the death of the man of God as a divine rebuke for his disobedience, in eating bread at idolatrous Beth-el; and both counteracted the conclusion, which Jeroboam might have been tempted to draw from his death against the truth of his message, and formed a solemn proof, how God abhorred, and would have all his people

r xii.31—33.2Chr. xi. 15. xiii. 9. Am. iv. 6—11.
* Heb. *returned and made.* Ps. lxxviii. 34. Jer. xviii. 4. *marg.*
s Num. i. 51. iii. 10. xvii. 5. 12, 13.
† Heb. *filled his hand.* Ex. xxviii. 41. *marg.* Judg. xvii. 12.

33 ¶ After this thing r Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but * made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: s whosoever would, he † consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high places.

34 And this thing t became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even u to cut *it* off, and to destroy *it* from off the face of the earth.

t xii. 30. 2 Kings x. 31. xvii. 21.
u xii. 26. xiv. 10. xv. 29, 30.

abhor, this newly instituted worship.—Thus, for one offence, a faithful servant of God was punished with immediate death, being "chastened of the Lord, that he "should not be condemned with the world:" whilst the lying prophet, and the idolatrous king, escaped with impunity, being reserved to the punishments of a future state; which were in this instance loudly proclaimed. The old prophet indeed paid respect to the man of God, and expressed his conviction that his predictions would be verified, and a concern about his own bones. But he seems to have shewn no humiliation for his enormous crimes, no tokens of true repentance, no care about his soul: he neither left Beth-el, nor entered a publick protest against Jeroboam's idolatry; nor did any thing, which many a hypocrite has not equalled or exceeded, in attempting to buoy up his own presumption, or to impose upon others. Nay, he appears to have been desirous of gratifying his own vanity, and his claim to be considered as a prophet, when he buried the man of God in his own sepulchre, and lamented over him, "Alas, my brother!" He was, however, instrumental in accomplishing the Lord's word: and the prophet of Judah being buried at Beth-el, with a monumental inscription, would tend to keep his prediction in remembrance, and be an abiding protest against the worship of the golden calves.—The man of God from Judah appears to have spoken more prophecies, than are mentioned in the beginning of the chapter: and though the *city* Samaria was not yet built, the historian calls the cities in that neighbourhood, "The cities of Samaria;" in some of which Jeroboam had built high places.

V. 33, 34. *Notes,* xii. 31—33. xiv. 9—16. *2 Chr.* xiii. 13—22.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The Lord often meets sinners in the midst of their crimes, with alarming indications of his displeasure, to shew that "their way is perverse before him."—It requires great fortitude to deliver faithfully the messages of God, especially to those in authority: for a full and plain declaration of his word will certainly exasperate the proud and ungodly of every description, whether profane, superstitious, or hypocritical. But the Lord will bear those out whom he sends, and who simply trust and obey him: and faith in him is sufficient to overcome the fear of man. They who are employed in services of this kind should speak and act decidedly, as men in earnest, calling upon the very inanimate creation to testify, as it were, against the crimes of presumptuous offenders, who will not regard the word of God; in order that a deeper impression may be left upon the minds of their hearers.—The Lord is peculiarly offended with those, who attempt any thing against such intrepid reprovers of sin; and they, who have most insulted his servants, are often brought by affliction to pay court to them, and to desire their prayers. Nor ought this ever to be refused: for by returning good for evil, their severity against men's crimes is proved to be connected with compassionate love for their persons; and in answer to prayer, God often bestows temporal mercies upon impenitent sinners; though, continuing such, they cannot escape the damnation of hell.—Carnal men frequently betray their impenitency under convictions, even by their concessions: they acknowledge the true believer to be the servant of God, but they do not imitate him: they feel the vanity of their own superstitions or worldly idols, but they do not renounce them: they desire the removal of their afflictions, rather than the forgiveness of their sins, or the mortification of their lusts: and they shew kindness or offer presents to the minister who prays for them, while they requite the Lord with base ingratitude.—When persons are living in open sins, and causing others to sin by their influence and authority, the "men of God" should manifest their abhorrence of their crimes, by refusing to accept of any favours from them, and by separating from all intercourse with them. And when those who are in low circumstances act in this manner, with firmness and meekness, and plainly assign the reasons of their conduct; it will be one of the most alarming and convincing warnings, which can possibly be given. Ministers and Christians must often go among ungodly people, but they ought never to make themselves familiar with them; and should shew that they are so uneasy in their company, that none of their temporal good things can bribe them, needlessly to prolong or repeat their visits. In order to this, they must be superior to the love of worldly pleasure and interest, inured to hardship and self-denial, and well acquainted with the commandments of God.—In the mystery of Providence, false religion is permitted to be planted, and to prevail to the deceiving of great multitudes: but the Lord keeps the times and seasons in his own power; he foresees and determines those events, which are most distant and appear most contingent; and he will in his appointed time destroy every species of irreligion or superstition, by one of the house of David, of far nobler name and greater excellency than Josiah.—But the tokens of his displeasure, on the instruments of iniquity, proclaim his awful vengeance upon the sinners themselves: and none will become sacrifices to his justice with deeper detestation and contempt, than *hireling* ministers, who for filthy lucre have countenanced false religion, to the destruction of the souls of those who blindly followed such blind guides.

V. 11—19.

The cause of God admits of no neutrality. (*Note, Matt.* xii. 29, 30.) In times of general apostasy, or increasing infidelity and ungodliness, we are especially called to bear our testimony, without yielding to fear or shame: and if any professed Christian will not confess Christ in this world, Christ will not own him in the day of judgment. But if a reputed prophet, an old prophet, who appeared zealous for the truth, while credit and advantage ac-

CHAP. XIV.

Jeroboam sends his wife, disguised, to Ahijah the prophet, to enquire concerning his son Abijah, who was sick, 1—4. Ahijah, forewarned by God, denounces to her the destruction of Jeroboam's family, the death of her son, and the rejection of Israel, 5—16. Abijah dies and is buried, 17, 18. Jeroboam dies and is succeeded by Nadab, 19, 20. Rehoboam reigns over Judah; and they provoke the Lord by their wickedness, 21—24. Shishak carries away much treasure, and the golden shields, from Jerusalem, 25, 26. Rehoboam makes brazen shields in their stead, 27, 28. His acts, and wars with Jeroboam, 29, 30. He dies and is succeeded by Abijam, 31.

a xiii. 33, 34.
b 12, 13. Ex. xx. 5. 1 Sam. iv. 19, 20. xxxi. 2. 2 Sam. xii. 15.

AT [a] that time Abijah [b] the son of Jeroboam fell sick.

2 And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and [c] disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam; and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there *is* [d] Ahijah the prophet, which told me that *I should be* king over this people.

3 And [e] take [*] with thee ten loaves, and [†] cracknels, and a [‡] cruse of honey, and go to him: [f] he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.

4 And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to [g] Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see; [h] for his eyes [§] were set by reason of his age.

c 5, 6. xxii. 30. 1 Sam. xxviii. 8. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. 2 Chr. xviii. 29. Luke xii. 2.
d *See on* xi. 29—38.
e xiii. 7. 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8. 2 Kings iv. 42. v. 5. 15. viii. 7—9.
* Heb. *in thine hand.*
† Or, *cakes.* 2 Sam. xiii. 6.
‡ Or, *bottle.*
f 2 Kings i. 2. viii. 8. Luke vii. 2, 3. John iv. 47, 48. xi. 3.
g xi. 29. Josh. xviii. 1. 1 Sam. iv. 3, 4. Jer. vii. 12—14.
h Gen. xxvii. 1. xlviii 10. Deut. xxxiv. 7. 1 Sam. iii. 2. iv. 15. Ps. xc. 10. Ec. xii. 3.
§ Heb. *stood for his hoariness.*

crued from it, purchase security by conniving at prevailing abominations, he may justly be suspected of hypocrisy. These are indeed "dumb dogs that cannot bark," when the Lord is robbed of his worship and honour; and are not fit persons to be employed by him, or countenanced by his faithful people. In some cases they are even worse than the active instruments of deception: because they sin against greater light; they more frequently stumble unestablished persons, and bring deeper disgrace upon the truths which they have professed. Such time-servers, however, are often willing to be thought the servants of God by religious people, though ashamed of him among his enemies: and *for that purpose*, they covertly seek the acquaintance of those ministers who are in reputation for faithfulness, and shew them kindness. But they are the most dangerous, because the most plausible and unsuspected, of all tempters to real Christians, whose candour makes them willing to hope the best of them, to credit their professions, and to return their civilities. Having learned to be silent, when called to defend the truth, they soon learn to forge lies in the name of God, when it can answer their purpose; and, by various specious pretences, they obtain the esteem of the unwary, and abuse their confidence by inveigling them into disobedience: so that tempters of this description often prevail, when the terrors of persecution, and the allurements of preferment, have been resolutely withstood. 'Surely, says the tempted believer, such good men would never propose an ill thing! they brought the word of God for it! they were so very kind, and could have no interest in it!' But for our own sakes, and for the credit of the gospel, let us all with one consent withdraw from *worldly* professors of religion, and be upon our guard against them: let them decidedly serve God, or Baal, that we may know what they are; or let us refuse to have any acquaintance with them.

V. 20—34.

Nothing can excuse any act of wilful disobedience: the tempter "hath the greater sin," but the tempted is deeply criminal; and the offences of those who are much honoured and employed of God, are of all the most dishonourable to him, as they rivet the prejudices and embolden the blasphemies of his enemies. Such offenders therefore shall by no means escape correction in this world: and perhaps their very tempters shall be employed to denounce, or inflict, the chastisements of the Lord upon them; or in other respects they shall be made very severe and alarming: while the wicked frequently escape, in this life, being "reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished."—The exact obedience of the irrational creatures to their Maker, forms a reproach of man's rebellion: for he can restrain or change the very nature of every creature, to render it subservient to his wise and righteous purposes.—Happy are they, who are habitually ready for death: even if the Lord shall call them hence, by some awful rebuke for an incidental transgression; while they are made useful warnings to others, they will be found safe and happy themselves. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxii. 15—20. 1 *Cor.* xi. 29—34.)—But many will shew respect to the servants of the Lord, assent to the truth of their words, appear to lament their death, and wish to have their lot with them in another world; who yet live and die impenitent: (*Note, Num.* xxiii. 10:) and many are warned, convinced, and alarmed, who silence their consciences, and practise increasing wickedness, to the utter ruin of themselves and those connected with them. Let all then fear provoking God to leave them to final hardness of heart: let us "take heed and beware of hypocrisy;" let us dread prospering in sinful ways; let us tremble while we read this chapter, and pray earnestly to be kept from every delusion and temptation, and to be enabled to walk with self denying perseverance in the way of God's commandments!

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—4. In the remainder of the books of the Kings, we have the history of Judah and Israel carried on together, or with continual transitions from one to the other. But the latter part of the second book of Chronicles more fully relates the history of the kings of Judah, and drops that of the kings of Israel, except as connected with the other.—Jeroboam had taken no notice of Ahijah, either while taking possession of the kingdom, or when establishing his idolatrous worship at Dan and Beth-el; being conscious that the prophet would have opposed and condemned his whole conduct. But when his son Abijah

5 And [i] the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he *is* sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself *to be* another *woman*.

6 And it was *so*, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, [k] thou wife of Jeroboam; [l] why feignest thou thyself *to be* another? [m] for I *am* sent to thee *with* [*] heavy *tidings*.

7 Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [n] Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,

8 And [o] rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and *yet* thou hast not been as [p] my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do *that* only *which was* right in mine eyes;

9 But [q] hast done evil above all that were before thee: for [r] thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, [s] to provoke me to anger, and hast [t] cast me behind thy back:

10 Therefore, behold, [u] I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam [x] him that pisseth against the wall, *and* [y] him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, [z] as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone.

11 Him [a] that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

i 2 Kings iv. 27. vi. 8—12. Prov. xxi. 30. Am. iii. 7. Acts x. 19, 20.

k Job v. 13. Ps. xxxiii. 10.

l 2. 5. Ez. xiv. 3—5. 7, 8. Luke xx. 20—23. Acts v. 3—5. 9, 10. Heb. iv. 13.

m 10, 11. xiii. 20—22. xx. 42. xxi. 18—24. xxii. 8. 1 Sam. xv. 16. 26. xxviii. 18. Jer. xxi. 2—7. Ez. ii. 4, 5. Dan. iv. 19—25. v. 17—28. Mark xiv. 21.

* Heb. *hard.*

n xii. 24. xvi. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 27—30. xv. 16. 2 Sam. xii. 7, 8.

o *See on* xi. 30, 31.

p iii. 14. xi. 33. 38. xv. 5. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. xxviii. 1. Acts xiii. 22. 36.

q 16. xii. 28. xiii. 33, 34. xv. 34. xvi. 31.

r Deut. xxxii. 16, 17. 21. Judg. v. 8. 2 Chr. xi. 15. Ps. cvi. 19, 20. cxv. 4—8. Is. xliv. 9—20. Jer. x. 14—16.

s 22. Deut. ix. 8—16. 24. 2 Kings xxi. 3. xxiii. 26. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 40, 56. Jer. vii. 9, 10. Ez. viii. 3. 17. 1 Cor. x. 22.

t Neh. ix. 26. Ps. l. 17. Ez. xxiii. 35.

u xv. 25—30. Am. iii. 6.

x xvi. 11. xxi. 21. 1 Sam. xxv. 22. 34. 2 Kings ix. 8, 9.

y Deut. xxxii. 36. 2 Kings xiv. 26.

z 1 Sam. ii. 30. 2 Kings ix. 37. xxi. 13. Job xx. 7. Ps. lxxxiii. 10. Is. v. 25. xiv. 19. 23. Jer. viii. 2. Ez. xxvi. 4. Zeph. i. 17. Mal. ii. 3. Luke xiv. 34, 35.

a xvi. 4. xxi. 19. 23, 24. Is. lxvi. 24. Jer. xv. 3. Ez. xxxix. 17—19. Rev. xix. 17, 18.

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was dangerously ill, he wished to know from the prophet, whether he would recover or not: for he was convinced, that more dependence might be placed on his word, than on that of all his priests. But he did not enquire, 'Wherefore the Lord corrected him,' or, 'How he might avert his displeasure.' He did not request the prophet's instructions or prayers; or even his directions what to do in order to his son's recovery: he only wished to be relieved from his anxiety, by being informed whether he would or would not recover. (*Notes, 2 Kings* i. 2. viii. 7, 8.) Not choosing himself to go to the prophet, fearing his severe reproofs and warnings; and perhaps being unwilling that the people should discover his own private judgment concerning his calves, and their priests; he would not confide the business to any servant, but sent his wife: yet, she must go in disguise, as the wife of a husbandman, with a present suitable to one in that station, to enquire about her son, without informing the prophet of her rank!—Alas! what ideas must he have had of the infinite and omniscient God, that he should expect him to reveal to his prophet, whether the son of this unknown person would recover; without revealing who it was that came to enquire of him! —Ahijah was infirm, and blind with age; and, not being fitted as formerly for active service, he lived retired, and probably much respected, at Shiloh; lamenting doubtless, though he could not prevent, the sin and misery of his people.

Cracknels. (3) נְקֻדִּים: from נָקַד *punctatus:* a kind of cake, marked with spots, probably reckoned a delicacy.

V. 5, 6. The Lord previously informed his servant of the whole device, by immediate revelation, and instructed him what message to deliver. The wife of Jeroboam came to the prophet; yet, as he was commissioned to declare to her the purpose of God, he told her, that he "was "sent to her with heavy tidings:" and, as she came with dissimulation, and in an assumed garb and character, in order to impose upon him; and as Jeroboam had apostatized to idolatry; he shewed no manner of respect to her rank, or to that of her husband. (*Notes,* xxi. 20. *Dan.* v. 17.)

V. 7—11. (*Notes,* xi. 29—38.)—Jeroboam *intended* that his calves, at Dan and Beth-el, should represent the God of Israel, who brought the nation out of the land of Egypt; and would have his subjects to think, that they were worshipping the God of their fathers. (*Note,* xii. 26—29.) But the Lord called them, "other gods, and "molten images;" for as he cannot be represented by any similitude, so he abhors all image-worship as the grossest idolatry. The case is precisely the same, as to the worship of images in the church of Rome. (*Note, 2 Chr.* xi. 13—17.) None of the rulers or Judges of Israel had acted so wickedly: Saul, who had been rejected for his rebellion, had not committed open idolatry; much less had he used his authority to promote it. Even Solomon, for whose apostasy the ten tribes had been rent from his son, had not established idolatry by a law, as Jeroboam had done: nor had any thing so atrocious been attempted by Israel, since it became a nation. Such judgments therefore were denounced against Jeroboam's house, as had never before been inflicted: and some of the terms used here occur for the first time. (*Marg. Ref.* x, y.—*Note,* 1 *Sam.* xxv. 21, 22. *v.* 22.)—By "him that is shut up and left in Israel," may be meant, 'every one who has taken refuge in the most fortified cities, and every one that has escaped from the more general devastations:' or, in general, all without exception, however secure they might suppose themselves to be; even these would be pursued and cut off. Or, an allusion may be made to those peculiar treasures, which are shut up for security in the safest repositories, and are reserved to the last when all else is spent; and yet they must be parted with, or will be searched out and seized upon. Indeed the house of Jeroboam was become as offensive to the Lord, as dung would be in a man's habitation; and should therefore be taken away till there was none left.

12 Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: *and* [b] when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die.

13 And all Israel [c] shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him [d] there *is* found *some* good thing toward the LORD God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.

14 Moreover [e] the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: [f] but what? even now.

15 For [g] the LORD shall smite Israel, [h] as a reed is shaken in the water; and he shall [i] root up Israel out of [k] this good land which he gave to their fathers, and [l] shall scatter them beyond the river; [m] because they have made their groves, [n] provoking the LORD to anger.

16 And [o] he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, [p] who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

17 ¶ And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to [q] Tirzah: *and* [r] when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died;

18 And they buried him: and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.

19 And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, [s] how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they *are* written [t] in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

20 And the days which Jeroboam reigned *were* two and twenty years: [u] and he * slept with his fathers, and [x] Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

21 ¶ And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. [y] Rehoboam *was* forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, [z] the city which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, [a] to put his name there. And his mother's name *was* [b] Naamah an Ammonitess.

b 3. 6. 17. 2 Kings i 6. 16. John iv. 50—52.
c Num. xx. 29. Jer. xxii. 10. 18.
d 2 Chr. xii. 12. xix. 3. Job xix. 28. Philem. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 8, 9.
e xv. 27—30.
f Ec. viii. 11. Ez. vii. 2—7. xii. 22—28. Jam. v. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 3.
g 1 Sam. xii. 25. 2 Kings xvii. 6, 7.
h Matt. xi. 7. Luke vii. 24.
i Deut. xxix. 28. Ps. lii. 5. Prov. ii. 22. Am. ii. 9. Zeph. ii. 4. Matt. xv. 13.
k Lev. xxvi. 32—34. 43. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 36. 64—68. xxix. 24—28. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16.
l 2 Kings xv. 29. xvii. 23. xviii. 11, 12. Am. v. 27. Acts vii. 43.
m Ex. xxxiv. 13, 14. Deut. xii. 3, 4.
n *See on* 9. 23, 24.
o Is. xl. 24. Hos. ix. 11, 12. 16, 17.
p xii. 30. xiii. 34. xv. 30. 34. xvi. 2. Ex. xxxii. 21. 35. Jer. v. 31. Hos. v. 11, 12. Mic. vi. 16. Matt. xviii. 7. Rom. xiv. 13.
q xv. 21. 33. xvi. 6. 8, 9. 15. 23. Josh. xii. 24. Cant. vi. 4.
r *See on* 12, 13.—1 Sam. ii. 30—34. iv. 18—20.
s 30. 2 Chr. xiii. 2—20.
t 29. xv. 31. xvi. 5. 14. 20. 27. xxii. 39. 1 Chr. xxvii. 24. Esth. vi. 1.
u *See on* ii. 10. xi. 43.
* Heb. *lay down.* Job xiv. 12. Ps. iii. 5. iv. 8.
x xv. 25—31. B. C. 975.
y xi. 43. 2 Chr. xii. 13. xiii. 7.
z *See on* viii. 16. 44. xi. 36.—Ps. lxxviii. 68, 69. lxxxvii. 1, 2. cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xii. 6.
a *See on* Ex. xx. 24. Deut. xii. 5. 21.
b 31. Deut. xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. xii. 13.

B. C. 954.

Nor should any of his family, save Abijah, be buried, but their dead bodies should be left above ground, till the dogs or the fowls of the air devoured them, to their deeper disgrace and abhorrence. (*Notes*, xxi. 21—26. 2 *Kings* ix. 30—37. *Jer.* viii. 1—3.)

Hast cast me, &c. (9) 'Neglecting me and my service. 'For those things we cast behind our backs, which are 'nothing worth; and for which we have no regard, or 'concern what becomes of them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12, 13. Abijah was the only person of all the house of Jeroboam, who was well disposed to the worship and service of JEHOVAH: and it is probable, that he had expressed strong disapprobation of his father's idolatry, and a purpose of suppressing it, if he should ever have it in his power. His removal was therefore a heavy judgment upon Israel, who were unworthy of so pious a prince to reign over them: and it was the earnest of the entire destruction of Jeroboam's family, and a sort of preparation for it.—It seems, that Israel, though generally apostate, had some sense of Abijah's worth, and of their loss by his death, and sincerely mourned for him. (18. *Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxxv. 25—27.)

V. 14. (*Notes*, *Ex.* ix. 13—16.)—*But what? even now.*] That is, 'Do not think that these judgments are distant events; but prepare for them, and consider what will be the consequence if they should come immediately; for they are even now at hand.' In two years after Jeroboam's death, Baasha utterly extirpated his family. (xv. 25—30.) —Some, however, interpret the clause to mean, that the desolation of Jeroboam's house should merely be an introduction to still greater calamities on Israel.

V. 15, 16. These verses emphatically predict the enfeebled, distracted state of Israel, by continual usurpations, massacres, and civil wars, and the further idolatries into which they were led by their wicked princes, until they were given up finally at the Assyrian captivity.—They were punished for "willingly walking after the commandment" of Jeroboam, to worship the golden calves; and for concurring in his revolt from the house of David, and from the worship of God. (*Marg. Ref.* p. *Notes*, *Hos.* v. 11, 12. viii. 2—6. xiii. 10, 11. *Mic.* vi. 16.)

V. 17, 18. *Note*, 12, 13.—*Tirzah.* (17) *Marg. Ref.* q.

V. 19, 20. (*Marg. Ref.*) *The book*, &c. (19) These chronicles, or *words of days*, or *journals*, were the publick records of the kingdom, from whence extracts seem to have been made by the inspired writers, with such additions as were suited for instruction. If any one wished further to gratify his curiosity, he was referred to the original records: but these have now long since been buried in oblivion. The same may be said of "The book of the chron- "icles of the kings of Judah" (29), which were the records of that kingdom, and not that part of holy writ, which we call the Books of Chronicles. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xi. 41. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 29, 30.)

V. 21. Rehoboam, was born one year before David's death: for Solomon reigned only forty years: and having had his education in the best part of his father's reign, he had abundant opportunity of becoming a wiser man than he proved to be. Naamah is supposed to have been the daughter of Shobi, the Ammonite, who was kind to David in Absalom's rebellion; (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 27—29;) and Shobi having been proselyted to the religion of

22 And [c] Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [d] they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, [e] above all that their fathers had done.

23 For they also [f] built them high places, and [*] images, and [g] groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

24 And [h] there were also sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations, which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

25 And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, *that* [i] Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem:

26 And [k] he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all; and he took away all [l] the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

27 And king Rehoboam [m] made in their stead brazen shields, and committed *them* unto the hands of the chief of the [†] guard, which kept the door of the king's house.

28 And it was *so*, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into [n] the guard-chamber.

29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, [o] *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

30 And [p] there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days.

31 And [q] Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And [r] his mother's name *was* Naamah, an Ammonitess. And [s] Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

c Judg. iii. 7. 12. iv. 1. 2 Kings xvii. 19. 2 Chr. xii. 1. Jer. iii. 7—11.
d *See on* 9.—Deut. iv. 24. xxix. 29. xxxii. 16—21. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Is. lxv. 3, 4. 1 Cor. x. 22.
e xvi. 30. 2 Kings xxi. 11. Ez. xvi. 47, 48.
f iii. 2. Deut. xii. 2. Is. lvii. 5. Ez. xvi. 24, 25. xx. 28, 29.
* Or, *standing images*, or, *statues*. Lev. xxvi. 1.
g Mic v. 14. Deut. xii. 2. 2 Kings xvii. 9, 10. xxi. 3—7. 2 Chr. xxviii. 4. Jer. xvii. 2.
h xv. 12. xxii. 46. Gen. xix. 5. Deut. xxiii. 17. Judg. xix. 22. 2 Kings xxiii. 7. Rom. i. 24—27. 1 Cor. vi. 9.
i xi. 40. 2 Chr. xii. 2—4.
k *See on* vii. 51.—xv. 18. 2 Kings xxiv. 13. 2 Chr. xii. 9—11. Ps. xxxix. 6 lxxxix. 39—45.
l x. 16, 17. 2 Chr. ix. 15, 16. Prov. xxiii. 5. Ec. ii. 18, 19.
m Lam. iv. 1, 2.
† Heb. *runners*. .. 5. xviii. 46. 1 Sam. viii. 11. xxii. 17 2 Sam xv. 1.
n 2 Chr. xii. 11.
o *See on* 19. xi. 41.—xv. 23. xxii. 45. 2 Chr. xii. 15.
p xii. 24. xv 6, 7. B. C. 958.
q *See on* 20. xi. 43. xv. 3. 24. xx. i. 60. 2 Chr. xii. 16.
r *See on* 21.
s 1 Chr. iii. 10. *Abia*. 2 Chr. xii. 16. *Abijah*. Matt. i. 7. *Abia*.

Israel, David took his daughter to be the wife of his son Solomon, perhaps out of gratitude for his kindness. David had himself married the daughter of Talmai the king of Geshur; but the character of Absalom, his son by her, should have cautioned him against such marriages. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* iii. 2—5. xiii. 37—39. xv—xvii.) It is very doubtful whether Naamah ever cordially embraced true religion: and as Solomon worshipped the gods of Ammon among the rest, it has been thought, that she at last became one of his seducers. (*Note*, iii. 1. xi. 1—8.)

V. 22—24. It was a most extraordinary circumstance, that, after the priests and Levites, and pious persons from Israel, had settled in Judah, (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xi. 13—17. xii. 1,) Rehoboam and his subjects in general should become more gross idolaters, than the Israelites were. Yet this was actually the case: for they worshipped false gods even more directly than the Israelites; and the *groves* seem to have been temples erected in shady places, where the most abominable lewdness was practised in honour of their filthy idols. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 9—11. xii. 26—29. *Lev.* xviii. 21—30.) Thus they far surpassed all their progenitors in abominable idolatries, and emulated the abominations of the devoted Canaanites.

V. 25—28. It is probable that Shishak was excited by Jeroboam, as well as allured by the prospect of an immense booty, in thus making war against Rehoboam. (*Note*, xi. 40.) If, as some learned men suppose, Shishak was the Sesostris of pagan historians, he was a most powerful and formidable conqueror: and Rehoboam, perhaps intimidated by seeing the hand of God so speedily lifted up against him, seems to have tamely surrendered. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xii. 1—11.) Thus in less than five years from Solomon's death, the temple was plundered, as well as his royal palaces; and Shishak having seized the booty, appears to have relinquished his conquests in Judah.—Rehoboam replaced the golden shields with others made of brass: and the use which he made of these shews for what purposes those of gold had been designed; and intimates, that he still on some occasions attended the worship of God at his temple. (*Notes*, vii. 2. x. 16, 17.)

V. 29. *Marg. Ref.—Note*, 19.

V. 30. Rehoboam was not allowed to attack Jeroboam, in the beginning of his reign, and we read of no great battles fought between them: yet by mutual incursions, they molested and weakened each other all their days. (*Notes*, xii. 21—24. xv. 6, 7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20.

Parents often suffer and are corrected in the affliction of their children: and on such occasions they should examine their lives, repent of their sins, humble themselves before God, submit to his will, seek help from him, and especially pray that the affliction may be sanctified for the good of their souls. But sinners are more anxious to know the *secret* purposes of God, than to understand his *revealed* will and their own duty: and they are often conscious, that their *forms* are not to be depended on; but are afraid that others should perceive their convictions, and despise them. They secretly reverence the faithful servants of God: and, having found the truth of some of their words, they have an inward persuasion, that the rest also will be verified; except as they flatter themselves with hopes of escaping the miseries denounced against them. They form, indeed, very erroneous judgments both of God and of his servants; yet they would be glad of help or information in times of trouble, did they not fear rebukes and warnings. They therefore, either keep at a distance, or attempt to impose upon faithful ministers, by disguising their real characters, and pretending kindness to them. Indeed the wisest of

CHAP. XV.

Abijam's wicked reign, 1—7. He dies, and is succeeded by Asa, 8. Asa's good reign, 9—15. In his war with Baasha, he makes a league with Benhadad, king of Syria; compels Baasha to desist from building Ramah; and with the materials builds Geba and Mizpah, 16—22. He dies, and is succeeded by Jehoshaphat, 23, 24. Nadab's wicked reign over Israel, 25, 26. Baasha slays him, seizes the kingdom, and executes Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam's family, 27—32. Baasha's wicked reign, 33, 34.

NOW [a] in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, reigned Abijam over Judah.

2 Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And [b] his mother's name *was* [c] Maachah, the daughter of [d] Abishalom.

3 And he walked in [e] all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: [f] and his heart was not perfect

[a] *See on* xiv. 31.—2 Chr. xiii. 1, 2.

[b] 13. 2 Chr. xi. 20—22.

[c] 2 Chr. xiii. 2. *Michaiah the daughter of Uriel.*

[d] 2 Chr. xi. 21. *Absalom.*

[e] xiv. 21, 22.

[f] *See on* iii. 14. xi. 4. 33.—2 Kings xx. 3. 2 Chr. xxv. 2. xxxi. 20, 21. Ps. cxix. 80.

men may thus be deceived; but God searches every heart, and often unmasks the hypocrite before the world: he more frequently enables *his servants* to see through their disguises, and to address them in their *real*, not their *assumed* characters; and at last he will expose them to universal shame and contempt before the assembled world. 'What then doth it avail thee, thou deceiver, to attempt imposing upon men? "Why feignest thou thyself to be "another" person? In vain dost thou expect an answer of peace, while thou continuest in sin. The ministers of Christ are all sent to thee with heavy tidings: thine attempt to impose on them, or to bribe them by presents, does but increase thy guilt: they will not thus be diverted from giving thee faithful reproofs and awful warnings; and the event will shortly inform thee of the purpose of God concerning thee; the foreknowledge of which, would only augment thy misery, except thou repent of all thy wickedness, and turn to the Lord in uprightness of heart.'—Every providential favour demands a return of grateful obedience, and aggravates future transgression; and thus prosperous sinners accumulate guilt and wrath, with a rapidity proportioned to their abused mercies. (*Note, Rom.* ii. 4—6.)—When men have witnessed, and have even gained by, the wrath of God against the sins of other men, and yet imitate and exceed them in iniquity; they may expect to be visited with more tremendous vengeance: and as they dishonour him by their crimes, he will disgrace them in their punishment.—A man is not indeed affected by the indignity shewn to his dead body, or even by the miseries of his posterity; yet the prospect may torment his mind while he lives: such judgments form a proper emblem of the punishment of the wicked after death; and they strongly express the abhorrence and indignation of God for a warning to others.—Instruments will readily be found, among the depraved sons of men, for the most bloody and savage acts of inhumanity: but the circumstance of their being advanced to power by the providence of God, who over-rules their crimes to the accomplishment of his own righteous purposes, forms no excuse for their ambition and cruelty.—Impenitent sinners often flatter themselves, that threatened judgments are very distant, when they are even at the door; and excuse themselves, because they were persuaded or frighted into compliance. —Awful indeed will be the doom of those who employ their abilities and authority to make others sin; for thousands will for ever execrate some of them, as the causes of their eternal perdition. They however, who yield to temptation, follow bad examples, and obey sinful commands, will provoke the Lord to give them up, and cast them off, unless they deeply repent of their iniquity.—The Lord deals with men according to their *habitual character:* and he will not mention against the upright believer, who has cordially followed him, those incidental sins of which he has repented, and for which he has patiently borne correction. —To shew the power and sovereignty of his grace, he frequently reserves an individual or two out of the worst of families, in whom there is "some good thing toward the "LORD God of Israel." The fruits of his grace he peculiarly delights in, when they flourish from the hearts of the young and the affluent, and of those who are surrounded with contagious examples and instructions. When such young persons are spared, they prove blessings to their families and connexions: but their premature death forebodes awful judgments, and may well be mourned over as a publick calamity. But they "are taken away from "the evil to come," and their death can never be a loss to themselves.

V. 21—31.

No wonder that they, who live at a distance from the ordinances of God, are hardened in iniquity; when such as are most favoured provoke him to jealousy by their crimes, and are uninfluenced by his judgments, mercies, warnings, and promises.—The perpetration of the worst crimes, of the worst of the heathen, in Jerusalem, the city that the Lord had chosen for his temple and worship; and at present in this favoured land and city; demonstrates, that nothing can render the heart of fallen man holy, but the special sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit: on this alone may we depend; for this may we daily pray, in behalf of ourselves and of all around us!—But sin quickly enfeebles, impoverishes, and disgraces the most prosperous nations: and when holiness, the real glory of a religious profession, is gone, all external splendour will follow it, or become worthless. Yet many, who live in gross wickedness, keep up a formal attendance upon divine ordinances, and are pleased with an ostentatious imitation of the usages of better times; which have lost all their intrinsick value, and retain nothing, except the external glitter that amuses weak and carnal minds.—Death still marches his solemn round, and conveys monarchs from their thrones, as well as peasants from their cottages. Happy are they, and they alone, who possess the "lively "hope of an incorruptible inheritance," in that world, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the "weary are at rest!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—3. (*Marg. Ref.* a, b. *Note*, 9.) There

with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.

4 Nevertheless [g] for David's sake did the LORD his God [h] give him a * lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, [i] and to establish Jerusalem:

5 Because [j] David did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any *thing* that he commanded him all the days of his life, [k] save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

6 And [l] there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

7 Now [m] the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And [n] there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

8 And [o] Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and [p] Asa his son reigned in his stead.

9 ¶ And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.

10 And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his † mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

11 And [q] Asa did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* David his father.

12 And he took away [r] the sodomites out of the land, and removed [s] all the idols that his fathers had made.

13 And also [t] Maachah [u] his mother, even her he removed from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa ‡ destroyed her idol [v] and burnt *it* by [x] the brook Kidron.

14 But [y] the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart [z] was perfect with the LORD all his days.

[g] xi. 12. 32. Gen. xii. 2. xix. 29. xxvi. 5. Deut. iv. 37. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. Is. xxxvii. 35. Jer. xxxiii. 20—26. Rom. xi. 28.
[h] xi. 36. 2 Chr. xxi. 7. Ps. cxxxii. 17. Luke i. 69—79. ii. 32. John viii. 12. Rev. xxii. 16.
* Or, *candle.* Ps. xviii. 28.
[i] Ps. lxxxvii. 5. Is. ix. 7. xiv. 32. lxii. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 2. Mic. iv. 1, 2. Matt. xvi. 18.
[j] *See on* 3. xiv. 8. —2 Kings xxii. 2. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 2. Ps. cxix. 6. Luke i. 6. Acts xiii. 22. 36.
[k] 2 Sam. xi. 4. 15 —17. xii. 9, 10. Ps. li. *title.*
[l] *See on* xiv. 30.
[m] *See on* xiv. 29. —2 Chr. xiii. 2. 21, 22.
[n] 2 Chr. xiii. 3—20
B. C. 953.
[o] *See on* xiv. 31. —2 Chr. xiv. 1.
[p] 1 Chr. iii. 10. Matt. i. 7, 8.
† That is, *grandmother's.* 2. 13. 2 Chr. xi. 20, 21. xiii. 2.
[q] 3. 2 Chr. xiv. 2. 11. xv. 17. xvi. 7—10.
[r] *See on* xiv. 24.—xxii. 46. Rom. i. 26, 27. Jude 7.
[s] 3. xi. 7. 8. xiv. 23. 2 Chr. xiv. 2—5. Ez. xx. 18, 19. Zech. i. 2—6. 1 Pet. i. 18.
[t] 2. 10. 2 Chr. xv. 16.
[u] Deut. xiii. 6—11. xxxiii. 9. Zech. xiii. 3. Matt. x. 37. xii. 46—50. 2 Cor. v. 16. Gal. ii. 5, 6. 14.
‡ Heb. *cut off.* Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. vii. 5. 2 Kings xviii. 4. xxiii. 12—15. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 4.
[v] Ex. xxxii. 20. Deut. ix. 21. Josh. vi. 24.
[x] 2 Sam. xv. 23. 2 Kings xxiii. 6. John xviii. 1. *Cedron.*
[y] xxii. 43. 2 Kings xii. 3. xiv. 4. xv. 4. 2 Chr. xiv. 3. 5. xvii. 6. xi. 4. 2 Chr. xv. 17. xvi. 9. xxv. 2.
[z] viii. 61.

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is no sufficient ground for the opinion, that Maachah was the daughter of Absalom the son of David. (*Marg. Ref.* c, d.) She is called "Michaiah the daughter of Uriel," in Chronicles.—*His heart was not perfect,* &c. (3) *Marg. Ref.* f. *Note,* 14.—As Abijam, though a wicked man, was a professed worshipper of JEHOVAH, he is called "the "LORD his God." (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxviii. 5.)

V. 4. Notwithstanding the wickedness of Abijam, and others of David's race; they were for his sake continued as "a lamp in Jerusalem:" (*Notes,* xi. 12, 13. 34—36, *v.* 36:) and they were made highly useful, both to establish the civil state of that city, and to maintain the true worship of God in it; when the light of divine truth was extinguished in almost all other places of the earth.

V. 5. *Save only,* &c.] Many other parts of David's conduct were evidently faulty: but in this instance alone he acted so inconsistently with his profession, in all respects, as otherwise it could scarcely have been conceived, that a truly pious man could have done. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* xi.) —Those who know the human heart, and the state of a believer in this world of conflict and temptation, will never expect to see in mere man a character and conduct free from blemish and criminality; though they observe many preserved from falling, or from continuing long, under the power of notorious evils. David, however, deeply repented of this part of his conduct; and to the close of his life he shewed himself to be the upright and devoted servant and worshipper of the Lord, and in no instance turned aside to idolatry, or countenanced it in his subjects. (*Notes,* xi. 1—8, *conclusion.* 1 *Chr.* xxviii, xxix. *Ps.* li.)

V. 6, 7. God vouchsafed to continue the royal authority over Judah in the family of David: yet, instead of ruling over Israel also, as David and Solomon had done, both Rehoboam and Abijam were harassed by perpetual wars with Jeroboam the king of Israel. Rehoboam left this unnatural war, after it had lasted all his days, to his son Abijam, who obtained a most decisive victory over Jeroboam, but died soon after. (*Notes,* xiv. 30. 2 *Chr.* xiii. 3—22.)

V. 9. Abijam began to reign during the eighteenth year of Jeroboam; he reigned through his nineteenth year, and he died before the close of his twentieth, when Asa succeeded him. Thus Abijam is said, according to the Hebrew idiom, to have reigned "*three* years," in the same manner as Christ is said to have risen after "*three* days." Thus also Nadab began to reign in the second year of Asa, and reigned two years: yet Baasha succeeded him in the third year of Asa (28). This is the way, in which the computation of the years between the two kingdoms may be made to coincide: for, in the numerous successions in the kingdom of Israel, the same year is frequently twice reckoned; both to him who reigned in its commencement, and to him who succeeded before the close of it.

V. 10—13. Maachah was Asa's *grandmother,* but probably his own mother was dead, and Maachah had brought him up: (*Notes,* 1—3. 2 *Chr.* xi. 18—23:) he however deprived her of authority, and removed her from court, for her idolatry, which he entirely suppressed.—The words translated, "from being queen," may be rendered, *from the queen,* namely, lest Maachah should seduce Asa's queen also into idolatry.—*Idols.* (12) גִּלּוּלִים. *Dungy gods. Deut.* xxix. 17. *marg. Note, Lev.* xxvi. 30. Σκυβαλα. *Phil.* iii. 5.

An idol. (13) מִפְלֶצֶת: 'Which imports something of 'terror and horror, either because it was of a frightful as-'pect, or brought dreadful judgments on its worshippers.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 14. *Was perfect,* &c.] This may be opposed to the external good behaviour, and the insincere and divided heart, of hypocrites; and may signify, that Asa was cordially devoted to the service and worship of God all his days; and that his sins arose from infirmity, not from pre-

15 And [a] he brought in the [*] things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels.

16 ¶ And [b] there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

17 And [c] Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built [d] Ramah, that [e] he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

18 Then [f] Asa took all the silver and the gold *that were* left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants; and king Asa sent them to [g] Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at [h] Damascus, saying,

19 *There is* a [i] league between me and thee, *and* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and [k] break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may [†] depart from me.

20 So Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote [l] Ijon, and [m] Dan, and [n] Abel-beth-maachah, and all [o] Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.

21 And it came to pass, [p] when Baasha heard *thereof*, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in [q] Tirzah.

22 Then king Asa [r] made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none *was* [‡] exempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded: and king Asa built with them [s] Geba of Benjamin, and [t] Mizpah.

23 The [u] rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless [x] in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

24 And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and [y] Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

25 ¶ And [z] Nadab the son of Jeroboam [§] began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa, king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.

26 And [a] he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [b] walked in the way of his father, and [c] in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

27 And [d] Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, [e] conspired against him: and Baasha smote him at [f] Gibbethon, which *belongeth* to the Philistines; (for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon;)

28 Even [g] in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.

29 And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* he smote all the house of Jeroboam; [h] he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:

a See on vii. 51.—1 Chr. xxvi. 26—28. 2 Chr. xiv. 3. xv. 18.
* Heb. *holy things.*
b 6, 7. 32. xiv. 30. 2 Chr. xvi. 1, &c.
c 27. 2 Chr. xvi. 1.
d 21. Josh. xviii. 25. 1 Sam. xv. 34. Jer. xxxi. 15.
e xii. 27. 2 Chr. xi. 13—17.
f 15. xiv. 26. 2 Kings xii. 18. xviii. 15, 16. 2 Chr. xv. 18. xvi. 2—6.
g xx. 1—5. 33, 34. 2 Kings viii. 7—15.
h xi. 23, 24. Gen. xiv. 15. xv. 2. Jer. xlix. 27. Am. i. 4.
i 2 Chr. xix. 2. Is. xxxi. 1.
k 2 Sam. xxi. 2. 2 Chr. xvi. 3. Ez. xvii. 13—16. Rom. i. 31. iii. 8.
† Heb. *go up.*
l 2 Kings xv. 29.
m xii. 29. Gen. xiv. 14. Judg. xviii. 29.
n 2 Sam. xx. 14, 15.
o Josh. xi. 2. xii. 3. 2 Chr. xvi. 5.
p xiv. 17. xvi. 15—18. Cant. vi. 4.
q Josh. xii. 24.
r 2 Chr. xvi. 6.
‡ Heb. *free.*
s Josh. xviii. 24. *Gaba.* xxi. 17.
t Josh. xviii. 26. 1 Sam. vii. 5. *Mizpeh.* Jer. xl. 6. 10.
u 7, 8. xiv. 29—31.
x 2 Chr. xvi. 12—14. Ps. xc. 10.
B. C. 914.
y xxii. 41—43. 2 Chr. xvii. 1. Matt. i. 8. *Josaphat.*
z xiv. 12. 20.
§ Heb. *reigned.*
a xvi. 7. 25. 30.
b xii. 28—33. xiii. 33, 34.
c 30. 34. xiv. 16. xvi. 19. 26. xxi 22. xxii. 52. Gen. xx. 9. Ex. xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 24. 2 Kings iii. 3. xxi. 11. xxiii. 15. Jer. xxxii. 35. Rom. xiv. 15. 1 Cor. viii. 10—13.
d See on 16, 17.
e xvi. 9. 2 Kings xii. 20.
f xvi. 15. 17. Josh. xix. 44. xxi. 23.
g Deut. xxxii. 35.
h xiv. 10—14. 2 Kings ix. 7—10. 36, 37. x. 10, 11. 31. xix. 25.

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sumptuous, deliberate wickedness. (*Notes*, 5. 17—24. 2 *Chr.* xvi. *Ps.* xix. 12—14.) But some explain it to mean no more, than that he never turned aside from the worship of God to idolatry, as Solomon had done.—He had not, however, zeal and resolution enough to suppress the high places, on which the people sacrificed to the Lord, instead of coming to the temple; though he destroyed the idols out of the land. (*Notes*, iii. 2—4.)

V. 15. It seems that Abijam, in his war with Jeroboam, had made some vow of dedicating the spoil to God, which he did not live to perform. But Asa fulfilled it, as well as a similar vow of his own. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, *Lev.* xxvii. 28, 29. 2 *Chr.* xiv. 9—15.)

V. 16—22. (25—31.) The conduct of Asa evidently arose from unbelief, and was very criminal in itself. It was wholly wrong to tempt Benhadad to "break his league" with the king of Israel; and still worse to hire him to it with the consecrated treasures of the temple: and the calamities and miseries brought by Ben-hadad's invasions on the inhabitants of the cities in the northern part of the land, were very great. This occurred in the latter years of Asa's reign.—Baasha's policy was not unlike the impious devices of Jeroboam: (*Note*, xii. 26—29:) but God could have turned it into foolishness, without Asa opposing it by a policy not more justifiable. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xvi. 1—10.)

V. 23, 24. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xiv. 19. 2 *Chr.* xvi. 12—14.

V. 27. *Gibbethon.*] *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, xvi. 15.

V. 29, 30. No doubt Baasha left the dead bodies of Jeroboam's family unburied, as it had been predicted. (*Notes*,

30 Because of [i] the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

31 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* [j] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

32 And [k] there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, [l] twenty and four years.

34 And [m] he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [n] walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

i See on 26.—xiv. 9—15.

j xiv. 19. xvi. 5. 14. 20. 27.

k See on 16.

l xvi. 8.

m 26.

n See on 26.—xii. 28, 29. xiii. 33. xiv. 16.

xiv. 9—14.) It is also referred to as a well-known fact in subsequent passages. (xvi. 3, 4. xxi. 22—24.) Baasha, however, only sought to secure himself in the kingdom by this cruelty, and therefore he imitated Jeroboam in his idolatry and other impieties. (34. *Notes*, xvi. 2—7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

Even a superficial acquaintance with the divine law may enable us to perceive evident defects in the conduct of eminent believers; and man's natural enmity to God and his servants disposes him to delight in severely animadverting on them: yet if the habitual conduct of the righteous, towards God and man, be impartially contrasted with that of unbelievers, the difference is very visible, and they appear to be of another spirit, and far more excellent than their neighbours. But when the secret desires and good works of the righteous, and the secret evils of the hearts and lives of ungodly men, shall be made manifest at the day of judgment; the glory of the divine justice and mercy will be displayed to the whole world, in the allotment of their everlasting portion of happiness or misery. (*Note*, *Mal.* iii. 13—18.) The general conduct of the Lord's servants may therefore be held forth as an example for imitation: and numbers are blessed on their account, both while they live, and after they are gone to their rest. But alas! even children, who have been favoured and spared for their parents' sake, often forsake their righteous ways; and but few, especially in superior stations, or among kings and rulers, have hitherto served God in uprightness of heart. He has, however, still taken care of his cause; while those, who ought to have been serviceable to it, have perished in their sins: and the Son of David will continue a Light to his church, to establish it in truth and righteousness, to the end of time, and for ever. (*Note*, *Rev.* xxi. 22—27.)—It is happy for nations, when wicked rulers are speedily removed; and when the righteous come in their stead, and are long preserved, "to do "that which is right in the eyes of the LORD."—Those who would please him, and promote reformation, must prefer his glory to the reputation of every friend or relative: nay, they must oppose the crimes even of their own parents, though this may seem a reflection upon the memory of the deceased, or a slight put upon the characters of the living. Nor may any age, sex, or relative tie, induce such as are entrusted with authority, to allow those to possess power or influence, who abuse it to the dishonour of God, and to promote idolatry, superstition, or ungodliness; and in every situation our duty to him must have the precedency over all other duties. (*Notes*, *Matt* x. 37—39. *Luke* xiv. 25—27.) How absurd then is it, to be satisfied with a religion, merely because our fathers professed it! for indeed that reason, if allowed to be valid, would generally prove that men ought to continue in idolatry, superstition, and immorality. (*Note* and *P. O.* 1 *Pet.* i. 17—21.)—Every reformation upon earth has hitherto been defective: the utmost attainment of fallen man has been an upright and persevering endeavour to glorify God; and this meets with his *merciful* acceptance, by faith in Jesus Christ.

V. 16—34.

Even true believers find it very difficult in times of urgent danger, "to trust in the LORD with all their heart, and "not to lean to their own understanding:" and unbelief proportionably makes way for carnal policy. This has often induced Christians to call in the help of the enemies of God, in their contests with their brethren; to spend that time and substance to obtain their favour, which ought to have been devoted to the Lord's service; and to tempt others to behave deceitfully or cruelly. Such evils have frequently disgraced religious disputes: the victories thus acquired have weakened the common cause, and ended in shame and bitterness: and some, who once shone bright in the meridian of the church, have been thus covered with a dark cloud toward the close of their days. May God help us "to follow after peace, and those things, "wherewith one may edify another;" that our "path may "shine more and more bright unto the perfect day!"—But after all, how much happier are those who are connected with godly people, than such as have their lot cast among the profane and wicked! (*Note*, xvi. 21, 22.)—Wretched is it for others, but most so for themselves, when children inherit the vices, with the estates, of their wicked parents: their temporal calamities may arise from the sins of their fathers; but "the wrath to come" will be the recompence of their own crimes.—Ungodly men execute the just judgment of God upon each other, whilst gratifying their own ambition, avarice, or revenge; and at the same time they ripen for severer vengeance, by imitating the sins of those whom they have supplanted.—Many suffer, and many are induced to commit iniquity, by such rulers and usurpers. But in the midst of all these enormities, and this apparent confusion, the Lord is carrying on his universal plan: and when it shall be fully completed, all rational and holy creatures, and all the company of redeemed sinners, will perceive, admire, and adore the glorious justice, wisdom, truth, and mercy, displayed in every part of it, through all the ages of eternity.

CHAP. XVI.

Jehu the prophet predicts the ruin of Baasha's family, 1—4. Baasha dies, and is succeeded by his son Elah, 5—7. Zimri slays Elah, succeeds him, and fulfils Jehu's prophecy, 8—14. Omri usurps the kingdom, and besieges Zimri in Tirzah, who burns himself in the palace, 15—20. Tibni opposes Omri, who prevails against him, 21, 22. Omri builds Samaria, reigns very wickedly, dies, and is succeeded by Ahab, 23—28. Ahab's excessive wickedness and idolatry, as instigated by his wife Jezebel, 29—33. Joshua's curse on him that should rebuild Jericho, is fulfilled on Hiel, 34.

THEN the word of the LORD came
a 7. 2 Chr. xix. 2. xx. 34. to [a] Jehu the son of [b] Hanani against
b 2 Chr. xvi. 7—10. Baasha, saying,

2 Forasmuch as [c] I exalted thee out
c xiv. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 8. 27, 28. xv. 17—19. 2 Sam. xii. 7—11. Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. Luke i. 52. of the dust, and made thee prince over
d See on xiii. 33, 34. xv. 34. my people Israel, and [d] thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and [e] hast
e See on xiv. 16. xv. 26.—Ex. xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 24. xxvi. 19. made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;

3 Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of
f 11. 12. xiv. 10. xv. 29, 30. xxi. 21—24. Is. lxvi. 24. Jer. xxii. 19. his house; and [f] will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

4 Him that dieth of Baasha in the
g See on xiv. 11. city [g] shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

h See on xiv. 19. xv. 31. 5 Now [h] the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

6 So [i] Baasha slept with his fathers, i xiv. 20. xv. 24. and was buried in Tirzah: and [j] Elah j 8. 13, 14. his son reigned in his stead.

7 And also by [k] the hand of the pro- k See on 1, 2. phet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger [l] with the work l Ps. cxv. 4. Is. ii. 8. xliv. 9—20. of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and [m] because he killed m xiv. 14. xv. 27—29. 2 Kings x. 30, 31. Is. x. 5. Z. Hos. i. 4. Acts ii. 23. iv. 27, 28. him.

8 ¶ In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah, began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years.

9 And his servant Zimri, captain of n xv. 27. 2 Kings ix. 14. xii. 20. xv. 10. 25. 30. half *his* chariots, [n] conspired against q xx. 16. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. 2 Sam. xiii. 28, 29. Prov. xxiii. 29—35. Jer. li. 57. Dan. v. 1—4. 30. Nah. i. 10. Hab. ii. 15, 16. Matt. xxiv. 49—51. Luke xxi. 34. him, as he was in Tirzah, [o] drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, * steward of *his* house in Tirzah.

10 And [p] Zimri went in, and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and [q] reigned in his stead.

* Heb. *which was over.* Gen. xv. 2. xxiv. 2. 10. xxxix. 4. 9.

p 2 Kings ix. 31. q 15. B. C. 929.

11 And it came to pass, when he r xv. 29. Judg. i. 7. began to reign, as soon as he sat on s See on xiv. 10.—1 Sam. xxv. 22. 34. his throne, *that* [r] he slew all the house of Baasha: [s] he left him not one that

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1. Hanani, the father of Jehu, was a prophet, as well as his son. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xvi. 7—10.) Jehu was a young man at this time, and he continued for many years employed by the Lord, and useful to his people. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xix. 2. xx. 31—34.)—Thus a succession of prophets was raised up in the nation of Israel, through every generation, till the advent of Christ approached. (*Preface to Malachi.*)

V. 2. The conduct of Baasha, in conspiring against Nadab, and murdering him and Jeroboam's family, was highly criminal. But the success of his conspiracy, and his advancement from a very low condition, to the throne of Israel, were from the Lord; whose benefits aggravated the guilt of his subsequent idolatry and wickedness. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xii. 8.)—God acknowledged Israel as his people, notwithstanding their apostasy, because they professed themselves his worshippers; because there were many believers in the land; and because he intended to maintain religion among them, and not utterly to cast them off. This also was an aggravation of Baasha's sin; that being, by Providence, made prince over the Lord's people, he employed his authority in causing them to sin against him.

V. 3—6. (*Notes*, xiv. 5—14.) Baasha was not slain, but died and was buried; Jeroboam also died: but the threatenings were executed on his whole family and posterity.

I will take away. (ℵ) מבעיר: *I will consume as by fire.*

V. 7. It is likely, that Jehu was sent from Judah, of which kingdom he seems to have been, and delivered his message to Baasha, as the man of God did to Jeroboam. (*Notes*, xiii. 1—6. 2 *Chr.* xvi. 7—10. xix. 2.)—*Killed him.*] 'Baasha destroyed Jeroboam in his posterity, by cruelly 'murdering them all.' God had not *commanded* him to do this, though he had *predicted* that it should be done. Baasha was actuated by his own ambition and other selfish passions; and therefore deserved punishment, though he fulfilled the righteous purposes of God. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* x. 29—31. *Is.* x. 5—15. *Hos.* i. 4, 5. *Acts* ii. 22—24.)

V. 8—14. Baasha began to reign in the third year of Asa; and he reigned twenty-four years; yet he died, and was succeeded by Elah, in the twenty-sixth year of Asa. Thus, it is evident, that a part of the third year of Asa, after Baasha came to the throne, is calculated as a whole year. (*Note*, xv. 9.) In like manner Elah, who began to reign in the twenty-sixth year of Asa, and was killed in the twenty-seventh, is said to have reigned two years, that is,

pisseth against a wall, *neither of his kinsfolks nor of his friends.

12 Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, [t] according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha [†] by Jehu the prophet;

13 For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their [u] vanities.

14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* [v] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

15 ¶ In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign [x] seven days in Tirzah; and the people *were* [y] encamped against Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines.

16 And the people *that were* encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made [z] Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.

17 And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they [a] besieged Tirzah.

18 And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, [b] and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died,

19 For his sins which he sinned [e] in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and [d] in his sin which he did, to make Israel sin.

20 Now [e] the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

21 Then were the people of Israel [f] divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.

22 But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned.

23 ¶ In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah, began Omri to B. C. 925.

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a part of two years.—The sentence, denounced against the house of Baasha greatly resembles that denounced against Jeroboam and his family: and both Jeroboam and Baasha died in peace; while Nadab and Elah, their sons, were slain within two years, and the posterity of each of them was entirely and ignominiously extirpated! But Baasha's friends likewise were involved in the same ruin: and Zimri executed the sentence of the prophet with great rapidity; though he meant not so.—*Drunk.* (9) *Marg. Ref.* o.

V. 15. The death of Nadab had before prevented the prosecution of the siege of Gibbethon: (xv. 27, 28:) and it was the second time interrupted by the murder of Elah, who staid at home to indulge himself while his army was besieging that city.—Gibbethon lay in the lot of Dan, but it was given to the Levites. (*Josh.* xix. 44. xxi. 23.) The Philistines, however, had got possession of it, during the distractions which prevailed in Israel.

V. 17—19. The army, which besieged Gibbethon, having made their commander Omri king, by a military election; and Omri having left the siege of Gibbethon, to make war against Zimri in Tirzah; Zimri, finding his cause desperate, afraid of falling alive into the hands of his enemies, and perhaps envying his competitor the possession of that palace and those riches which he had coveted, burnt himself, with the palace and all its treasures. He was driven to this extremity, and left to this desperation, by the righteous judgment of God, for his sins: as in the space of seven days he had murdered all the posterity and relations of Baasha; and had manifested his determination to support the worship of the golden calves. (*Note, 2 Kings* ix. 30—37.)

V. 21, 22. The army, encamped before Gibbethon, chose Omri, their commander, king: but it seems either that some of them were afterwards disgusted by him; or, that the principal persons, who were absent, disapproved of this measure, and set up Tibni against him.—As the war lasted six years, (*Note*, 23,) numbers no doubt were cut off on both sides, before the contest ended with the death of Tibni.

So Tibni, &c. (22) How much is contained in this concise sentence! and similar contests continually terminate in the same manner. It is an epitome especially of the history of civil wars.

V. 23. *Twelve*, &c.] Twelve years elapsed between the death of Zimri and that of Omri; namely from the beginning of the twenty-seventh, to the end of the thirty-eighth year of Asa's reign. But probably, half that time had been spent in civil wars, between Omri and Tibni; and the thirty-first year of Asa was nearly concluded, when Omri obtained the undisputed possession of the throne; from which time he reigned six complete years.—Thus, whilst Israel was torn to pieces by intestine commotions, conspiracies, massacres, and the succession of one usurper to another, who were all monsters of iniquity, and all destroyed the families, friends, and adherents of the murdered king; Judah was quietly governed by one pious prince, who began to reign in the days of Jeroboam, survived Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri, and lived till the fourth year of Ahab. The revolt of Israel there-

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* Or, *both his kinsmen and his friends.*

t *See on* 1—4.

† Heb. *by the hand of.* 7. xiv. 18. 2 Kings xiv. 25. 2 Chr. x. 15. Prov. xxvi. 6.

u Deut. xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. xii. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 15. Is. xli. 29. Jer. x. 3—5. 8. 15. Jon. ii. 8. 1 Cor. viii. 4. x. 19, 20.

v *See on* 5.

x 2 Kings ix. 31. Job xx. 5. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36.

y xv. 27. Josh. xix. 44. xxi. 23.

z 30. 2 Kings viii. 26. 2 Chr. xxii. 2. Mic. vi. 16.

a Judg. ix. 45. 50., 56, 57. 2 Kings vi. 24, 25. xviii. 9—12. xxv. 1—4. Luke xix. 43, 44.

b Judg. ix. 54. 1 Sam. xxxi. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Job ii. 9, 10. Matt. xxvii. 5.

c 7. 13. xv. 24. Ps. ix. 16. ivm. 9—11.

d *See on* xii. 28. xiv. 16. xv. 26.

e 5. 14. 27. xiv. 19. xv. 31. xxii. 39.

f 8. 29. xv. 25. 28. Prov. xxviii. 2. Is. ix. 18—21. xix. 2. Matt. xii. 25. 1 Cor. i. 12, 13. Eph. iv. 3—6.

reign over Israel, [g] twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called [h] the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, * Samaria.

25 But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and [i] did worse than all that *were* before him.

26 For [j] he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with [k] their vanities.

27 Now [l] the rest of the acts of Omri, which he did, and his might that he shewed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

28 So Omri [m] slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

29 ¶ And in the thirty and eighth [n] year of Asa king of Judah, began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel [n] in Samaria twenty and two years.

30 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD [o] above all that *were* before him.

31 And it came to pass, † as if it had been [p] a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he [q] took to wife [r] Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of [s] the Zidonians, [t] and went and [u] served Baal, and worshipped him.

32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in [x] the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

33 And Ahab [y] made a grove; and Ahab [z] did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger, than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

34 In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, [a] according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

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fore proved to be mainly their own loss. (*Note*, xii. 16.)

V. 24. It is probable, that the burning of the palace at Tirzah, by Zimri, induced Omri to this measure.—It is conjectured that Shemer sold this estate at a low price, upon condition of having the city, to be built on it, called by his name. From this city the whole surrounding country was called Samaria, or *Shomeron:* and sometimes the whole kingdom of the ten tribes is thus called, after Samaria became the capital city. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 30—33. Omri had done worse than all that had been before him, and probably had enforced the worship of the golden calves with greater strictness and severity: (25, 26:) but it seemed a light thing to Ahab to tread in his steps, or in those of Jeroboam; (*Note*, *Ez.* xvi. 44—47;) for, without any *political* inducement, he proceeded to still grosser idolatries. He had a rooted enmity to the worship of JEHOVAH, and to every thing which related to it; and he married Jezebel, a zealous and furious worshipper of Baal, on purpose, as it seems, to have her counsel and assistance in supplanting the worship of the Lord, and even of the golden calves; and in establishing that of Baal throughout the land.

Ethbaal, &c. (31) 'Called in profane writers Ithobalus.' *Bp. Patrick.* His name was taken from the idol, which he worshipped.

An altar for Baal, &c. (32) Jeroboam and his successors professed to consider the golden calves, as representatives of the God of Israel. (*Note*, xii. 26—29.) But Ahab more directly and expressly worshipped other gods. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* x. 18—28.)—*A grove.* (33) *Marg. Ref.* y. *Notes*, 2 *Kings* xvii. 16. xxi. 3.

V. 34. (*Note*, *Josh.* vi. 26.) Four hundred and forty years had passed, since this word had been spoken; and the exact accomplishment of it, after so long a period, was a solemn warning to the people, to expect the fulfilment of all the curses denounced against them, in case of their idolatry, by Moses and Joshua. (*Notes*, *Deut.* iv. 25—28. *Josh.* xxiii. 13—16.)—This account illustrates the daring spirit of rebellion against God, which prevailed in those wretched times. Hiel, inured to idolatry at Beth-el, set the curse of God at defiance: and, though his eldest son died when he laid the foundation of Jericho, he scorned to be intimidated, or to desist from his undertaking; till, when he completed the work, his youngest son died also; and the rest of his children, as it is supposed, in the intermediate space of time.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

We do not well understand the rules, and plans of wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy, by which God governs nations and individuals; (*Note*, *Ps.* xcvii. 2;) yet we may draw general instructive conclusions from this history. Frequently the Lord warns before he punishes: and they, who are not induced to repentance, are rendered more inexcusable in their wickedness. By whatever means men are advanced to authority; their exaltation is from the Lord, they are bound to use it in his service, and are liable to severe punishment for the abuse of it: yet they must also

CHAP. XVII.

Elijah foretels to Ahab a long and excessive drought; and is sent by God to the brook Cherith, and fed by ravens, 1—7. He is afterwards sent to Zarephath, and sustained by a widow-woman, whose barrel of meal and cruse of oil do not fail, 8—16. Her son dies, but is restored to life in answer to Elijah's prayer; whom she fully believes to be sent by God, 17—24.

AND * Elijah the Tishbite *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, [a] *As* the LORD God of Israel liveth, [b] before whom I stand, there shall not be [c] dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

* Heb. *Elijahu.* Matt. xi. 14. xvi. 14. xxvii. 47. 49. Luke i. 17. iv. 25, 26. ix. 30. 33. 54. John i. 21. 25. Rom. xi. 2. *Elias.*

a xvii. 14. 2 Kings iii. 14. v. 16. Is. xliv. 18. Matt. vii. 29. Luke i. 17. b Deut. x. 8. Jer. xv. 19. Luke i. 19. xxi. 36. Acts xxvii. 23. c Luke iv. 25. Jam. v. 17. Rev. xi. 6.

give an account to God, for the crimes committed in order to obtain the dangerous pre-eminence. The same observations hold good in respect of wealth, and every other temporal distinction.—God is greatly displeased with those who in any way tempt others to commit iniquity: but he is especially provoked by those, who seduce his professing people to apostasy, or true believers to conceal or disgrace their profession: persecutors, therefore, will be answerable for all the sins, to which they tempt men by the dread of punishment, as well as for all the injustice which they commit, and the blood which they shed.—Those who follow the examples of such as have been awfully punished for their sins, may expect to be overtaken with similar vengeance: and many very wicked men have been men of might and renown, have built cities, and perpetuated their memories in the annals of history; but they have no name in the book of life, and stand condemned in the word of God.—The impunity of the principal culprits, while their children, relatives, or helpers suffer for their crimes, loudly declares the approaching day of judgment, and the more exact discrimination of characters, and distribution of rewards and punishments, which shall then take place.—No crime more degrades and exposes a man than drunkenness: and they who sit down with the intention of "drinking "themselves drunk," or are persuaded to do so, should recollect how easily they may be murdered in such a state; in how many ways they may be hurried before the tribunal of God; and what an awful thing it would be, to meet their Judge in such a situation. And when rulers and great men spend their time in intemperate indulgence, instead of attending to the duties of their station, it bodes ill to the publick and to themselves. (*Notes, Esth.* iii. 12—15. *Prov.* xxxi. 4—7. *Ec.* x. 16—19.)

V. 15—34.

Wicked men accomplish the purposes of God without intending it; and their injustice and cruelty towards each other display his righteousness, while they illustrate the desperate wickedness of the heart of man.—When they are hurried on by their vile passions, and have got the power into their hands, they often perpetrate much wickedness in a little time: and thus they speedily fill up their measure, and hasten the vengeance of God upon themselves. Whether they destroy themselves, or are murdered by others, the ruin is brought upon them by sinning against the Lord: even in death they frequently shew the predominancy of their pride, envy, and malice; and thus are driven away into the eternal world, not only under condemnation as sinners, but under the domineering power of most diabolical dispositions, being "vessels of wrath "fitted for destruction." From such a death, good Lord, deliver us!—In all cases the triumphing of the ungodly is short; and for the wickedness of nations many are their princes. When tyrants hastily succeed one another, with massacres, conspiracies, and civil wars; and when every one is worse than all that went before him; we may be sure that the Lord has a controversy with the people for their sins: and they are loudly called to repentance and reformation. Indeed, those who forsake God, will generally be left to plague one another: they, who seek not rest in his service, will always be unsettled and uneasy; and when his professed people quarrel with each other, their enemies will always be gainers.—Intermarriages with daring offenders greatly embolden men's minds in wickedness, and hurry them on to the greatest excesses.—The progress of iniquity must be from bad to worse; it seems a light thing to notorious sinners to walk in the steps of their predecessors; and they are often ambitious of distinguishing themselves, and of expressing their enmity and contempt of God, in ways before unheard of. Hence so many newly invented oaths, blasphemies, superstitions, and species of false religion; as well as new refinements in licentiousness and immorality.—When princes set the example of rebellion against God, their subjects will often ambitiously emulate them, and thus ungodliness becomes a test of loyalty, and a kind of fashionable accomplishment: nor will any warnings daunt the stout spirits of presumptuous sinners, till wrath come upon them to the uttermost. But they, who despise the denunciations of God's word, will certainly know his truth in them by their own dreadful experience.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. The most illustrious prophet Elijah was raised up, in the reign of the most wicked among the kings of Israel: and he is brought to our notice in a very abrupt manner. Nothing is recorded either of his parentage, education, or previous manner of life. He is called "the Tishbite:" but it is not agreed, whether this title was taken from the place where he lived; or given him because he was *the reformer* of Israel: for the word may signify *a converter*. He was of the inhabitants of Gilead, beyond Jordan; but we know not of which tribe. His name signifies, *The LORD my God is He.* This might imply that JEHOVAH, the true God, would stand by him in the perilous services to which he was called, in opposing the worship of false gods.—It may be supposed, that Elijah had previously warned Ahab to forsake his idolatry, and that he had treated his message with contempt: at length therefore, he declared, and confirmed it with a solemn oath by the LORD God of Israel, before whom he stood, (as his servant acting by his authority,) that there should be neither rain nor dew for *years*, but according to his word; that is, until he came again, and foretold its coming, and prayed for it. The expression, "As the LORD God of "Israel liveth," intimated that the idols of the heathen

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2 And [d] the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and [e] hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.

4 And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and [f] I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and [g] did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith; that *is* before Jordan.

6 And [h] the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7 And it came to pass, [*] after a while, that [i] the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8 ¶ And [k] the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

9 Arise, get thee to [l] Zarephath, [m] which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a [n] widow-woman there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate

d xvi. 22. 1 Chr. xvii. 3. Jer. vii. 1. xi. 1. xviii. 1. Hos i. 1, 2.
e xxii. 25. Ps. xxxi. 20. lxxxiii. 3. Jer. xxxvi. 19. 26. John viii. 59. Acts xvii. 14. Heb. xi. 38. Rev. xii. 6. 14.
f 9. xix. 5—8. Num. xx. 8. Job xxxiv. 29. xxxviii. 8—13. 41. Ps. xxxiii. 8, 9. cxlvii. 9. Am. ix. 3, 4. Matt. iv. 4. 11.
g xix. 9. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Matt. xvi. 24. John xv. 14.
h Ex. xvi. 35. Num. xi. 23. Judg. xiv. 14. xv. 18, 19. Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 3. 10. lxxviii. 15, 16. 23, 24. Jer. xxxvii. 21. xl. 4. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Matt. vi. 31, 32. xiv. 19—21. xix. 26. Luke xxii. 35. Heb. vi. 18.
* Heb. *at the end of days.*
i Is. xl. 30, 31. liv. 10.
k *See on* 2.—Gen. xxii. 14. Is. xli. 17. Heb. xiii. 6.
l Ob. 20. Luke iv. 26. *Sarepta.*
m Matt. xv. 21, 22.
n 4. Judg. vii. 2. 4. Rom. iv. 17—21. 2 Cor. iv. 7

were lifeless stocks, and could not help their worshippers. —The duration of this drought was three years and a half; and the effects must have been inexpressibly calamitous. (*Marg. Ref.* c.) One whole year, without rain or dew, would afflict this land, more terribly than it can be conceived: but in much less than three years and a half nearly all the cattle must be destroyed, and most of the inhabitants would be either dead or migrated into other countries. Yet the bulk of Israel continued mad upon their idols, throughout this most tremendous calamity! It was sent in answer to the prophet's prayer, which probably he offered in Ahab's hearing: and the judgment was intended to be a demonstration, that Baal could not defend his worshippers against the indignation of JEHOVAH. The glory of God and the interests of true religion were therefore so greatly concerned in this decision, which was needful in order to prevent the utter apostasy and rejection of Israel, that the prophet might present this petition in wise zeal, and true benevolence; and doubtless he was immediately instructed by the Lord to do so. The benefit of the calamity would abundantly outweigh the miseries: for though many were hardened, yet doubtless numbers were eventually brought to repentance; and made to embrace and continue stedfast in the service of the true God. (*Note, Jam.* v. 16—18.)

V. 2, 3. Elijah was commanded to conceal himself, not only to avoid the persecuting rage of Ahab instigated by Jezebel, but as an additional judgment upon the Israelites. The Lord did not intend to shorten the term of the calamity, and he would not have his servant pray for it and be denied. (*Notes, Jer.* xiv. 10—12. xv. 1.) He was pleased therefore to send him out of the way, that he might not be solicited and refuse: and all this time the people were deprived of the benefit of Elijah's example and instructions. Thus he was excluded from society and usefulness: but he doubtless was engaged in heavenly contemplation and communion with God; and in prayers for the reformation of his people, and for their being turned unto the Lord, though not for the present removal of the famine.—The brook Cherith ran into the river Jordan (5); but it seems the place was so retired, and the prophet kept so close, that neither friends nor foes knew where he was. (*Note,* xviii. 10.)

V. 4—6. Elijah was a very extraordinary person, and every circumstance relating to him was rendered equally extraordinary, in order to excite the attention of a thoughtless and hardened generation. Ravens, being birds of prey, were far more likely to take away the food of those who had any, than to bring bread and flesh to the prophet in his destitute situation: but the *command*, or miraculous power of God, suspended their natural instinct, and made them act directly contrary to it. (*Note,* 1 *Sam.* vi. 10—16.) It is useless and presumptuous to enquire whence they procured the bread and flesh, or how the food was prepared? He, who commanded them to feed his servant, had ten thousand ways of enabling them to fulfil his word. Thus Elijah was sufficiently provided for, when numbers were starving: and the consolations of the Lord would render him contented with his solitude and sustenance.—Some have objected that *ravens*, being unclean birds, would pollute the food which they brought: but this arises from a mistake. The flesh of unclean animals might not be eaten; but the touch of them when living, communicated no ceremonial uncleanness, either to food, or any other thing: for asses and camels were also unclean; yet in constant use, for carrying provisions, as well as for other purposes. (*Note, Lev.* xi. 31.)

V. 7. Elijah seems to have continued in this situation about a year: the natural supply of water which came by common Providence failed because of the dry weather; but the miraculous supply of food, which was ensured to him by promise, failed not. (*Note,* 10—16.)

V. 9. (*Marg. Ref.* l.) This woman was of Gentile extraction, a Zidonian, of the same nation with Jezebel the patroness of the worship of Baal: (xvi. 31:) yet she had become acquainted with the God of Israel, and probably was a spiritual worshipper of him, when the nation of Israel was in general lapsed to idolatry. (*Note, Matt.* xv. 21—24.) That *ravens* first, and then a poor *widow-woman*, a Gentile, should be employed to feed God's prophet, in preference to any of the Israelites, was a severe reflection upon that people: and Elijah's being sent to Zarephath, rather than to any other city, or any poor distressed widows, of Israel, was an illustration of God's sovereignty, and a pre-intimation of the calling of the Gentiles. (*Note, Luke* iv. 23—30.)—As the Lord *commands* his creatures, according to their natures, and capacities; perhaps this poor widow had received some pre-intimation of Elijah's coming, and a command to entertain him, nothing doubting.

V. 10—16. The effects of the famine, in the land of

of the city, behold, the widow-woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he
o Gen. xxi. 15. xxiv. 17. John iv. 7. 2 Cor. xi. 27. Heb. xi. 37. called to her, and said, [o] Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.
p Gen. xxiv. 18, 19. Matt. x. 42. xxv. 35—40. Heb. xiii. 2. 11 And [p] as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, [q] a morsel of bread in thine hand.
q 9. xviii. 4. Gen. xviii. 5.
r *See on* 1 Sam. xiv. 39. 45. xx. 3. 21. xxv. 26. xxvi. 10. 2 Sam. xv. 21. Jer. iv. 2. v. 2. 12 And she said, [r] *As* the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, [s] but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, [t] that we may eat it and die.
s 2 Kings iv. 2—7. Matt. xv. 33, 34.
t Gen. xxi. 16. Jer. xiv. 18. Lam. iv. 9. Ez. xii. 18, 19. Joel i. 15, 16.
u Ex. xiv. 13. 2 Kings vi. 16. 2 Chr. xx. 17. Is. xli. 10. 13. Matt. xxviii. 5. Acts xxvii. 24. 13 And Elijah said unto her, [u] Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but [v] make me thereof a little cake [x] first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.
v Gen. xxii. 1, 2. Judg. vii. 5—7. Matt. xix. 21. 22. Heb. xi. 17. 1 Pet. i. 7.
x Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10. Matt. vi. 33. x. 37.
y 2 Kings iii. 16, 17. vii. 1, 2. ix. 6. 14 For [y] thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [z] The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil
z 4. 2 Kings iv. 2—7. 42—44. Matt. xiv. 17—20. xv. 36—38. fail, until the day *that* the LORD [*] sendeth rain upon the earth.
* Heb. *giveth.*

15 And she went and [a] did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat [†] many days.
a Gen. vi. 22. xii. 4. xxii. 3. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Matt. xv. 28. Mark xii. 43. John xi. 40. Rom. iv. 19, 20. Heb. xi. 7, 8. 17.
† Or, *a full year.*
16 *And* [b] the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, [c] according to the word of the LORD, which he spake [‡] by Elijah.
b Matt. ix. 28—30. xix. 26. Luke i. 37. 45. John iv. 50, 51.
c *See on* xiii. 5.
‡ Heb. *by the hand of. See on* xvi. 12.
17 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, *that* [d] the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick: and his sickness was so sore, [e] that there was no breath left in him.
d Gen. xxii. 1, 2. 2 Kings iv. 18—20. Zech. xii. 10. John xi. 3, 4. 14. Jam. i. 2—4. 12. 1 Pet. i. 7. iv. 12.
e Job xii. 10. xxxiv. 14. Ps. civ. 29. Dan. v. 23. Jam. ii. 26. *Marg.*
18 And she said unto Elijah, [f] What have I to do with thee, [g] O thou man of God? [h] art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?
f 2 Sam. xvi. 10, xix. 22. 2 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxxv. 21. Luke iv. 34. viii. 28. John ii. 4.
g *See on* xiii 1.
h xviii. 9. Gen. xlii. 21, 22. 1. 15—17. 1 Sam. xvi. 4. Job xiii. 26. Ez. xxi. 23, 24. Mark v. 7. 15—17. vi. 16.
19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up [i] into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.
i 2 Kings iv. 10. 21. 32. Acts ix. 37.

Israel, were severely felt at Zidon also, and probably in all the adjacent countries; Judah perhaps being excepted. The poor woman was gathering sticks for fuel, when addressed by the prophet, who probably knew by a divine intimation that she was the person appointed to entertain him. Notwithstanding her distress, and the scarcity that prevailed, she readily complied with the request of a stranger to fetch him a little water. But when he craved a morsel of bread also, she called "the LORD his God" to witness, that she had none, but was going to prepare her very last provision; and then had nothing to look for, but death by hunger, for herself and her son. It must be supposed, that she knew Elijah to be an Israelite by his appearance and attire: (*Note, Num.* xv. 38—40:) and he had perhaps declared himself the servant of JEHOVAH, and asked her for bread and water in his name; and, for his sake, she would have been ready to help him, if it had been in her power. Moreover, she doubtless perceived something venerable in his aspect, which prepossessed her in his favour: so that when he required her, "in the name "of the LORD," to make him a cake *first*, (which, *in her circumstances*, was surely one of the hardest commands that ever was given!) promising her that her scanty supply should not fail; her faith surmounted all difficulties and silenced all objections: she believed his words, and did as she was directed, and so "became heir of the righteous-"ness that is by faith." (*Note, Heb.* xi. 7.) Thus having "entertained a prophet, in the name of a prophet, she re-"ceived a prophet's reward. (*Note, Matt.* x. 40—42.) For above two years she and her son, as well as Elijah, were fed miraculously with sufficient provision; and she lived by faith, in temporal as well as in spiritual things! For though the margin renders the words "many days," *a full year;* it is evident from the continuance of the famine, that Elijah abode with her a much longer time.

V. 17. Perhaps the woman's son died suddenly, before the prophet had opportunity to pray for his recovery; because the Lord intended a greater display of his own glory, and a more distinguishing favour to the woman, than the sparing of his life: or, he was left to die without any miraculous interposition, to try her faith. (*Notes, Mark* v. 35—43. *John* xi. 1—10.)

V. 18. This woman had doubtless heard, that the drought had come upon Israel in answer to Elijah's prayer; and perhaps she supposed that her affliction had come upon her in the same way. She seems to have venerated his sanctity, and to have had a trembling consciousness of her own sinfulness. Perhaps the death of her son brought her former worship of Baal to remembrance; or she thought she was not worthy of the company of the prophet, or had not duly profited by it. But her mind was much agitated; and her words imply a mixture of unbelief and impatience, as well as self-abasement and a sense of guilt. And she seems to have thought the presence of the man of God was dangerous, and hastened divine judgments upon her. (*Luke* v. 8. *Notes, 1 Sam.* xvi. 4. 2 *Sam.* vi. 8, 9.) Yet by her own account the prophet's presence had prolonged her son's life, and her own also (12.) 'Their sins are said to be "called to '"remembrance" by God, when he punishes them.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Ez.* xxi. 23.)

V. 19. *Loft.*] 'The LXX translate it ὑπερῳον, an upper 'room; which he had to himself for his study, meditation, 'and prayer; as Elisha afterwards had in another place: '2 *Kings* iv. 10.' *Bp. Patrick.*

20 And [j] he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, [k] hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

21 And [l] he [*] stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, [m] O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come [†] into him again.

22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, [n] and he revived.

23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, [o] See, thy son liveth.

24 And the woman said to Elijah, [p] Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, and *that* [q] the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth.

j xviii. 36, 37. Ex. xvii. 4. 1 Sam. vii 8, 9. 2 Kings xix. 4. 15. Ps. xcix. 6. Matt. xxi. 22. Jam. v. 15—18.
k Gen. xviii. 23—25. Josh. vii. 8, 9. Ps. lxxiii. 13, 14. Jer. xii. 1.
l 2 Kings iv. 33—35. Acts xx. 10.
* Heb. *measured.*
m Acts ix. 40. Heb. xi. 19.
† Heb. *into his inward parts.*
n Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. 2 Kings xiii. 21. Luke viii. 54, 55. John v. 28, 29. xi. 43, 44. Acts xx. 12. Rom. xiv. 9. Rev. xi. 11.
o 2 Kings iv. 36, 37. Luke vii. 15. Acts ix. 41. Heb. xi. 35.
p John ii. 11. iv. 42—48. xi. 15. 42. xv. 24.
q Ec. xii. 10. 1 Thes. ii. 13. 1 John ii. 21.

V. 20. Elijah himself could not understand the mystery of this dispensation; but greatly wondered that the Lord should bring evil on the woman, who entertained him for his sake, as well as on those who rejected both God and his prophet; and he expostulated with God on the occasion.

V. 21, 22. The external conduct of Elijah denoted the earnestness of his desires, and the greatness of his expectations, of the child's restoration to life. He would, if possible, have communicated of his own life to him, or have concurred, if any thing had been in his power, to his revival.—The expression, "Let this child's soul come into "him again," not only intimates the prophet's certainty that he was really dead; but it marks the distinction between the rational soul and the earthly body to be as real, as that between the house and its inhabitant: for both the prophet and the historian, "speaking as they were moved "by the Holy Ghost," used proper language. No one had yet, as far as we know, been raised from the dead, and perhaps no prayer to this effect had ever before been offered. (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 5, 6. *John* ix. 27—34. *Rom.* iv. 18—22. *Heb.* xi. 17—19.) Elijah's petition was no doubt directed by immediate inspiration.

V. 24. The woman had been strongly tempted to unbelief: but she had now got the victory, and was more confirmed and assured in faith and hope than ever. She had doubted, but now she knew, that Elijah was the servant of God, and she fully expected the performance of all his declarations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The Lord will have witnesses to his truth in the worst of times: and as he does not immediately cast off his professing people, when they renounce his service; he employs various methods to convince them of their sin, and to bring them to repentance.—Great intrepidity and resolution are necessary for those, who are employed to stop the torrent of prevailing iniquity, or to declare the message of God before persecuting tyrants: but he who sends them, will qualify them, and bear them out in these arduous and perilous services.—Impenitent sinners have eventually the prayers even of the most benevolent ministers of God against them: because, if they go on in sin, his glory requires their destruction; and every servant of the Lord seeks His glory, in preference to every other consideration. But, if the severest temporal judgments be made effectual to bring men to serve God, they will have great cause to bless him for sending them.—Fruitful seasons, and abundance of provisions for the body, are valuable mercies; and famine is a most tremendous evil: yet the liberty and opportunity of attending on divine ordinances are more valuable advantages; and a famine of the word of God is above all to be dreaded and deprecated. (*Note, Am.* viii. 11—14.)—The Lord will provide for those who serve him faithfully: and he will teach them to be satisfied with their provisions though mean, and their situation though outwardly uncomfortable. Indeed, if we consider how much better we are dealt with than we deserve, and how many are destitute of the necessaries of life; we shall see abundant reason to be contented with food and raiment, of the meanest and coarsest kind: nor ought we ever to desire luxuries or superfluities.—It is the greatest trial to the faithful and zealous minister, to be taken off from his work and usefulness, and excluded from the society of pious persons: yet, if thus circumstanced, he should submit to it as his trial, wait the Lord's time to be employed again, seek his comfort from communion with him, and diligently prepare for future service. And if the trying dispensation did not arise from his own misconduct, the loss will not eventually be his, but that of those from whom he is banished; being frequently a judgment upon them for not profiting by former advantages, while they enjoyed them.—All nature shall sooner change its course, than one of God's promises fail. We do not indeed now expect *literally* to be fed by ravens: but the Lord often employs selfish men, contrary to their nature and general character, to support his indigent people, or to maintain his cause by their property. The thanks, in this case, are due to the Lord, who sends the provisions by such instruments: but we should pray, that, as he has counteracted their natural disposition in this instance, he would be pleased also to change them by his renewing grace.

V. 8—16.

The Lord does not generally provide long together for his people in the same way, or by the same means; lest they should rest in them, and expect help from them. But he permits one resource to fail: and when he has left them nothing but his own promise to trust to, he unexpectedly opens another resource; that they may admire the manifold riches of his wisdom, as well as adore his power truth, and love. Frequently he raises supplies from those, who themselves need relief: "the abundance of their joy, "and their deep poverty, abound unto the riches of their "liberality:" (*Notes, 2 Cor.* viii. 1—5. ix. 8—11:) and he supplies their wants, whilst they are encouraged to communicate of their pittance to others still more destitute. Indeed our faith must be proved by various trials in provi-

CHAP. XVIII.

Elijah is sent to meet Ahab, 1, 2. Ahab and pious Obadiah go different ways, to search the land for pasture, 3—6. Elijah meets Obadiah and sends him to call Ahab, 7—16. Ahab, at Elijah's word, convenes Israel, with the prophets of Baal, at Carmel, 17—20. Elijah proposes to decide, whether JEHOVAH or Baal be God, by proving which would answer by fire, 21—24. Baal's prophets invoke him in vain, 25—29. Elijah prepares a sacrifice, causes much water to be poured upon it, and calls on JEHOVAH, who answers by fire consuming the altar with the sacrifice; the people are convinced that JEHOVAH is God; and at Elijah's word they slay Baal's prophets, 30—40. Elijah gives Ahab notice of abundant rain, which he obtains by prayer; and then he runs before Ahab's chariot to Jezreel, 41—46.

AND it came to pass [a]*after* many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in [b]the third year, saying, [c]Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and [d]I will send rain upon the earth.

2 And Elijah [e]went to shew himself unto Ahab: and *there was* [f]a sore famine in Samaria.

3 And Ahab called [*]Obadiah, which *was* [†]the governor of *his* house. (Now Obadiah [g]feared the LORD greatly:

a Luke iv. 25. Jam. v. 17. Rev. xi. 2. 6.
b xvii. 1. 7. 15.
c 2. 15, &c.
d Lev. xxvi. 4. Deut. xxviii. 12. Ps. lxv. 9—13. Is. v. 6. Jer. x. 13. xiv. 22. Joel ii. 23. Am. iv. 7.
e Ps. xxvii. 1. lvi. 4. Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. li. 12. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.
f Lev. xxvi. 26. Deut. xxviii. 23, 24. 2 Kings vi. 25. Jer. xiv. 2—6. 18. Joel i. 15—20.
* Heb. *Obadiahu.*
† Heb. *over his house.* Gen. xxiv. 2. 10. xxxix. 4, 5. 9. xli. 40.
g 12. Gen. xxii. 12. xlii. 18. 2 Kings iv. 1. Neh. v. 15. vii. 2. Prov. xiv. 26, 27. Mal. iii. 16. Matt. x. 28. Acts x. 2. 35.

dence, as well as by our obedience to the commandments of God; and must also grow strong by exercise. But when it is genuine, it "worketh by love" of him and of his people: and the desire of doing good to others for his sake, united to a firm expectation that his promises will be performed, produces obedience even to hard commands, notwithstanding all the reluctancy and objections of our distrustful, selfish hearts.—They, who come unto God and walk with him, must simply trust him, nay, venture their lives and souls upon his word, and at his command renounce every present interest, in expectation of future and more enduring advantages. Genuine faith encourages men to do this; while unbelief dislikes the security, holds fast things present, and for the perishing pleasures and interests of this world foregoes the blessings of eternal salvation. But none can be losers in the event by giving up secular advantages, at the Lord's command; and what is expended upon his people, for his sake, shall be recompensed as if given to himself: so that the self-denial and liberality of faith, are the best means of excluding the fear of future want, of providing for our families, and of placing out our substance at the highest interest, and upon the most unexceptionable security. In these funds the poor may obtain property, as well as the rich; for a morsel of bread, or a cup of water, will go as far, when it is all that we can give, as thousands of gold and silver when they can be spared. (*Notes, Prov.* xix. 17. *Mark* xii. 41—44. *Luke* vi. 27—36. 2 *Cor.* viii. 10—15.)

V. 17—24.

Neither faith nor obedience, however exemplary, can exclude afflictions and death: and under severe and unexpected trials it is extremely difficult to avoid impatience, and to exercise unshaken confidence and unreserved submission. But the Lord bears with our infirmities and compassionates our sorrows: and we should pity and readily help each other, thus bearing one another's burdens, according to the example and command of Christ. (*Note, Gal.* vi. 1—5.) Though we cannot work miracles for the relief of the afflicted, we may afford much assistance to them; and in all cases we may pray in faith, that the Lord would sanctify and make up every loss, by the influences and consolations of his Spirit.—The Lord by afflictions "calls our sins to remembrance;" and this should quiet our spirits, and lead us to self-examination and repentance, that we may obtain forgiveness from him: and thus all shall issue in our increase of faith, assurance of hope, and joyful expectation of every promised good.—Thus when Jesus comes to communicate his blessings, the convinced trembling sinner often mistakes the meaning of those humbling instructions which he imparts, and those trials which he employs; he is ready to suspect, that he means to "bring his sins to remembrance," and to slay all his hopes; and is tempted to say, "What have I to do with "thee?" But the loving Saviour pities and bears with such trembling souls: and when he has turned their mourning into joy, by reviving their hopes and forgiving their sins; they admire his love and power, and know assuredly that his word is truth; and expect every future good in reliance on his promise, and obedience to his holy will.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1, 2. *The third year.*] That is, in the third year of Elijah's abode at Zarephath. For it is probable, that he continued there above two years; which, added to a year at the brook Cherith, completed three years and a half: for this was the time which the drought lasted. Some, however, think he remained just two years at Zarephath; and that the six months preceded his retiring to the brook Cherith. (*Luke* iv. 25.)—He seems to have been little noticed at Zarephath, notwithstanding the miracles which he wrought.—Elijah could not but deeply lament the miseries of Israel: but he did not leave his retirement, till the Lord ordered him to go to Ahab, previously to his sending "rain upon the *land*," as it should be rendered; for the land of Israel was especially intended.—The extremity of the famine rendered it the more dangerous for him to shew himself to the enraged tyrant: but at this time he was raised above all fear of what flesh could do unto him. (*Note*, xix. 2.)

V. 3. Obadiah signifies *The servant of the LORD.* Obadiah was so faithful and useful a servant to Ahab, that even Jezebel's instigation did not induce him to dismiss or injure him: and he was, it seems, willing to retain his place, though perilous and difficult, while he could with a safe conscience; as he might do some good, and prevent some evil, by continuing in it: and, though he witnessed abominable idolatries and iniquities, we may be sure, that he was not required to bow his knee unto Baal. (*Notes, Dan.* ii. 46—49. iii. 1—7.) "He feared the LORD greatly."

4 For it was *so*, when * Jezebel h cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty i in a cave, and k fed them with l bread and water.)

5 And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find m grass to save the horses and mules alive, that † we lose not all the beasts.

6 So they divided the land between them, to pass throughout it: n Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7 And as Obadiah o was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and p he knew him, and q fell on his face, and said, *Art* thou that r my lord Elijah?

8 And he answered him, I *am*: go, tell s thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*.

9 And he said, t What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?

10 *As* u the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, x whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, *He is* not *there*; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that y they found thee not.

11 And now thou sayest, z Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*.

12 And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone from thee, that a the Spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and *so* when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee,

* Heb. *Izebel*
h Neh. ix. 26. Matt. xxi. 35. Rev. xvii. 4—6.
i Heb. xi. 38.
k 1 S. 2 Kings vi. 22, 23. Matt. x. 40—42. xxv. 35. 40.
l xiii. 8, 9. 16.
m Ps. civ. 14. Jer. xiv. 5, 6. Joel i. 18. ii. 22. Hab. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 20—22.
† Heb. *we cut not off ourselves from the beasts.*
n Jer. xiv. 3.
o xi. 29.
p 2 Kings i. 6—8. Matt. iii. 4. xi. 8.
q Gen. xviii. 2. 1. 18. 1 Sam. xx. 41. 2 Sam. xix. 18. Is. lx. 14.
r Gen. xviii. 12. xliv. 16. 20. 33. Num. xii. 11.
s 3. Rom. xii. 1 Pet. ii. 17, 19.
t 12.—*See on* xvii. 18.—Ex. v. 21.
u 15. i. 29. ii. 24. xvii. 1. 12. 1 Sam. xxix. 6.
x Ps. x. 2. Jer. xxvi. 20—23.
y xvii. 5. 9. Ps. xli. 7, 8. xxxi. 20. xci. 1. Jer. xxxvi. 26. John viii. 59.
z 8. 14.
a 2 Kings ii. 11. 16. Ez. iii. 12—14. viii. 3. xi. 24. xxxvii. 1. xl. 1. 2. Matt. iv. 1. Acts viii. 39. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3.

Obadiah, at a distance from religious ordinances, and surrounded by the worst of examples and by strong temptations, was eminently pious and devoted to God! (*Notes*, *Gen.* xxii. 11, 12. *Ec.* xii. 11—14.)

V. 4. Wicked as Ahab was, he does not seem to have directly persecuted, except as instigated by Jezebel, until she had long trained him up to it.—After the institution of the worship of the golden calves, the priests and Levites, and pious Israelites, had generally left their possessions, and gone up to the tribe of Judah, and united with it: (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xi. 13—17:) but the Lord had mercifully raised up prophets, who promoted true religion throughout the land. It is probable, that they were brought up in the schools of the prophets, first instituted by Samuel, which still remained, and were made very serviceable by the blessing of God upon them. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* x. 5, 6. 2 *Kings* ii. 3. iv. 1.) These prophets did not statedly offer sacrifices; nor did they require the people to go up to Jerusalem to keep the solemn feasts: but they taught them the essentials of true religion, either in private houses, or in such assemblies as were afterwards called synagogues. Thus they worshipped the God of Israel *towards*, though not *at*, the temple and Jerusalem: (*Note*, viii. 28—30:) and there seems to have been considerable numbers of believers dispersed through the tribes. Against these prophets, who were the chief opposers of idolatry, (and doubtless against the seminaries where they were educated,) Jezebel's rage was directed, and she cut off many of them: but Obadiah found means to conceal and preserve a hundred persons, through the persecution, supporting them in their concealment at his own expense. And, though his conduct was no secret, he was still protected and employed by Ahab!—*Bread and water.*] That is, with the necessaries of life; "food convenient for them." (xiii. 8, 9. 16. 22.)

V. 5, 6. *Horses*, &c. (5) Ahab seems to have been more anxious about the animals, which ministered to his luxury, than about those, which were more immediately necessary to his poor subjects, as sheep, goats, and oxen. That the king in person should go upon such a business, could only be the effect of the extremity of the famine. Probably most of the cattle, and many of the people, had perished: yet no mention was made of returning to the Lord with repentance, fasting, and prayer! (*Notes*, *Joel* i. 13—15. ii. 15—17.) Had God never sent to them, it seems they would never have applied to him to terminate the calamity, whatever extremities they had endured: but he had a remnant, for whose sake he was pleased to return to them in mercy; and the glory of his name required, that he should not yet give up Israel to utter destruction. (*Notes*, xix. 18. *Judg.* iii. 9, 10. 14. *Rom.* xi. 1—6.)

V. 7. Elijah was a poor man, and greatly hated in Ahab's court, in which Obadiah held considerable preferment: yet Obadiah, by word and deed, testified the greatest reverence for him, as to an honoured and distinguished superior; because he was a man of God, and of eminent sanctity! (*Note*, *Matt.* viii. 8, 9.)

V. 10. *No nation*, &c.] That is, in the neighbourhood, among Ahab's dependents and allies.—He was so earnest to discover Elijah, that he caused the rulers of those countries, in which he possessed sufficient influence, to swear that they did not conceal him, and perhaps that they would deliver him up if they found him: yet Elijah lived part of the time in Ahab's own kingdom; and the rest, in the country of Zidon, whence Jezebel came!—As Ahab offered no violence to the prophet when he met him, it has been thought, that he did not seek him from a vindictive motive, but in expectation that he would terminate the terrible drought which he had denounced: as if the prophet could do it without the Lord, to whom no application was made! It is, however, probable, that resentment and enmity greatly influenced Ahab; and that Jezebel intended to cut off Elijah also, if he could have been found, at least, unless he consented to remove the famine. But Ahab was overawed by his unexpected appearance and intrepidity, and did not dare to proceed against him. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* i. 15, 16.)

V. 12—16. Obadiah, even in Ahab's family, had from

[b] he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD [c] from my youth.

13 Was it not told my lord [d] what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

14 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here:* and he shall slay me.

15 And Elijah said, [e] *As* the LORD [f] of hosts liveth, [g] before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him today.

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art* thou [h] he that troubleth Israel?

18 And he answered, [i] I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, [k] in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

19 Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto [l] mount Carmel, and [m] the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the [n] prophets of the groves four hundred, which [o] eat at Jezebel's table.

20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, [p] How long halt ye between two [*] opinions? [q] if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people [r] answered him not a word.

[b] 1 Sam. xxii. 11—19. Dan. ii. 5—13. Matt. ii. 16. Acts xii. 19.
[c] 1 Sam. ii. 18. 26. iii. 19, 20. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3. Ps. lxxi. 17, 18. Luke i. 15. 2 Tim. iii. 15.
[d] 4. Gen. xx. 4, 5. Ps. xviii. 21—24. Acts xx. 34. 1 Thes. ii. 9, 10.
[e] *See on* 10.—Heb. vi. 16, 17.
[f] Gen. ii. 7. Deut. iv. 19. Job xxv. 3. Ps. xxiv. 8—10. ciii. 21. cxlviii. 2, 3. Is. vi. 3. Jer. viii. 2. Luke ii. 13, 14.
[g] *See on* xvii. 1.—Deut. i. 38. Luke i. 19.
[h] xxi. 20. Josh. vii. 25. Jer. xxvi. 8, 9. xxxviii. 4. Am. vii. 10. Acts xvi. 20. xvii. 6, xxiv. 5.
[i] Ez. iii. 8. Matt. xiv. 4. Acts xxiv. 13. 20.
[k] ix. 9. 2 Chr. xv. 2. Prov. xi. 19. xiii. 21. Is. iii. 11. Jer. ii. 13. 19. Rom. ii. 8, 9.
[l] 42, 43. Josh. xix. 26. 2 Kings ii. 25. Jer. xlvi. 18. Am. i. 2. ix. 3.
[m] xxii. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 1. Rev. xix. 20.
[n] xv. 13. xvi. 33. 2 Kings xiii. 6.
[o] xix. 1, 2. 2 Kings ix. 22. Rev. ii. 20.
[p] Deut. iv. 35. 2 Kings xvii. 41. Zeph. i. 5. Matt. vi. 24. Luke xvi. 13. Rom. vi. 16—22. 1 Cor. x. 21, 22. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. Rev. iii. 15, 16.
[*] Or, *thoughts.*
[q] 39. Ex. v. 1, 2 Josh. xxiv. 15. 23, 24. 1 Sam. vii. 3. 1 Chr. xvii. 26. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 13. Ps. c. 3.
[r] Gen. xxiv. 50. xliv. 16. Job xl. 4, 5. Matt. xxii. 12. 34. 46. Rom. iii. 19. vi. 21.

his youth been a devoted and zealous worshipper of JEHOVAH! He introduced the mention of his good services, not in ostentation, but as an evidence of his sincerity. He well knew, how exceedingly Ahab would be offended, if he thought himself imposed upon, in a matter which he had so much at heart; and perhaps he concluded that Ahab would be enraged, because he had not apprehended the prophet, when he had the opportunity. He could not suppose that Elijah intended to venture into the presence of his indignant enemy, and he was persuaded, that the Spirit of the Lord could readily convey away his servant, and again conceal him: (*Marg. Ref.* a. *Notes, 2 Kings* ii. 16—18. *Ez.* viii. 2—4:) and therefore he desired to be excused from so perilous a service. But when the prophet solemnly assured him, that he did not mean to elude Ahab, but to shew himself unto him on that very day, he willingly went to inform him.

V. 17, Elijah was the grand opposer of Ahab's plan, for bringing Israel to unite in the worship of Baal, and so making, according to his views, a quiet settlement of the religion of the nation: and in this sense he perhaps deemed him "a troubler of Israel." (*Notes, Acts* xvi. 19—24. xvii. 5—9.)—But it is not easy to determine what his precise sentiments were concerning the drought, which came at Elijah's word. If he thought, that it was caused and continued by the prophet's *power*, and could be removed at his *will;* and that he *troubled* Israel in not removing it; he must have been disposed to credit any absurdity, rather than believe that JEHOVAH was the Author of it, and that it could be removed only by his power; or allow that it was his interest and duty to return to the worship of God which he had forsaken. (*Notes, Ex.* vii. 22, 23. 1 *Sam.* vi. 2—9.)

V. 18—20. "Baalim" is the plural number; for Ahab worshipped many false gods.—The boldness and authority, with which the prophet charged him as the "troubler of "Israel," intimidated the king, who had not his prompter Jezebel with him. He was afraid perhaps, that Elijah would execute judgment upon him at once, if he further offended him: (*Note,* 1 *Sam.* xv. 26—28:) he found the prophet would not be induced by menaces and reproaches to comply with his requirements; and he was willing to be upon terms with him, in hopes that he would procure the removal of the famine: and thus he was induced to consent to the demand which he made.—It seems that an altar had been built upon mount Carmel, and sacrifices offered on it to JEHOVAH (30); but the worship of Baal had supplanted even this irregular service of the one living and true God.—There were no less than four hundred and fifty prophets, or priests, of Baal, and four hundred of the groves (הָאֲשֵׁרָה), who are supposed to have been devoted to a Zidonian goddess. These four hundred especially were entertained at Jezebel's table, as a kind of domestick chaplains; though no doubt they too were at times sent, at her expense, into every part of the land, to promote idolatry among the inhabitants.—Elijah, however, desired to confront the whole company before all the people of Israel, and to bring the matter in dispute to a fair decision. But when JEHOVAH had called for drought, and neither Baal nor any other of their idols could send rain, the matter was already sufficiently plain to every reasonable person. (*Note, Jer.* xiv. 19—22.)

Troubled, &c. (18) 'They trouble a nation, who break 'the laws of God, not they that defend them.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Josh.* vii. 25, 26.)

Mount Carmel. (19) In the lot of Asher towards the north of the land. (*Josh.* xix. 26.) Not Carmel, in the lot of Judah. (1 *Sam.* xxv. 2.)

V. 21. *Halt ye,* &c.] The metaphor is taken from the unequal walk of a lame person. Many of the people wavered in judgment, and varied in practice; sometimes worshipping JEHOVAH, at others worshipping Baal, as their convictions or interests prevailed: or they endeavoured to form a coalition between them, of which Baal's prophets

22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, *even* [s] I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but [t] Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men.

23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under:* and I will dress the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under:*

24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that [u] answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered [v] and said, [*] It is well spoken.

25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress *it* first; for ye *are* many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire *under.*

26 And they took the bullock, which was given them, and they dressed *it,* and called on the name of Baal [x] from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, [†] hear us. But *there was* [y] no voice, nor any that [‡] answered. And they [§] leaped upon the altar which was made.

27 And it came to pass at noon, that [z] Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry [‖] aloud; for he *is* a god; either [*] he is talking, or he [†] is pursuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he sleepeth, and [a] must be awaked.

28 And they cried aloud, and [b] cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till [‡] the blood gushed out upon them.

29 And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they [c] prophesied until the *time* of the [§] offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that *there was* [d] neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any [‖] that regarded.

30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And [e] he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down.

[r] xix. 10, 14. xx. 13. 22. 35. 38. xxii. 6—8. Rom. xi. 3.
[s] 19, 20. Matt. vii. 13—15. 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.
[t] 38. Lev. ix. 24. Judg. vi. 21. 1 Chr. xxi. 26. 2 Chr. vii. 1.
[u] 2 Sam. xiv. 19.
[v] Heb. *The word is good.* Is. xxxix. 8.
[x] Matt. vi. 7.
[y] 24. Ps. cxv. 4—7. cxxxv. 15—20. Is. xxxvii. 38. xliv. 17. xlv. 20. Jer. x. 5. Dan. v. 23. Hab. ii. 18. 1 Cor. viii. 4. x. 19, 20. xii. 2.
[z] xxii. 15. 2 Chr. xxv. 8. Ec. xi. 9. Is. viii. 9, 10. xliv. 15—17. Ez. xx. 39. Am. iv. 4, 5. Matt. xxvi. 45. Mark vii. 9. xiv. 41.
[a] Ps. xliv. 23. lxxviii. 65, 66. cxxi. 4. Is. li. 9. Mark iv. 38, 39.
[b] Lev. xix. 28. Deut. xiv. 1. Mic. vi. 7. Mark v. 5. ix. 22.
[c] xxii. 10, 12. 1 Sam. xviii. 10. Jer. xxviii. 6—9. Acts xvi. 16, 17. 1 Cor. xi. 4, 5.
[d] See on 26.—Gal. iv. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 8, 9.
[e] xix. 10. 14. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 16. Rom. xi. 3.

[†] Or, *answer.*
[‡] Or, *heard.*
[§] Or, *leaped up and down at the altar.* Zeph. i. 9.
[‖] Heb. *with a great voice.*
[*] Or, *he meditateth.*
[†] Heb. *hath a pursuit.*
[‡] Heb. *they poured out blood upon them.*
[§] Heb. *ascending.* See on 36.
[‖] Heb. *attention.*

would probably admit; but to which JEHOVAH would never consent. Elijah therefore called upon them without further delay to determine, whether of the two was the self-existent and eternal God, the Creator, Governor, and Judge of the world; and to follow him alone, whether JEHOVAH or Baal were he, as there could be no more than one supreme God. (*Notes, Deut.* vi. 4, 5. *Josh.* xxiv. 14, 15. *Matt.* vi. 24.) To this the people answered nothing: being unwilling to confess their guilt, or offend the king, and not being able to object to what he said, or being ashamed of their conduct.

V. 22. Elijah was the only prophet of JEHOVAH, who stood forth at this time; the prophets whom Obadiah preserved, and the prophets of whom we afterwards read, being driven into concealment. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 4. xix. 10.)

V. 23. Elijah conceded the preference, in every external circumstance, to the prophets of Baal, that the victory might be the more conspicuous, to the glory of God alone: for doubtless he acted by direction from heaven. (*Note, Ex.* viii. 9—11.)

V. 24. The proposal was so reasonable, that the people at once agreed to it: and thus Baal's prophets were constrained either to comply; or to allow Baal to be an impotent idol, and JEHOVAH the only true God.—*By fire.*] *Marg. Ref.* u. *Notes, Gen.* iv. 3—5. *Lev.* ix. 24.

V. 26. *O Baal,* &c.] (*Note, Matt.* vi. 7, 8.) The continued cry of four hundred and fifty prophets, during several hours, with an unmeaning repetition of the words, "O Baal, hear us," with great vehemence, must have formed a most dissonant vociferation; whilst, like frantick men, they leaped *upon,* or *round,* or *up and down,* at the altar and sacrifice, according to the worship which they were accustomed to perform!—Some think that the sun was worshipped under the name Baal; and that this encouraged his prophets to expect an answer by fire.

V. 27—29. Elijah mocked, or ridiculed, the false prophets, and ironically observed, that Baal, no doubt, had a very great number of engagements, and therefore was taken up, or at a distance, or asleep; and therefore his votaries would not succeed without greater earnestness and louder cries! (*Notes,* xxii. 15. *Ec.* xi. 9, 10. *Is.* xliv. 12—17. *Mark* vii. 9.)—The *absurdity* of the idolatry was worthy of being exposed to contempt before the people, though the effects of it were most deplorable.—It seems however, that they thought Elijah in earnest in his counsel, and determined to follow it: and, still more to please the demon whom they worshipped as god, they cut their flesh, and mingled their own blood with that of their sacrifice, according to the frequent custom of idolaters! But all their efforts proved in vain: though they continued to prophesy, after their manner, till three hours after noon day had passed, shewing tokens of being under a supernatural influence; and, as many suppose, singing hymns to Baal along with their absurd and frantick devotions.—No doubt Satan could have sent fire, and would if he might have done it; but he can do nothing except what is *permitted* to him. (*Notes, Job* i. 9—12. 16. *Matt.* viii. 30—32.)—*The evening sacrifice.* (29) About three hours before sun-set. (*Note,* 36, 37.)

V. 30. The prophet gave his competitors full opportunity of making a fair trial, what Baal could do: but when

31 And Elijah took [f] twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, [g] saying, Israel shall be thy name:

32 And [h] with the stones he built an altar [i] in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And [j] he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, [k] Fill four barrels with water, and pour *it* on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, [l] Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time.

35 And the water * ran round about the altar, and he filled [m] the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass, [n] at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, [o] LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, [p] let it be known this day that thou *art* God in Israel, and *that* I *am* thy servant, [q] and *that* I have done all these things at thy word.

37 [r] Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the LORD God, and *that* [s] thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 [t] Then the [u] fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw *it*, [v] they fell on their faces: and they said, [x] The LORD, he *is* the God: the LORD, he *is* the God.

40 And Elijah said unto them, † Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook [y] Kishon, and [z] slew them there.

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they had prophesied till almost evening, it was time that he should proceed to shew them what JEHOVAH could and would do; and therefore he interrupted them by addressing the people. (*Note*, 18—20.)

V. 31. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 21—25.) Elijah meant by this exact number of stones, selected to repair, or rebuild, the altar of JEHOVAH which had gone to decay, to shew, that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, notwithstanding divisions and apostasies, were yet the people of JEHOVAH, and formed one church and nation; and that they ought to unite in worshipping the God of their fathers, and in opposing all idolatry. The reference to the name of "Israel" given to Jacob, when he wrestled with God and prevailed, was suited to shame the people from their idol-worship, as well as to encourage Elijah's own heart in prayer. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen.* xxxii. 24—30.)

V. 32—35. By forming this trench, or trough, round about the altar, and both filling it with water, and pouring a great quantity upon the altar, the burnt-offering, and the wood, Elijah excluded all possibility of suspicion that any fire had been concealed, and thus rendered the divine interposition more illustrious and convincing.

V. 36, 37. The prophet, by the time chosen for his sacrifice and prayer, avowed his communion with the worshippers of God, at his temple in Jerusalem: and he briefly, but most fervently, besought JEHOVAH on this important occasion to interpose; that the people might be convinced that he was indeed the true God, the God of their fathers, and of the nation; and also that all, which he, his servant, had done, concerning the famine especially, had been in obedience to God's command. This would greatly display the glory of his name, and promote the highest good of his people; since they might henceforth know and worship him, as that God, who had thus turned their hearts back from idolatry unto himself, to worship and serve him alone, and to render the whole praise and glory unto his name. Holy zeal and intelligent goodwill to Israel suggested every word, and rendered the prayer peculiarly emphatical; especially when contrasted with the unmeaning and long continued vociferations of Baal's prophets. (*Note*, 26.)

V. 38, 39. It is probable, that this fire appeared as lightning, though no cloud was seen: or it was called "the "fire of God," from its extraordinary force, and its unparalleled effects; and especially as sent to plead the cause of God, and to expose his worthless rival to contempt. (*Marg. Ref.* t, u.)—It would be more perspicuous and emphatical to retain the original word, JEHOVAH, in the translation of this chapter. The people were convinced, for the time, that JEHOVAH was the only true God; and they prostrated themselves before him with terror, mixed with reverence.—It has been observed, that the fire on this occasion consumed the altar as well as the sacrifice, because oblations were not there statedly to be offered; but at the dedication of the temple, the sacrifice was consumed, and the altar continued. (*Notes, Lev.* ix. 24. *2 Chr.* vii. 1—3.)

V. 40. Baal's prophets, being Israelites, idolaters, and teachers of idolatry in Israel, were condemned by the prophet to die, according to the express injunctions of the Mosaick law. (*Notes, Deut.* xiii. 1—5. xviii. 20—22.) The people, under the present impression, readily concurred with Elijah, and Ahab did not interpose to prevent the execution of the condemned criminals.—"The four hun-"dred prophets of the groves," were not present on this occasion. Some learned men think, that they were Zidonians, not Israelites; and therefore their attendance had not been insisted on, or they had refused to come.

41 ¶ And Elijah said unto Ahab, [a] Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* [*] a sound of [b] abundance of rain.

42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And [c] Elijah went up to the top of Carmel: and [d] he cast himself down upon the earth, and [e] put his face between his knees,

43 And said to his servant, [f] Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing. And he said, [g] Go again seven times.

44 And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth [h] a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, [†] Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

45 And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and [i] there was a great rain. [j] And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.

46 And [k] the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and [l] he girded up his loins, and [m] ran before Ahab [‡] to the entrance of Jezreel.

a Ec. ix. 7. Acts xxvii. 34.
* Or, *a sound of a noise of rain.* xvii. 1.
b *See on* 1.
c 19. Matt. xiv. 23. Luke vi. 12. Acts x. 9.
d Gen. xxiv. 52. Josh. vii. 6. 2 Sam. xii. 16. Dan. ix. 3. Mark xiv. 35. Jam. v. 16, 17.
e xix. 13. Ezra ix. 6. Ps. lxxxix. 7. Is. vi. 2. xxxviii. 2. Dan. ix. 7. Ps. v. 3. Luke xviii. 1.
f Gen. xxxii. 26. Hab. ii. 3. Luke xviii. 7. Eph. vi. 14. Heb. x. 36, 37.
h Job viii. 7. Zech. iv. 10.
† Heb. *Tie*, or, *Bind*. 1 Sam. vi. 7. 10. Mic. i. 13.
i 39, 40. Num. xxv. 8. 2 Sam. xxi. 14.
j xxi. 1. 23. Josh. xix. 18. 2 Sam. ii. 9. 2 Kings ix. 16.
k 2 Kings iii. 15. Is. viii. 11. Ez. i. 3. iii. 14.
l 2 Kings iv. 29. ix. 1. Job xxxviii. 3. Jer. i. 17. 1 Pet. i. 13.
m Matt. xxii. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 17.
‡ Heb. *till thou come to Jezreel.*

V. 41. (*Note*, xvii. 1.) The idolatry of Israel having received a powerful check, and its chief abettors the prophets of Baal having suffered condign punishment; the prophet declared to Ahab the approach of deliverance from that awful calamity, under which the land had so long groaned; and encouraged him to go and cheerfully refresh himself. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 9—14.) It is probable, that the prophet, who throughout this chapter spake and acted with heroical intrepidity, "being strong in faith, giving "glory to God;" was too sanguine in his expectations of subsequent success. Ahab's concurrence in all that he had done, or connivance at it, and the people's decided language and conduct, led him to conclude, that he should, as it were, carry all before him, till the worship of Baal was wholly extirpated. This unwarranted expectation made way for the timid conduct and depressed state of mind, which is recorded in the next chapter. (*Notes*, xix. 1—14.) In this chapter he shews what man may be and do, when God upholds and strengthens him; in the next what the same man is, when left to himself. This appears, in the case of Elijah, as clearly, though in a far different way, as in the case of Samson; (*Notes*, *Judg.* xvi;) and in many things it resembles what St. Paul records of himself. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 1—10.)

V. 42. In a posture of most profound reverence, the prophet sought of God, by earnest prayer, the blessing of rain upon the parched land; and he continued his fervent supplications in the same place and posture, without having taken any refreshment, as it appears, till he had sensible evidence that his prayer was granted. (*Note*, *Jam.* v. 16—18.)

V. 43—45. As Elijah had no servant before he went to Zarephath; some have thought, that the widow's son, whom he had raised to life, had accompanied him. But it appears from the narrative, that he was not old enough; and it is more likely, that a young person from the schools of the prophets attended Elijah on this occasion.—The prophet spake as one assured, that his prayer would immediately be answered; and like Jacob of old, he seemed determined not to let the Lord go until he had blessed him. The servant was therefore ordered to go seven times; and he saw no appearance till the last time, when a very small cloud arose, out of the Mediterranean sea, which was near to mount Carmel: this the prophet knew to be the forerunner of the desired blessing, and he sent word to Ahab accordingly.—The rain was no doubt equal to the necessities of the land; and it formed another demonstration that JEHOVAH was the only true God. (*Note*, 18—20.)

Went up, &c. (43) The transactions of the day are supposed to have taken place, at the foot of the mount, near some rivulet, whence water could still be procured. From this place, Ahab went up, to some tent or residence to take refreshment; but Elijah went up towards the summit of the mount, where the Mediterranean sea might be clearly seen: yet he sent his servant to some higher crag or eminence to make his observations.

V. 46. The Lord directed and strengthened Elijah, though weak with fasting and fatigue, to shew this respect to Ahab; and to run as a footman before his chariot; in order to convince him, that his severe reproofs were consistent with affection and loyalty in secular matters: nor was the prophet afraid of going to Jezreel, where Jezebel was; though he did not come into her presence. It does not appear, that either Ahab, or his attendants, or the inhabitants of Jezreel, offered him any refreshment, or hospitably entertained him. His reception at least was discouraging.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The severest judgments will not of themselves humble or change the hearts of sinners; who often grow more hardened under them, even to desperation. The *imagined* fire of purgatory, therefore, or the *real* torments of hell, possess no purifying efficacy; and the wicked under the anguish of their sufferings will continually increase in wickedness, and accumulate wrath to all eternity. For nothing, except the atoning blood of Christ, can expiate the guilt of sin; nothing, except the sanctifying Spirit of God, can purge away its pollution: and all other expedients are satanical delusions, to keep men from this one "fountain, "which God hath opened for sin and for uncleanness."—The enmity of man's heart against God, expresses itself by persecuting those who bear his image and seek his glory: yet he protects them, until their testimony be finished.—It has been the common lot of his prophets and faithful servants, to be lodged in caves or dens of the earth, and fed with bread and water, (if that could be procured,) while the ministers of Satan have rioted in luxury. (*Note*,

CHAP. XIX.

Ahab shews Jezebel, that Elijah had slain Baal's prophets, and she sends to Elijah, threatening to take away his life, 1, 2. He flees into the wilderness; is weary of living; but being twice strengthened with food brought by an angel, he fasts forty days, and arrives at Horeb, 3—8. There God meets him, preceded by a strong wind, an earthquake, and fire; and, speaking to him in a still small voice, commissions him to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, 9—17. Elijah is informed that seven thousand worshippers of JEHOVAH still remain in Israel, 18. Elijah casts his mantle on Elisha, who takes leave of his friends, and follows him, 19—21.

Heb. xi. 35—38.) Yet the Lord has had a remnant in all places, where any part of his word has been known, in every age of the world: and notwithstanding errors and irregularities, that spiritual worship, and that repentance, fear, and love of his name, which are the fruits of his Holy Spirit, are accepted through the Redeemer, and by faith in him. Thus the remnant in Israel, when that nation had generally apostatized to idolatry, encourages the hope, that there are true believers known unto God, and reserved to him, in those parts of the Christian church, where the ostensible body is most deformed by superstition and idolatry.—If men of eminent piety were found in Ahab's family, and in Nero's palace, we may conclude that the Spirit of God will keep alive the holy flame which he has kindled, in any situation to which a believer can be called. (*Note, Phil.* iv. 21, 22.) We should therefore be very cautious about leaving, or persuading others to leave, the posts assigned in Providence, however perilous or ensnaring; while they can be maintained without sinful compliances, and while they afford opportunities of doing good.—They, who begin early to serve God, are likely to be eminent in their generation: and those who "fear the LORD greatly," devise various methods of usefulness; for they do not shrink from trouble, danger, or expense, in promoting his cause, or protecting and relieving his oppressed and afflicted servants. Providence indeed has often remarkably preserved those, who have ventured their lives freely in his service, in times of triumphant wickedness; yet, singular activity, prudence, and fidelity in secular concerns, frequently prove the means of their security. (*Notes, Dan.* vi. 3—5.)—Many are careful to prevent the effects of sin upon their temporal interests, whilst they continue by their crimes to augment the fierce wrath of God, which is the cause of all misery: and ungodly rich men are commonly more careful about their own self-indulgence, than to preserve the multitude of the poor from starving. (*Notes, Am.* vi. 3—8. *Luke* xvi. 19—21.) But while sinners remain on earth, the Lord will afford them some respite; that his judgments and mercies may concur, either to lead them to repentance, or to display his justice in their condemnation: and national calamities are often retarded or terminated, for the sake of a despised remnant of believers; for if persecutors could extirpate them all, they would open the flood-gates of divine vengeance upon themselves.—The servants of God may, in his cause, boldly face their most powerful enraged enemies; for they *dare not* touch them when he intimidates their hearts, and *cannot* when he restrains their hands: (*Notes, Matt.* xiv. 3—5. *Acts* iv. 13—22. v. 26—39:) and such as fear the Lord, however exalted in life, will greatly respect his faithful servants, though poor and hated by all around them.—They, whose situations have long required them to be cautious of giving unnecessary umbrage, are apt to grow too timid, and to apprehend consequences which are not likely to follow: if, however, they be sincere, they will surmount their fears, and join with their more courageous brethren in doing the will of God.

V. 17—29.

The ministers of the Lord have generally been accounted the *troublers* of nations, nay, even of the church, by ungodly rulers: because they oppose prevailing abuses though sanctioned by authority, and denounce the wrath of God against impenitent sinners. Nay, they have frequently been treated as the authors of those calamities, which have come upon men for persecuting them, and neglecting their warnings! But they are able to refute, and even to retort, such charges, when urged to their faces; and to shew that those who forsake the commandments of the Lord, and teach others to do so, are the real troublers of the world, of the church, and of themselves and their own families: and when this is done with firmness and solemnity, as by the authority of God, it will often cause the proudest sinner to tremble; to desist from present purposes of violence, and to comply with reasonable requirements.—The condescension of the Lord in repeatedly proving the most evident truths, concerning his being, perfections, the divine authority of his word, and the nature of his worship, is as wonderful as the perverseness of men, which requires such repeated demonstrations: but the fundamentals of religion stand on such manifest grounds of reason and sound argument, that they need fear no fair investigation. It is of peculiar importance, that we come to a decision on such subjects; for whilst we waver respecting them, we must be unstable in all our ways. But we should be equally decided in our practice, else our creed, however orthodox, will be received only by a *dead* faith. If the LORD be God, let us worship him, choose him for our Portion, and devote ourselves to his service: if Jesus be the divine and only Saviour, let us come to him, cleave to him, and depend on him alone for every thing: if the Bible be the word of God, let us reverence, study, and receive the whole of it, and submit our understanding to its teaching: and let us no longer endeavour to serve God and Mammon; to reconcile religion and secret sin; or to believe revelation, to accept of salvation, or to give up ourselves to the service of our Redeemer, by halves, or with reserves. This, Satan will be content with, but the LORD abhors it.—The cause of truth is not to be determined by vote, authority, or wealth: one poor prophet or minister for JEHOVAH; hundreds and thousands for Baal, even of those in reputation and favour, and the highest secular or ecclesiastical stations; as well as of those who have possessed wealth and learning, has been a common case! But God will plead his own cause, and that of his witnesses, which will countervail all disadvantages; and his truth is great, and will prevail. In confidence of his support, we may concede every external precedency to our opponents, and boldly stand forth in his cause, without

a xvi. 31. xxi. 5–7. 25.
b See on xviii. 40.

AND [a] Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal [b] how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

c II. 28. xx. 10, 11. Ruth i. 17. 2 Kings vi. 31.
d Ex. x. 28. xv. 9. 2 Kings xix. 10–12. 22. 27, 28. Dan. iii. 15.
e Prov. xxvii. 1. Acts xii. 4–6. Jam. iv. 13, 14.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, [c] So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, [d] if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by [e] to-morrow about this time.

f Gen. xii. 12, 18. Ex. ii. 15. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. 1s. li. 12, 13. Matt. xxvi. 56. 70–74. 2 Cor. xii. 7.
g iv. 25. Gen. xxi. 31. Am. vii. 12, 13.
h xiii. 14. Gen. xxi. 15, 16. John iv. 6.
i 3. Num. xi. 15. 2 Kings ii. 11. Job iii. 20–22. Jer. xx. 14–18. Jon. iv. 3. 8. Phil. i. 21–24.
* Heb. *for his life.*

3 And when he saw *that*, [f] he arose, and went for his life, and came to [g] Beer-sheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and [h] sat down under a juniper-tree: and [i] he requested * for himself that he

apprehension about the event. It is right, however, to state every thing in so equitable, plain, and convincing a manner, that all may be constrained to say, "It is well "spoken," and that the mouths of gain-sayers may be stopped.—The absurdities of superstition and false religion might excite our ridicule or mockery, did not their awful effects demand our tears. The example of Elijah, in this instance, must be imitated with great caution, and only on very peculiar and evident occasions.—The service of Satan, whether in the observations of idolatrous worship, or in the practice of immoralities, whilst it promises indulgence to men's lusts, is cruel to their persons, and tends to torment them even in this world.

V. 30—46.

All religious diligence, which is not regulated according to the word of God, as to its grand outlines, however self-denying or plausible, is unavailing: "for he, who gathereth "not with" the Saviour, "scattereth." (*Note, Matt.* xii. 29, 30.) Yet, when it is impracticable for us *exactly* to come up to the scriptural standard; or when we cannot have personal communion with God's people, in his more solemn ordinances: we must come as near as we can to the one, and shew our fellowship with the other by such expressions as we are capable of: and the Lord will graciously accept our upright intentions, and dispense with the unavoidable irregularity.—Hypocrites expect to be heard for their much or their loud speaking; but a few words uttered in assured faith, and with fervent affections of zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, or thirstings after the Lord's image and favour, often form "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man, which "availeth much." Such principles ought to dictate all our prayers, and we should utterly disregard even our own reputation in the judgment of men; except when it is connected with the credit of religion, the conviction of sinners that our cause is that of God, and the establishment of believers in the faith: but for these purposes we should endeavour to obviate every occasion of suspicion, and to be careful that our good be not evil spoken of.—The awful displays of the divine justice and holiness may terrify and convince the sinner; extort many confessions, and dispose him to external acts of obedience, while the impression lasts: but the view of these attributes, harmonizing with mercy, love, and truth, in Christ Jesus, is needful to draw the soul into self-abasement, affiance, and love. Yet the Spirit of God employs both methods, in effecting the conversion of sinners, in order and measure, as he pleases: and in our endeavours for that same blessed purpose, it is generally adviseable to inform the understanding and convince the judgment first, and then to address the heart and conscience.—When sinners are deeply impressed with divine truth, they should be earnestly exhorted without delay, to set about those self-denying duties, to which the Saviour calls his disciples.—Under the Christian dispensation indeed, we must not destroy the lives of men, even though they have deceived others to idolatrous worship. When, however, false teachers are removed, silenced, or put to shame, it exceedingly promotes the revival of true religion: and after effectual measures for publick reformation have been used, we may hope for the merciful removal of publick calamities.—Faith perceives things imperceptible to sense, and anticipates future and distant blessings: it therefore excites fervent prayers, in which reverence, humility, importunity, and perseverance are requisite in order to success.—The love of faithful ministers to the persons of sinners should not only be manifest to that God, who in secret hears their affectionate prayers for those, whom they most severely reprove: but they should shew it by every external expression; and be ready to give honour to whom honour on any account is due; and in their private conduct to become the meanest servants to those, whom, speaking in God's name, they "rebuke with "all authority." And he will strengthen his people for every exertion and self-denial, to which his commandments and his providence shall call them.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Lord left this wicked woman, when informed by Ahab of what had been done, to be so intoxicated by rage, that, instead of sending a messenger to apprehend or kill Elijah, she gave him warning and time to make his escape! (*Note, Matt.* ii. 7, 8.) Some indeed think, that she was afraid to venture at the same time on the rage of the people, and the miraculous power, which the prophet evidently and undeniably possessed, by attempting to slay him: but contented herself with threatening him, that he might abscond and occasion her no further interruption, or take further measures, against the worship and worshippers of Baal, and the prophets of the groves: (xviii. 19:) while others suppose she had such an opinion of his intrepidity, that she concluded he would certainly wait the event. But her absolute language, and the imprecation upon herself if she failed, seem more like the outrageous effusion of passion, than the effect of deliberation and design. Without reflecting that she might not live till the morrow, or not be able to find Elijah, or to prevail against him; she sware by the gods, that she would put him to death, as if all events were absolutely in her own power! (*Notes, 2 Kings* i. 10—17. *Prov.* xxvii. 1. *Jam.* iv. 13—17.)

V. 3, 4. It seems, that Elijah fled from Jezreel on the

might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I *am* not [k] better than my fathers.

5 And [l] as he lay and slept under a juniper-tree, behold, then [m] an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise *and* eat.

6 And he looked, and, behold, *there* [n] *was* a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his *head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And [o] the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise *and* eat: [p] because the journey *is* too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went [q] in the strength of that meat, [r] forty days and forty nights, unto [s] Horeb the mount of God.

9 And he came thither [t] unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the [u] word of the LORD *came* to him, and he said unto him, [u] What doest thou here, Elijah?

10 And he said, I have been [x] very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, [y] thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* [z] I only, am left; and [a] they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and

k Am. vi. 2. Nah. iii. 8. Matt. vi. 26. Rom. iii. 9.
l Gen. xxviii. 11—15.
m Ps. xxxiv. 7. 10. Dan. viii. 19. ix. 21. x. 9, 10. Acts xii. 7. Heb. i. 14. xiii. 5.
n xvii. 6. 9—15. Ps. xxxvii. 3. Is. xxxiii. 16. Matt. iv. 11. vi. 32. Mark viii. 2, 3. John xxi. 5. 9.
* Heb. *bolster.*
o *See on* 5.
p Deut. xxxiii. 25. Ps. ciii. 13, 14.
q Dan. i. 15. 2 Cor. xii. 9.
r Ex. xxiv. 18. xxxiv. 28. Deut. ix. 9. 18. Matt. iv. 2. Mark i. 13. Luke iv. 2.
s *See on* Ex. iii. 1. xix. 18.—Mal. iv. 4, 5.
t Ex. xxxiii. 21, 22. Jer. ix. 2. Heb. xi. 38.
u 13. Gen. iii. 9. xvi. 8. Jer. ii. 18. Jon. i. 3, 4.
x Ex. xx. 5. xxxiv. 14. Num. xxv. 11. Ps. lxix. 9. cxix. 139. John ii. 17.
y 14. xviii. 4. 30. Jer. ii. 30. Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.
z xviii. 4. 22. xx. 13. 22. 35. 41, 42. xxii. 8. Rom. xi. 2, 3.
a 2. xviii. 10. 17.

very night after the sacrifice, and the fire from heaven, and the abundant rain given in answer to his prayers; and before he had time suitably to refresh himself after the fatigues of the preceding day. Beer-sheba, in the south of Judah, was at a considerable distance from Jezreel, in the lot of Issachar: (*Josh.* xix. 18:) yet he travelled with all speed till he came thither. But there he left his servant, as unable to proceed through weariness: or perhaps he was unwilling to expose him to farther hardship; having, as some think, purposed to end his life in that desolate wilderness, where Israel had wandered forty years.—He had passed through the whole kingdom of Judah, where doubtless pious Jehoshaphat would have welcomed and protected him. But he seems, on this occasion, to have been left to himself for his humiliation; and consequently he was seized with unreasonable terror. Instead of venturing all consequences, assured of the protection of the Almighty; and pushing his advantage, by leading the people to destroy the temple and worship of Baal, and restore the worship of JEHOVAH; he fled from the important service, and impatiently wished and prayed for death! What a contrast to his zeal and intrepidity, as recorded in the preceding chapter! (*Notes,* xviii. 40. *Num.* xi. 11—15. *Jon.* i. 2, 3. iv. 1—4. 9—11.) Thus the people, left without a leader, and intimidated by his example, would be too much afraid of Jezebel, to reap those decisive advantages from the miracle, and the events recorded in the former chapter, which might have been hoped for.—When Elijah said, "I am no better than my fathers," he seems to have referred to some pre-intimations given him of his translation: but he was willing rather to die, than to live in misery, and to behold, without being able to prevent, the wickedness and ruin of his people: yet he would rather die by the hand of the Lord, than by that of Baal's worshippers, lest they should blaspheme that God whose prophet they had slain.

V. 5—8. The Lord intended that Elijah should visit Horeb, where Moses had fasted forty days and nights; that in him the miracle might be repeated: because as Moses was the lawgiver, so Elijah was in some respects the chief of the prophets. (*Note, Matt.* xvii. 3.) God at first miraculously provided his servant with food: (*Note,* xvii. 4—6:) and then he supported him without food, or any need or desire of it. (*Notes, Ex.* xxxiv. 28. *Matt.* iv. 3, 4.) As mount Horeb was but a few days' journey from Beer-sheba; the forty days here mentioned seem to include the whole of the time, which passed till his return out of the wilderness.

V. 9. *What doest thou,* &c?] Elijah had been secretly guided to mount Horeb, rather than to another place; and probably he sought retirement for meditation and prayer. But this was not at that crisis his proper employment; for he ought by no means, to have fled from the land of Israel, but there to have persevered, without dread of consequences, in promoting the cause of true religion. (*Notes, Josh.* vii. 10—12. *Neh.* vi. 10—14. *Acts* iv. 29—31. viii. 1.)

V. 10. The prophet pleaded in his own behalf, that "he had been very jealous for the LORD," having had his glory exceedingly at heart, and having been deeply grieved, and even filled with holy indignation, at Israel's apostasy. This he had long endeavoured to prevent; and he had now fled from his work, not through defect of zeal, but for want of encouragement. The whole nation, he thought, had renounced their covenant with JEHOVAH, and had concurred with their rulers in breaking down his altars, which had been erected on the high places; as if they were determined to worship him no more. (xviii. 30.) The altars, though irregular, on which sacrifices were offered to JEHOVAH alone, are thus distinguished from those, on which the people sacrificed to Baal and other idols, or to the golden calves.—They had also joined in murdering the prophets; so that he stood alone to stem the torrent, and they were all ready to assist Jezebel in putting him to death also. But he supposed matters to be much worse than they really were: for probably several of the hundred prophets, whom Obadiah had protected, were living, and privately attempting to do good with some success. So that he needlessly discouraged himself: and his mind was so much embittered by his disappointments, that he is said to have "made intercession against Israel." (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 11—17. *Rom.* xi. 1—6.)

V. 11—14. There seems to have been, in this manifestation of God to Elijah, an intended reference to that with which Moses was favoured, when the Lord caused

[b] stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, [c] the LORD passed by, [d] and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind: and after the wind [e] an earthquake; *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake [f] a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire [g] a still small voice.

13 And it was *so*, when Elijah heard *it*, that [h] he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, *there came* a voice unto him, and said, [i] What doest thou here Elijah?

14 And he said, [k] I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have [l] forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away.

15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to [m] the wilderness of Damascus; and when thou comest, [n] anoint [o] Hazael *to be* king over Syria:

16 And [p] Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint *to be* king over Israel: and [q] Elisha the son of Shaphat, of [r] Abel-meholah, shalt thou anoint *to be* prophet in thy room.

17 And it shall come to pass, *that* [s] him that escapeth [t] the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from [u] the sword of Jehu shall [x] Elisha slay.

18 [y] Yet [*] I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all [z] the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and [a] every mouth which hath not kissed him.

b Ex. xix. 20. xxiv. 12. 18. xxxiv. 2. Matt. xvii. 1—3. 2 Pet. i. 17, 18.
c Ex. xxxiii. 21—23. xxxiv. 6. Hab. iii. 3—5.
d Ex. xix. 16. xx. 18. Job xxxviii. 1. Ps. l. 3. Is. xxx. 30. Ez. i. 4. Nah. i. 3. 6. Heb. xii. 18—21. Rev. xx. 11.
e 1 Sam. xiv. 15. Ps. lxviii. 8. Nah. i. 5. Zech. xiv. 5. Matt. xxiv. 7. xxvii. 51—54. xxviii. 2. Heb. xii. 26. Rev. xi. 19. xvi. 18.
f xviii. 38. Gen. xv. 17. Ex. iii. 2. Deut. iv. 11, 12. 33. 2 Kings i. 10. ii. 11. Heb. xii. 29.
g Ex. xxxiv. 6. Job iv. 16. xxxiii. 7. Zech. iv. 6. Acts ii. 2. 36, 37.
h *See on* xviii. 42. —Ex. iii. 5. xxxiii. 23. Is. vi. 2. 6.
i 9. Gen. xvi. 8. John xxi. 15—17.
k *See on* 10.—Is. lxii. 1. 6, 7.
l Deut. xxix. 25. xxxi. 20. Ps. lxxviii. 37. Is. i. 4. Jer. xxii. 9. Dan. xi. 30. Hos. vi. 7. Heb. viii. 9.
m Gen. xiv. 15. 2 Kings viii. 7. Acts ix. 2, 3.
n Is. xlv. 1. Jer. i. 10. xxvii. 2, &c.
o 2 Kings viii. 8—15. 28. ix. 14. Am. i. 4.
p *See on* 2 Kings ix. 1—3. 6—14.
q *See on* 19—21. —Luke iv. 27. *Eliseus.*
r iv. 12. Judg. vii. 22.
s Is. xxiv. 17, 18. Am. ii. 14. v. 19.
t 2 Kings viii. 12. x. 32. xiii. 3. 22.
u 2 Kings ix. 14, &c. x. 6, &c.
x 2 Kings ii. 23, 24. Is. xi. 4. Jer. i. 10. Hos. vi. 5. Rev. xix. 21.
y Is. i. 9. x. 20—22. Rom. xi. 4, 5.
* Or, *I will leave.*
z Ex. xx. 5. Is. xlix. 23. Rom. xiv. 10—12. Phil. ii. 10.
a Job xxxi. 27. Ps. ii. 12. Hos. xiii. 2.

his goodness to pass before him; and to the terrifick solemnities from mount Sinai, (where Elijah now was,) compared with the mild majesty, in which he communed with Israel from above the mercy-seat. (*Notes, Ex.* xix. 16—25. xxxiii. 20—23. xxxiv. 5—7.) It was preceded by a vehement wind, rending the mountains and rocks; by an earthquake, still more tremendous; and by a fire, similar perhaps to that which appeared on mount Sinai at the delivery of the law: all these effects were no doubt produced by the ministration of angels. But the Lord made known his more immediate presence, not by these terrors, but by a still small voice; and it is not said, that there was any visible appearance of glory. This intimated that miraculous judgments, and terrifying displays of the Lord's power and indignation, though proper for the destruction or intimidation of his enemies, or to excite attention, were only preparatives for that real good intended for Israel; which must be effected by the energy of his Spirit, accompanying the convincing and persuasive instructions of his word. Elijah had perhaps expected to prevail, as with a high hand, and with continued miracles and judgments: or he had supposed that the desired reformation was to be effected by the interference or sanction of regal authority, or the support of the people at large. Whereas, having gained their attention by the famine, and its gracious removal, in answer to his prayers; by calling for and obtaining fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice, and by the execution of Baal's priests, and by rain, according to his word; he ought to have proceeded to instruct them with meekness and gentleness, "publickly and from house to "house," and to have excited others to assist him: and then the Lord would have blessed that "still small voice," for the most important purposes; notwithstanding the persecuting rage of Ahab and Jezebel, and the general apostasy of the people. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* x. 1—6.)—Thus miracles in the first ages of Christianity called men's attention to the preaching of the gospel, which, as a still small voice, was the power of God to salvation to thousands and millions.—Though Elijah shewed tokens of humble adoration on this occasion, the repetition of his answer to the Lord's renewed enquiry, "What doest thou here?" shews, that he did not as yet fully understand the emblematick display: and that he was not properly convinced of his unbelief and sin in fleeing out of the land; or reconciled to going back to his station and employment. He afterwards better understood the Lord's meaning, as it appears from his subsequent conduct.

V. 15—17. As the prophet was ordered to go on the way to the wilderness of Damascus, it seems probable that he went directly towards Syria, and meeting with Hazael anointed him; though this is not recorded. Jehu was afterwards anointed by a prophet sent by Elisha; (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* ix. 1—10;) and perhaps Elisha was anointed by Elijah, when called to be his successor. Some, however, think the expression is not always to be taken literally; but merely as an intimation, that God would advance the persons spoken of, to the stations assigned, and qualify them for the work to be performed by them. (*Ps.* cv. 15. *Is.* xlv. 1.)—Jehu executed vengeance upon Jezebel and Ahab's posterity, and the priests and worshippers of Baal: Hazael through his whole reign wasted and destroyed the people of Israel: and, at Elisha's word, the Lord took vengeance on those, who would not attend to the instructions of his prophets. The order of time, in these judgments, seems not to be exactly marked, but the certainty of the events. (*Marg. Ref.* s—x.)—God was infinitely more jealous for his own glory, than Elijah could be for it; and he would by no means desert his cause, or suffer his enemies to triumph, as the prophet feared: but, before he proceeded to vengeance, he would gather in his chosen people, and separate a remnant from among the idolaters.

V. 18. The Lord "had reserved for himself" seven thousand Israelites, who had neither bowed their knees to Baal, nor kissed his image, nor in any way been induced

19 ¶ So he departed thence, and found [b] Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and [c] he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast [d] his mantle upon him.

20 And [e] he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, [f] Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, [*] Go back again; for what have I done to thee?

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and [g] boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and [h] gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and [i] ministered unto him.

[b] *See on* 16.
[c] Ex. iii. 1. Judg. vi. 11. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. Am. vii. 14. Zech. xiii. 5. Matt. iv. 18, 19.
[d] 13. 1 Sam. xxviii. 14. 2 Kings ii. 8. 13, 14.
[e] Matt. iv. 20. 22. ix. 9. xix. 27.
[f] Matt. viii. 21, 22. Luke ix. 61, 62. Acts xx. 37.
[*] Heb. *Go, return.*
[g] 2 Sam. xxiv. 22.
[h] Luke v. 28, 29.
[i] xviii. 43. Ex. xxiv. 13. Num. xxvii. 18—20. 2 Kings ii. 3. iii. 11. Acts xiii. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 11. Philem. 13.

to worship him. (*Marg. Ref.* y—a. *Note, Hos.* xiii. 2.) These, though few in comparison, were a considerable number in themselves, and far more than Elijah supposed. —As Ahab and Jezebel aimed to establish the worship of Baal, we may suppose that the golden calves were neglected; and that these persons conscientiously adhered to the worship of JEHOVAH, as the times would admit: they would however, greatly need further instruction and encouragement. Others might be recovered from idolatry; and the rising generation might be rescued from its contagion. So that there was a great deal of useful employment for Elijah, which it was well worth while to accomplish even by living amidst persecutions, perils, and conflicts. (*Note, Phil.* i. 21—26.) There was also a sufficient reason why the Lord should defer his anger, though provoked to jealousy every day. (*Note, Rom.* xi. 1—6.)

V. 19. This might occur after Elijah's return from the wilderness of Damascus, or in his journey thither.—Elisha was employed in husbandry, and his father seems to have been a man of wealth. Whilst he was employed in his labour, Elijah cast his mantle upon him, which was intended, and understood, as a call to him to follow and attend upon him. (*Notes, 2 Kings* ii. 13, 14.)

V. 20, 21. It is probable that Elijah intended to discover, whether Elisha was fully determined to renounce his temporal interests, and to venture persecution as a prophet of the Lord: and to lead him to count his cost ere he engaged. (*Notes, Matt.* viii. 18—22. *Luke* xiv. 28—33.) But Elisha's heart was touched by the Holy Spirit, and he was ready to leave all to attend Elijah. He did not ask to wait till the death of his parents, but only to bid them farewell: and, having made a feast for his neighbours of the flesh of the oxen, prepared with their yokes, as the fuel; (in token, that he never meant to return again to that employment;) he followed Elijah, and ministered to him, that under his tuition he might be prepared to succeed him, and in the mean time be a help and comfort to him. (*Notes, 2 Kings* iii. 11, 12. *Matt.* ix. 9—13.)—The prophet could now no longer complain, that he was left alone, for the Lord had provided him a companion. (*Notes, Ex.* iv. 14. *Matt.* x. 1—4.)—From the ensuing history it appears, that Elijah and Elisha employed themselves, not only in privately instructing the people, but also in founding or superintending seminaries of prophets, in different parts of the land, who might assist them in the work of reformation, and maintain it when they were removed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

No miracles or judgments can finally stop the fury of persecutors: though they be intimidated for a season, when they have respite, and leisure to confer with one another, they grow desperate in proportion as they have been baffled and mortified. (*Notes, Ex.* viii. 15. xiv. 5—9. *Acts* iv. 13—22. v. 17—28.) Nay, such diabolick enmity can inhabit the breasts of females, and has sometimes raged in them with peculiar vehemence! (*Notes, Matt.* xiv. 3—11.)—Mad passions often defeat their own end, and furious threats prevent the execution of determined malice.—The most eminent believers cannot exercise even those graces, which most distinguish their characters, without the immediate assistance of God: and when in danger of being exalted above measure, they are sometimes left to struggle with temptation without their wonted support. Then the boldest, who before feared no number or power of the adversaries, tremble at the distant prospect of danger; the most zealous are dissatisfied with their employments, and sit down disconsolate and desponding; nay, the most resigned grow fretful, and even pray in a peevish manner; and want to die, not out of longing for heavenly glory, but from weariness of conflicts and tribulations. But it is shameful for a soldier to wish to be absent from his place in the day of battle, or to expect the victory without the peril and the hardship of the conflict. The Lord, however, bears with his faithful servants, notwithstanding their infirmities; and preserves them for every service which he has allotted them, whatever they wish or fear. As all creatures are at his command, those, for whom he engages to provide, can want no good thing; and yet if he pleases he can support them without either means or instruments. (*Notes,* xvii. 1—16.) His mercy and power are the same from generation to generation, whether displayed in the same way or not: and he will vouchsafe his gracious presence to his people, into whatever place they are banished. Indeed when they flee from the path of duty, he will meet and rebuke them, but he will not forsake them.

V. 10—14.

No former zeal, boldness, or usefulness, will excuse present neglects: yet we are most apt to boast of what we have been and done, when most remiss in present duty! Disappointments in our too sanguine expectations often sour our tempers, as well as render us discontented: and then we are ready to blame others for our failures, and to be severe in our censures and remarks. The zealous minister often finds this leaven corrupting his services: he is sometimes tempted to think all his labour in vain, when he does not see the immediate effect; and to conclude, that he can do no good, because he cannot do all that he hoped for: and when he witnesses much evil in the church, or

CHAP. XX.

Ben-hadad king of Syria, not satisfied with Ahab's submission, leads a powerful army against Samaria, and wars against it, 1—12. Ahab, directed by a prophet, gains a complete victory over him, 13—21. A prophet warns Ahab to prepare for another assault, 22. The Syrians come again, the next year, with very great preparations; and are opposed by a very small company, 23—27. A prophet assures Ahab of victory, because the Syrians thought JEHOVAH the God of the hills, but not of the valleys, 28. The Syrians are smitten with immense slaughter, and Ben-hadad flees and hides himself, 29, 30. He submissively sues to Ahab, who makes a league with him, 31—34. A prophet, by a parable, leads Ahab to condemn himself, and then denounces the judgment of God against him for his unseasonable lenity, 35—43.

AND [a] Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together; and *there were* [b] thirty and two kings with him, [c] and horses and chariots: and he went up and [d] besieged Samaria, and warred against it.

[a] xv.18.20. 2Kings viii.7—15. 2 Chr. xvi. 2—4. Jer. xlix. 27. Am. i. 4.
[b] 16. 24. Gen. xiv. 1—5. Judg. i. 7. Ezra vii. 12. Is. x. 8. Ez. xxvi. 7. Dan. ii. 37.
[c] Ex. xiv. 7. Deut. xx. 1. Judg. iv 3. 1 Sam. xiii. 5. Is. xxxvii. 24.
[d] Lev. xxvi. 25. Deut. xxviii. 52. 2 Kings vi. 24—29. xvii. 5, 6.

in that part in which he labours, he often imagines matters to be much worse than they really are. Thus "our "hands hang down, and our knees wax feeble;" and we are ingenious in discouraging and disquieting ourselves. But upon reflection, this very experience may explain to us that rebellion of others, which so disconcerts us; and teach us gentleness and long-suffering, without disdaining or despairing of the worst of sinners.—The blessing is from the Lord; and he often works most effectually when proper means are used, with quiet assiduity and perseverance, without any of that bustle and vehemence which excite the publick attention. Magistrates should indeed exercise their authority, in promoting true religion, by all hallowed and scriptural means. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xvii. 7—9. xxx. 12.) But attempts to produce reformation, in either doctrine or worship, by coercive means, and the secular arm, bearing all down before it, like the strong wind, the earthquake, and the fire, in every case promise more than they effect; and even when the magistrate's authority is regulated and limited in a proper manner, in repressing impiety and immorality, and countenancing zealous ministers in their labours, it only makes way for the "still small voice" of the gospel, by means of which the Holy Spirit performs his gracious work upon the heart. (*Notes, Is.* xlii. 1—4. *Rom.* i. 13—16. 1 *Cor.* ii. 3—5. 2 *Cor.* x. 1—6.) And the minister, when deprived of this protection and support, and driven by persecution into obscure corners, may expect great usefulness, by this power accompanying his labours.—The word of God also is indeed "like a fire, and a hammer, that breaketh the "rocks in pieces;" and the whole of it should be preached with zealous plainness and faithfulness: but "the minis- "tration of condemnation," and the awful terrors of eternal vengeance, only precede and make way for "the "ministration of righteousness," and the sweet gospel of Christ, attended by urgent persuasions, melting expostulations, and tender invitations, in which the Lord chiefly comes to seal our hearts for himself; and without this little will be done.—We shall do well often to imagine, that we hear the Lord enquire, "What doest thou here?" In scenes of worldly dissipation, in trifling company, in riotous feastings, or where unlawful traffick is carrying on, the Christian can have no good answer ready: nor can the minister, if engrossed by needless worldly business, by trifling studies, or by the pursuits of ambition, preferment, pleasure, or reputation, to the neglect of the important duties of his calling. Nay, if we are at home, when we should be in the pulpit; asleep, when we should be at work; or in company, when we should be engaged in prayer and meditation, or reading the Scriptures; such a question must confound us. In short every station has its proper duties, and every portion of time its proper work, and we should frequently call ourselves to account, whether we be in our place and proper employment, as the duty of the season requires.

V. 15—21.

It is not easy to convince men of their faults, and silence their excuses or boastings: and, whilst the Lord encourages his servants under their difficulties, he sends them back to their proper work, ashamed of their timidity and neglect; and then he gives them both helpers and success. He has "a remnant, according to the election of grace," which he reserves to himself, and preserves from prevailing abominations. For their conversion and edification he waits and provides: in the mean time impenitent sinners ripen for vengeance; and he raises up instruments to execute it upon them, from whom they shall by no means escape: for the word of God, spoken by his despised ministers, ensures their destruction, more than the sword of any enemy. Nor will he ever desert his own cause, however it seems to be run down: he will furnish men for the most perilous and self-denying services: and those who duly understand the importance of the sacred ministry, will renounce every other honour, pleasure, and interest for the sake of it, though called to labour in the midst of hardships, poverty, and persecution.—Zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls will subordinate, though it will not extinguish, natural affections. (*Notes, Matt.* x. 37—39.) The work of the ministry requires the whole man: and when such persons are employed, as have not been regularly educated for it, they are especially concerned to attend the instructions, to frequent the company, and to copy the examples, of aged and approved ministers: and "no man "having set his hand to the plow, and looking back, is "fit for the kingdom of God." (*P. O. Matt.* iv. 12—25. *Note, Matt.* viii. 21, 22.) In difficult times helpers of inferior abilities may be a great comfort to the discouraged servants of God: and this service is carried on to advantage, when different ministers concur, from the same principles, to seek the same great end of his glory in the salvation of souls. May "the Lord of the harvest send "forth many such labourers into his harvest!" Amen. (*Note, Matt.* ix. 36—38.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. Ben-hadad, signifies *The son of Hadad;* (xi. 14—22;) yet he is said to have been "the

2 And [e] he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad,

3 Thy [f] silver and thy gold *is* mine; thy wives also and thy children, *even* the goodliest, *are* mine.

4 And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, [g] I *am* thine, and all that I have.

5 And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children;

6 Yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, [h] and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants: and it shall be, *that* whatsoever is [*] pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put *it* in their hand, and take *it* away.

7 Then the king of Israel called [i] all the elders of the land, and said, [j] Mark, I pray you, and see how this *man* [k] seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold, and I [†] denied him not.

8 And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Hearken not *unto him*, nor consent.

9 Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do; but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.

10 And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, [l] The gods do so unto me, and more also, [m] if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that [‡] follow me.

11 And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell *him*, [n] Let not him that girdeth on *his harness* boast himself as he that putteth it off.

12 And it came to pass, when *Ben-hadad* heard this [§] message, as he *was* [o] drinking, he and the kings in the [‖] pavilions, that he said unto his servants, [*] Set *yourselves in array*. And they set *themselves in array* against the city.

13 And, behold, there [†] came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, [p] Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will

e 2 Kings xix. 9. Is. xxxvi. 2, &c. xxxvii. 9, 10.

f Ex. xv. 9. Is. x. 13, 14.

g Lev. xxvi. 36. Deut. xxviii. 48. Judg. xv. 11—18. 1 Sam. xiii. 6, 7. 2 Kings xviii. 14—16.

h 1 Sam. xiii. 19—21. 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. 2 Kings xviii. 31, 32.

* Heb. *desirable.* Gen. xxvii. 15. Ezra viii. 27. Is. xliv. 9. Jer. xxv. 34. Lam. i. 7. 10. Hos. xiii. 15. Joel iii. 5. *Margins.*

i viii. 1. 1 Chr. xiii. 1. xxviii. 1. Prov. xi. 14.

j 2 Kings v. 7.

k Job xv. 35. Ps. vii. 14. xxxvi. 4. lxii. 3. cxl. 2. Prov. vi. 14. xi. 27. xxiv. 2. Dan. xi. 27. Rom. iii. 13—18.

† Heb. *kept not back from him. See on* 4.

l *See on* xix. 2.—Acts xxiii. 12.

m 2 Sam. xvii. 12, 13. 2 Kings xix. 23, 24. Is. x. 13, 14. xxxvii. 24, 25.

‡ Heb. are *at my feet.* Ex. xi. 8. *Marg.* Judg. iv. 10.

n 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 12, 13. xvii. 44—47. Prov. xxvii. 1. Ec. ix. 11. Is. x. 15, 16. Matt. xxvi. 33—35. 75.

§ Heb. *word.*

o 16. xvi. 9. 1 Sam. xxv. 36. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. Dan. v. 2. 30. Luke xxi. 34. Eph. v. 18.

‖ Or, *tents.* Jer. xliii. 10.

* Or, *Place* the engines. *And they placed* engines.

† Heb. *approached.*

p 2 Kings vi. 8—12. vii. 1. xiii. 23. Is. vii. 1—9. Ez. xx. 14. 22.

"son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion." (xv. 18.)—Perhaps Hadad was his father, and Tabrimon and Hezion his more remote ancestors.—The thirty and two kings were petty princes of the adjacent countries, who were either vassals or allies to the king of Syria.—Ben-hadad seems to have been induced by rapacity to wage war against Ahab; and it is probable that he had wasted the country before he besieged Samaria.—The late terrible famine must have diminished the number of the Israelites, by death and emigration, almost beyond calculation: and by the righteous judgment of God, the remainder were so disaffected to Ahab, or so dismayed by Ben-hadad, that they had retired or fled; and thus they left the capital city in a very defenceless condition.

V. 2—11. Ben-hadad's first message was couched in insulting language. He not only considered Ahab's riches as already his property; but his wives and children, even the goodliest of them, as his slaves. Yet Ahab understood this, only as a claim to dominion over him and his property, or kingdom; and in abject terms he consented to be his vassal, and to do him homage, and pay him tribute. Ben-hadad therefore, (perhaps perceiving his terror and pusillanimity,) grew more insolent, and by a second message demanded the *immediate possession and use* of them all, for himself and his servants, who would come the next day, and search all the houses and treasures, and carry away what they thought most valuable, whether it belonged to Ahab, or to his people. To this the elders of Israel would not allow the king to consent: the dominion and the publick treasures, Ben-hadad might have taken; but to plunder the city and enslave the inhabitants must not be granted. To this answer the king of Syria sent a boasting menace, confirmed with an oath by his idols; implying, that he would enter Samaria with such numbers, that, when the whole city was reduced to a heap of dust, it would not afford them every one an handful: (*Notes, Ex.* xv. 9, 10. *2 Kings* xix. 23, 24. *Is.* x. 12—14:) but Ahab very pertinently reminded him not to exult and triumph, till he had gotten the victory, and had put off his armour; as at present he was only girding it on, and preparing for the battle.

V. 13. Elijah had complained that he was left alone; yet the Lord had other prophets, whom he could send to speak before Ahab. (*Note*, xix. 10.) Probably, Elijah and Elisha were at this time well employed in some distant part of the land; and Ahab and Jezebel were too much engaged, to interrupt their labours or usefulness.—The Lord was pleased to predict the victory to this wicked prince, for his further conviction, that JEHOVAH, not Baal, was the living God; for the punishment of Ben-hadad's insolence; for the honour of his own name, and for the benefit of his true worshippers; and in his long-suffering towards Israel, and compassion for their complicated distresses.

deliver it into thine hand this day; [q] and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

14 And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the LORD, *Even* by the [*] young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall [†] order the battle? And he answered, Thou.

15 Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were [r] two hundred and thirty-two: and after them he numbered all the people, *even* all the children of Israel, *being* [s] seven thousand.

16 And they went out at noon. But [t] Ben-hadad *was* drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him.

17 And [u] the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria.

18 And he said, [v] Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.

19 So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.

20 And [x] they slew every one his man: and [y] the Syrians fled; and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria [z] escaped on an horse, with the horsemen.

21 And the king of Israel [a] went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

22 ¶ And [b] the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, [c] strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for [d] at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

23 And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, [e] Their gods *are* gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we: but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.

24 And do this thing; [f] Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their rooms:

25 And number thee an army, like the army that [‡] thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, *and* surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so.

V. 14, 15. Ahab, sensible that the promised victory must be *miraculous*, enquired, by whom it was to be obtained: and he was directed to employ, not his bravest soldiers, but the servants, or *pages*, of the chief men in the different provinces; and also himself to lead on the attack. His whole army consisted of only seven thousand men; (the same number, with those preserved from idolatry, but not the same persons;) yet none of these were to be employed, till the first assault had been made, and the first advantage gained, by this small company of servants! (*Notes, Judg.* vii. 8. 16—22. 1 *Sam.* xiv. 6—10.) And under the present impression of terror and hope, Ahab readily obeyed these uncommon orders; though in general he despised and hated both the prophets, and him that sent them.

V. 16—18. It is probable, that Ahab chose to lead out his little troop at noon, when he supposed the Syrians would be at dinner, or reposing themselves.—Ben-hadad, despising the Israelites, was indulging to excess: and on hearing that a small company came out of Samaria, he gave such orders, in haughtiness and intoxication, as were exactly suited to embarrass his officers and soldiers; and to prevent their attacking the assailants with spirit, lest they should slay those whom they had been ordered to take alive! (*Marg. Ref.* v.) And to make prisoners of those who came out to treat of peace, would have been contrary to all the laws and usages of nations, even in time of war.

V. 19—21. The two hundred and thirty-two servants, whom especially Ben-hadad had ordered to be taken alive, slew every one the man who attempted to seize him: and this unexpected resistance, by the secret operation of God upon the minds of the Syrians, so dismayed them, that they yielded the army an easy and decisive victory. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 11—15.) Ben-hadad, after all his boasts and menaces, might be considered as successful, beyond all reasonable expectation, in this respect, that he escaped with life, drunken as he then was. (16. *Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxx. 16—19.)

V. 22. It does not appear, that Ahab regarded this merciful and seasonable warning, given him by the prophet; or that he made any suitable return for his late unexpected deliverance and success.

V. 23—25. The servants of Ben-hadad, either in flattery, as if no *human* valour could possibly rout his army or from present conviction, ascribed their defeat to the *gods* of Israel. They supposed that Israel had deities, like the gods of other nations, especially JEHOVAH (28), to whom they ascribed a limited power, within a certain dis-

26 And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to [g] Aphek [*] to fight against Israel.

27 And the children of Israel were numbered, and [†] were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them [h] like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.

28 ¶ And [i] there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, [k] Because the Syrians have said, The LORD *is* God of the hills, but he *is* not God of the valleys, [l] therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and [m] ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

29 And they pitched one over against the other [n] seven days. And *so* it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians [o] an hundred thousand footmen in one day.

30 But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city: and *there* [p] a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men *that were* left. And Ben-hadad [q] fled and came into the city, [‡] into an inner chamber.

31 And [r] his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel *are* [s] merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, [t] put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; [u] peradventure he will save thy life.

32 So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and *put* ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, [v] Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, *Is* he yet alive? [x] he *is* my brother.

33 Now [y] the men did diligently observe whether *any thing would come* from him, and did hastily catch *it:* and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; [z] and he caused him to come up into the chariot.

34 And *Ben-hadad* said unto him, [a] The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou

g 30. Josh. xii. 4. xix. 30. Judg. i. 31. *Aphik.* 1 Sam. iv. 1. xxix. 1. 2 Kings xiii. 17.
* Heb. *to the war with Israel.*
† Or, *were victualled.* Josh. i. 11. Judg vii. 8.
h Deut. xxxii. 30. Judg. vi. 5. 1 Sam. xiii. 5—8. xiv. 2. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Ec. ix. 11.
i 13. 22. xiii. 1. xvii. 18. 2 Chr. xx. 14—20.
k See on 23.
l Deut. xxxii. 27. Josh. vii. 8, 9. Ps. lviii. 10, 11. lxxix. 10. Is. xxxvii. 29. 35. Jer. xiv. 7. Ez. xx. 9. 14. xxxvi. 21—23. 32.
m See on 13.—Ex. vi. 7. vii. 5. viii. 22. Deut. xxix. 6. Ez. vi. 14. xi. 12. xii. 16. xxxvi. 22. xxxix. 7.
n Josh. vi. 15. 1 Sam. xvii. 16.
o 2 Sam. x. 18. 2 Chr. xiii. 17. xx. 23—25. xxviii. 6. Is. xxxvii. 36.
p Is. xxiv. 18. Jer. xlviii. 44. Am. ii. 14, 15. v. 19. ix. 3. Luke xiii. 4.
q 10. 20. Dan. iv. 37.
‡ Or, *from chamber to chamber.* Heb. *into a chamber within a chamber.* xxii. 25. 2 Chr. xviii. 24.
r 23. 2 Kings v. 13.
s Prov. xx. 28. Is. xvi. 5. Eph. i. 7, 8.
t xxi. 27—29. 2 Sam. iii. 31. xiv. 2. 2 Kings xix. 1, 2. Esth. iv. 1—3. Is. xxii. 12. xxxvii. 1. Jon. iii. 5, 6. Rev. xi. 3.
u 2 Kings vii. 4. Esth. iv. 16. Job ii. 4. Matt. x. 28.
v 3—6. Job xii. 17, 18. xl. 11, 12. Is. ii. 11, 12 x. 12. Dan. v. 20—23. Ob. 3, 4.
x 42. 1 Sam. xv. 8. 20.
y Prov. xxv. 13. Luke xvi. 8.
z 2 Kings x. 15. Acts viii. 31.
a xv. 20. 2 Chr. xvi. 4.

trict, out of which they could do nothing. They had probably heard, that JEHOVAH had displayed his glory from mount Sinai: the temple was built on mount Zion; Samaria was situated on a hill; and the people loved to sacrifice on high places: therefore the Syrians concluded that the God of Israel was powerful upon the mountains, but not in the plains; and they foolishly expected to prevail against Israel and JEHOVAH, by changing their ground. (*Note, Num.* xxiii. 13.) No doubt, however, they likewise considered the plain country as better suited to their army, which was furnished with cavalry and chariots of war, than to the foot soldiers of Israel.—Their other advice was sensible and pertinent. The kings served rather for pomp and feasting, than for war: and it could not be expected that they would either be so hearty in the cause of Syria, or so observant of exact discipline, as Syrian captains, appointed by the king, and desirous of signalizing themselves, would be. (*Marg. Ref.* e, f.)

V. 26. Aphek lay in the lot of Asher, in the most northern part of the land; (*Marg. Ref.* g. *Note, Josh.* xix. 24—31;) and seems to have been selected as the seat of the war, because the adjacent region had plains and valleys, suited to Ben-hadad's cavalry.

V. 27. It is probable, that Israel's late miraculous victory encouraged the small army, by which it was gained, to accompany Ahab to the country selected by the Syrians; but no others joined them, and their appearance conveyed the idea of weakness and timidity; more resembling two small flocks of young goats, in a desolate country, than a powerful army, which the occasion seemed to demand. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xiii. 6, 7. 13—15. 22.)

V. 28. Ahab and Israel, instead of deliverance, merited severe vengeance: but it was proper, that the ignorance or blasphemy of the Syrians should be confuted; that all might know that JEHOVAH, the God of the whole earth, was almighty in every place. (*Notes, Deut.* xxxii. 26, 27. *Jer.* xiv. 7—9. *Ez.* xx. 7—9. xxxvi. 32.)—Probably, this man of God informed Ahab, that the Lord had devoted Ben-hadad to destruction, and would deliver them into his hands, that he might execute his vengeance upon him. Another prophet seems to have been sent with this message; and not he who delivered the former one.

V. 29, 30. Perhaps the Israelites were encamped on a hill, and the Syrians, intimidated by their late defeat, did not venture to attack them, notwithstanding their immense superiority in numbers, till they came down into the plain. This, it is probable, they did on the seventh day; and the Lord miraculously interposing, both to encourage and assist the little company of Israel, and to terrify and confound the Syrians; a decided victory, with prodigious slaughter of the Syrians, ensued. And the survivors taking refuge in the city, by the immediate interposition of the Almighty, twenty-seven thousand were crushed by the wall, from which they expected defence, falling upon them. (*Josh.* vi. 20.) And Ben-hadad concealed himself in a retired chamber. (*Marg.*)

V. 31—34. A general opinion seems to have prevailed, that the princes of Israel, the people of God, were more

shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then, *said Ahab*, I will send thee away
b 42. xxii. 31. 2 Chr. xviii. 30. Is. xxvi. 10. with this covenant. [b] So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.

c 38. 1 Sam. x. 12. 2 Kings ii. 3. 5. 7. 15. iv. 1. 38. Am. vii. 14. 35 ¶ And a certain man [c] of the sons of the prophets said unto his
d xiii. 1, 2. 17, 18. neighbour, [d] in the word of the LORD,
e 37. Is. viii. 18. xx. 2, 3. Jer. xxvii. 2, 3. Ez. iv. 3. Matt. xvi. 24. [e] Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him.

f xiii. 21—24. 26. 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23. 36 Then said he unto him, [f] Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him.

37 Then he found another man, and
g 35. Ex. xxi. 12. said, [g] Smite me, I pray thee. And the
* Heb. *smiting and wounding.* man smote him, [*] so that in smiting he wounded *him*.

38 So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and
h disguised himself with ashes upon his face.

h xiv. 2. xxii. 30. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. Matt. vi. 16.

39 And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, [i] Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall [k] thy life be for his life, [l] or else thou shalt [†] pay a talent of silver.

i Judg. ix. 7—20. 2 Sam. xii. 1—7. xiv. 5—7. Mark xii. 1—12.

k 42. 2 Kings x. 24.
l Ex. xxi. 30. Job xxxvi. 18. Ps. xlix. 7, 8. Prov. vi. 35. xiii. 8. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
† Heb. *weigh.*

40 And as thy servant was busy here and there, [‡] he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, [m] So *shall* thy judgment *be*; thyself hast decided *it*.

‡ Heb. *he was not.*
m 2 Sam. xii. 5, 6. Job xv. 6. Matt. xxi. 41. xxv. 24—27. Luke xix. 22.

41 And he hasted, and took [n] the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him, that he *was* of the prophets.

n 38. 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Job ii. 8. Jer. vi. 26.

42 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [o] Because thou hast let go out of *thy* hand a man, whom I ap-

o 34. 1 Sam. xv. 9—11.

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generous and clement than other kings: and indeed, sentiments, derived from the oracles of God, produce good effects, in this respect, on multitudes who do not act habitually on religious principles.—Ben-hadad's ambassadors, appearing in his name before Ahab, clothed in sackcloth, and with ropes on their heads, formed a remarkable and most humiliating contrast to the preceding state of affairs. Thus they acted as penitents and criminals, who were sorry that they had attacked Ahab, and confessed that they deserved to die for that offence. This must have been a very great mortification to Ben-hadad: and it was equally flattering to Ahab's vanity; who, seduced by it, forgot both the interests of Israel, and his own real honour and security. Indeed he ought to have given God the glory of his victory, and to have consulted the prophets in what manner to deal with Ben-hadad. But he acknowledged this wicked prince as his brother; being more pleased with the dignity of a king, than the distinction of an Israelite. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xv. 8, 9.) He even treated him with respect, and made a league with him upon disadvantageous terms; and sent him away, without any security, except his bare word, for the performance of the treaty, and which Ben-hadad soon violated. (*Notes*, xxii. 2—31.) In all this Ahab was extremely foolish, as well as deeply criminal.—These streets of Damascus were probably allotted the Israelites for the purposes of trade, that in them they might live unmolested according to their own laws. It is probable, that the same liberty had been allowed the Syrians in Samaria; where the idolaters were at ease, when the prophets of JEHOVAH were cut off.

Diligently observe, &c. (33) נִחֵשׁ. נחשׁ *auguratus est, divinavit, observavit conjecturas.*—*Gen.* xliv. 5. 15. (*Note*, *Gen.* xliv. 4—6.) Hence נָחָשׁ *a serpent. Gen.* iii. 1. (*Note*, *Gen.* iii. 1.) These men acted with the subtlety and sagacity of the serpent, in their conduct before Ahab.

V. 35, 36. This command was given by one of "the "sons of the prophets" "in the word of the LORD," to his neighbour, or *fellow*, to another of the same company, who would know that he spake in the name of the Lord. The refusal therefore was direct disobedience to God, which he was pleased to punish with immediate death, by a lion meeting and slaying him. (*Note*, xiii. 23—32.) Ahab would doubtless hear of this event: and if one who humanely refused to smite a pious prophet at the command of God was thus punished; he might conclude, that he should not be spared, who disobeyed God, by forming an alliance with a haughty idolatrous king, whom the Lord required him to destroy. It seems that the prophet intended, by being wounded, the better to personate a soldier who had been in the battle, and had deserved well of his king, though he had failed of his duty in one particular (37).

V. 38—40. The prophet appeared, either as one wounded in the face, and so covered with a bandage like a veil to disguise himself, as many understand it; or he assumed the character of a mourner, being under condemnation to die, seeing he could not pay the talent of silver required of him; or he united both. His account implied, that the prisoner trusted to his keeping was one of superior rank; and that his officer, or captain, committed him to his care, with this injunction, or warning: yet the prisoner was gone; and Ahab, without reflecting on his own conduct, confirmed the sentence. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xii. 1—7.)

V. 41, 42. As soon as Ahab discovered who the prophet was, he perceived that he had been drawn in to pass sentence upon himself.—Ahab lost his life in fighting against Ben-hadad, who did not fulfil this treaty: (*Notes*, xxii. 3. 31—35:) and great evils came upon Israel from the Syrians, whom Ahab might at this time have subju-

pointed to utter destruction, therefore
p xxii. 31—37. 2 Kings vi. 24. viii. 12. 2 Chr. xviii. 33, 34. p thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.

43 And the king of Israel q went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.
q xxi. 4. xxii. 8. Esth. v. 13. vi. 12, 13. Job v. 2. Prov. xix. 3.

gated, or deprived of power to injure them. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* vi. 25—29. viii. 12, 13. x. 32—36.)

V. 43. *Heavy*, &c.] Whilst the Lord secured his own glory, and protected his people; he deprived Ahab of all satisfaction in his deliverance and victory, and filled him with vexation and dismay. He did not repent of his fault, but he was chagrined at the message, and enraged at the messenger. Many think it was Micaiah; which is not improbable. (*Notes*, xxi. 4—6. xxii. 8. 1 *Sam.* xiv. 45, 46.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

The indignation of the Lord will surely weaken and dispirit sinners: and those nations especially, which have been favoured with the light of revelation, will be brought low for their iniquity, when they forsake the service of God.—Ungodly men delight to insult over the fallen; success increases their pride and insolence; and thus they too are prepared for vengeance.—Those, who most daringly rebel against God, are often mere cowards when assaulted by their fellow-creatures: and no extremities of affliction, or consulting together on what they should, or should not do, will bring sinners, when left to themselves, duly to consider the real causes of their distress.—Men will part with their most pleasant things, which they most love, to save their temporal lives: and yet they lose their souls, and incur everlasting misery, rather than bestow any labour, or give up any pleasure or interest, to prevent it! (*Notes*, *Matt.* xvi. 24—28. *P. O* 21—28.)—Boasting and menacing language generally betrays a weak and foolish mind, exposes men to cutting rebukes, and terminates in abject meanness and disgrace. To glory in what we *have* done, is pride and vanity: but to glory in what we *will* do, is extreme ignorance and folly; for no capacity or management can ensure success. (*Note*, *Jam.* iv. 13—17.)—Drunkards perform great things, as far as boasting words can go: and they urge one another on to rash and foolish enterprizes, which expose them in every way to detriment and to ruin.—The Lord will secure his own glory, and take care of his own people, notwithstanding the wickedness of the great, or the many: he will leave every impenitent sinner without excuse; and he delights to save by unlikely instruments, that his own power may be the more conspicuous. At some seasons, the convictions of the most abandoned may get an advantage over their lusts: for a time they may be restrained from iniquity, may do many things according to the command of God, and even regard the admonitions of his ministers: thus they are sometimes externally favoured; that they may experience the different effect of obedience and of disobedience, for their deeper condemnation, if they relapse into their former crimes.—The Lord inspires counsel and courage, or sends infatuation and dismay, as he pleases: so that the battle is not to the strong; but all calculations are strangely proved erroneous, when this secret influence is not taken into the account. (*Note*, *Ec.* ix. 11, 12.)

V. 22—43.

Fallen man has very confused, absurd, and dishonourable apprehensions of the divine attributes. He conceives of God, as if he were such an one as himself, and is thus emboldened to persist in his rebellion: and the most consummate wisdom, in worldly concerns, often unites with the most contemptible ignorance on religious subjects.—To silence the blasphemies, or to expose the mistakes of his enemies, the Lord sometimes gives temporary success to those, who, *in another way*, despise his warnings and disobey his precepts: but he will not countenance them in their crimes, nor let them finally escape condign punishment.—The whole creation is at war with those who fight against God; and he will surely render contemptible, as well as miserable, the haughtiest of them.—The ambitious are pleased with abject submissions and adulation; and love the society of the most wicked men, who will stoop low enough to them. Thus they are seduced and bribed, not only to disregard the will of God, and to prefer the friendship of his enemies; but to forego the most solid temporal advantages to themselves and their connexions, for the sake of empty words and fair professions! It indeed becomes all to be *merciful*; and clemency is the ornament of royalty, especially of the kings of Israel, the rulers of God's people: yet clemency to notorious criminals, whilst those who love and serve God are treated with cruelty, is strangely inconsistent; to pretend to be more merciful than the Lord, by sparing those whom he commands to be put to death, is an awful presumption; and to regard those as brethren, whom he has doomed to "utter "destruction," is an evidence of great impiety.—In every thing the Lord demands *implicit* obedience; even the plea of compassion will not excuse rebellion against his will: and, by severe temporal judgments on such as have committed lighter offences, he loudly speaks terror to more atrocious criminals; whom he will at length constrain to decide against themselves. And whatever prosperity they may in the mean time obtain, it will be embittered to them by what they feel, and what they fear; for "there is no "peace, saith my God, to the wicked."—But may we not here, by an allowable accommodation, hint some profitable instructions? The convinced sinner, not daring any longer to persist in his impotent contest against the Almighty; and unable to flee from him, or to purchase his forgiveness and favour, is almost reduced to despair. Then he hears a report of mercy, abounding in Christ Jesus to the chief of sinners; and in hopes of obtaining a free salvation, with penitent tears and humiliating confessions, he cries out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Becoming acquainted with the gracious appellations of Father, Brother, and Friend of sinners, and the exceedingly great and precious promises contained in the scripture; he diligently observes, and eagerly catches them, as it were, from the Saviour's lips, and pleads them in humble prayer. Thus he obtains forgiveness; the everlasting covenant is made with him, and all the blessings of the gospel are secured to him: at the same time, he yields himself to the Lord to be his servant, and love constrains him to live to his glory.—But alas! most that hear these glad tidings are busy here and there, till the day of salvation is gone; and, not hav-

CHAP. XXI.

Ahab covets Naboth's vineyard, and is greatly displeased, because Naboth refuses to part with it, 1—4. Jezebel discovering this, by letters, in Ahab's name, to the elders of Jezreel, causes Naboth to be stoned, as a blasphemer, 5—14. She excites Ahab to take possession of his vineyard, 15, 16. Elijah is sent to meet Ahab, and to denounce the judgment of God against him, and his family, and Jezebel, 17—24. Ahab's enormous wickedness, 25, 26. He externally humbles himself before God, and the judgments on his family are deferred to his son's days, 27—29.

[a] xx. 35—43. 2 Chr. xxviii. 22. Ezra ix. 13, 14. Is. ix. 13. Jer. v. 3.
[b] xviii. 45. Josh. xix. 18. Judg. vi. 33. 1 Sam. xxix. 1. Hos. i. 4, 5.
[c] Gen. iii. 6. Ex. xx. 17. Deut. v. 21. 1 Sam. viii. 14. Jer. xxii. 17. Hab. ii. 9—11. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Jam. i. 14, 15.
[d] 2 Kings ix. 27. Deut. xi. 10. Ec. ii. 5. Cant. iv. 15.
[*] Heb. be *good in thine eyes.* Gen. xvi. 6. 1 Sam. viii. 6. xxix. 6. *Margins.*
[e] Gen. xliv. 7. 17. Josh. xxii. 29. xxiv. 16. 1 Sam. xii. 23. xxiv. 6. xxvi. 9—11. 1 Chr. xi. 19. Job xxvii. 5. Rom. iii. 4. 6. 31. vi. 2. 15. vii. 7. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 15. Gal. vi. 14.
[f] Lev. xxv. 23. Num. xxxvi. 7. Ez. xlvi. 18.

AND it came to pass [a] after these things, *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which *was* in [b] Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, [c] Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for [d] a garden of herbs, because it *is* near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; *or*, if it [*] seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.

3 And Naboth said to Ahab, [e] The LORD forbid it me, that [f] I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

4 And Ahab came into his house [g] heavy and displeased, because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, [h] I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. [i] And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

[g] *See on* xx. 43.—Is. lvii. 20. Jon. iv. 1. 9.
[h] *See on* 3.—Num. xxxii. 13, 14.
[i] Gen. iv. 5—8. 2 Sam. xiii. 2. 4. Ec. vi. 9. vii. 9. Eph. iv. 27. Jam. i. 14, 15.

5 But [k] Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, [l] Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?

6 And he said unto her, [m] Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, [n] I will not give thee my vineyard.

7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, [o] Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise *and* eat bread, and let thine heart be merry; [p] I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

[k] 25. xvi. 31. xviii. 4. xix. 2. Gen. iii. 6.
[l] 2 Sam. xiii. 4. Neh. ii. 2. Esth. iv. 5.
[m] *See on* 3—Esth. v. 9—14. vi. 12, 13. Prov. xiv. 30. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Jam. iv. 2—7.
[n] *See on* 3, 4.
[o] 1 Sam. viii. 14. 2 Sam. xiii. 4. Prov. xxx. 31. Ec. iv. 1. viii. 4. Dan. v. 19—21.
[p] 15, 16. Mic. ii. 1, 2. vii. 3.

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ing wherewithal to ransom their souls, they must spend eternity in unavailing lamentations and despair. Nay, even true believers are often so taken up with trifles, as to let seasons of important usefulness glide away unimproved, to the loss both of themselves and of others. May the Lord "teach us so to number our days, that we may "apply our hearts unto wisdom!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. Ahab had not long before lost an opportunity of enlarging, securing, and improving his dominions: and now he coveted Naboth's vineyard, to make him an additional kitchen-garden, or pleasure-garden! He seemed, however, to propose equitable terms to the possessor; but his fault lay in desiring it in an inordinate manner. (*Notes, Ex.* xx. 17. *Rom.* vii. 7—12.)

V. 3. Naboth seems to have been a conscientious man, and a worshipper of JEHOVAH, which might render Jezebel the more determined on his destruction. (*Note*, 8—14.) He valued his vineyard as "the inheritance of his "fathers," originally assigned to them by the Lord himself. He might, if in want, have *leased out*, or *mortgaged*, his estate till the year of jubilee: (*Notes, Lev.* xxv. 23—28. *Num.* xxxvi. 1—9:) but this was not the case; and he was sensible, that if his vineyard became a part of the royal gardens, it would never revert to his family. The Lord had forbidden him to alienate his land: and he plainly gave Ahab the true reason, why he could not comply with his desires; for he would rather seem uncourteous, or offend his prince, than transgress the law of God; whatever otherwise he might have been disposed to do.

The Lord forbid it me.] חָלִילָה לִי מֵיְהוָה ' חוליה ', *profanitas; ' profanum; vox aliquid abominantis.* Respondet Græcis μη ' γενοιτο.' *Robertson.*—*Gen.* xviii. 25. *Josh.* xxii. 29. xxiv. 16. 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 7. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 17. Heb. The word implies the idea of *impiety;* and Naboth seems to have started back from the proposal, with aversion and alarm, as from a temptation to a heinous sin.

V. 4—6. (*Note*, xx. 43.) Ahab, a victorious and prosperous king, was filled with anguish and vexation, because he met with a denial in so small a matter! Such was the conflict of his passions, that he lay down, and, either through sickness or sullenness, would not taste food! He greatly desired the vineyard. His pride was intolerably offended, that one of his own subjects should peremptorily refuse to comply with his proposal; he was ashamed to yield the point in contest; and he was afraid of proceeding to extremities. The effects of these conflicting passions made him very miserable: yet it is probable he would not have attempted violence against Naboth, had not "Jezebel his "wife stirred him up." (*Notes, Esth.* v. 13, 14.)—It is observable, that in relating the cause of his disquietude, Ahab made no mention of Naboth's conscientious reason for his refusal; but stated it as if it had been entirely the effect of insolence and obstinacy!

V. 7. It was indeed unworthy of the king of Israel to fret himself about such a trifle. But this base woman meant to rouse her husband to gratify both his covetousness and revenge. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xiii. 1—4.) She intimated, that he was incapable of managing a kingdom, as it became a king, if he hesitated to seize on Naboth's vineyard, and to punish his insolence. (*Note, John* xi. 49—53.)

8 So [q] she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters unto [r] the elders, and to [s] the nobles that *were* in his city, dwelling with Naboth.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, [t] Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth [*] on high among the people;

10 And set [u] two men, [x] sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, [y] Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And *then* carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.

11 And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles, who were the inhabitants in his city, [z] did as Jezebel had sent unto them, *and* as it *was* written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

12 They [a] proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

13 And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and [b] the men of Belial witnessed against him, *even* against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did [c] blaspheme God and [d] the king. Then [e] they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, [f] Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, [g] Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

16 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that [h] Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

17 ¶ And [i] the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

18 Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, [k] which *is* in Samaria: behold, *he is* in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.

19 And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, [l] Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, [m] In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

q 2 Sam. xi. 14, 15. 2 Chr. xxxii. 17. Ezra iv. 7, 8. Neh. vi. 5. Esth. iii. 12—15. viii. 8—13.
r Num. xi. 16. Deut. xvi. 18, 19. xxi. 1—9.
s 1. 2 Kings x. 1—7. 11.
t Gen. xxxiv. 13—17. Is. lviii. 4. Matt. ii. 8. xxiii. 14. Luke xx. 47. John xviii. 28.
* Heb. *in the top of the people.*
u *See on* Deut. xix. 15.—Matt. xxvi. 59, 60. Acts vi. 11.
x *See on* Deut. xiii. 13. Judg. xix. 22.
y Ex. xxii. 28. Lev. xxiv. 15, 16. Matt. xxvi. 65, 66. John x. 33. Acts vi. 13.
z Ex. i. 17. 21. xxiii. 1, 2. Lev. xix. 15. 1 Sam. xxii. 17. 18. xxiii. 20. 2 Kings x. 6, 7. 2 Chr. xxiv. 21. Prov. xxix. 12. 26. Dan. iii. 18—25. Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16. Matt. ii. 12. 16. Acts iv. 19. v. 29.
a *See on* 8—10.
b Deut. v. 20. xix. 16—21. Ps. xxvii. 12. xxxv. 11. Prov. vi. 19. xix. 5. 9. xxv. 18. Mark xiv. 56—59.
c Job i. 5. 11. ii. 9. Matt. ix. 3. Acts vi. 11. 13.
d Ec. x. 20. Is. viii. 21. Am. vii. 10. Luke xxiii. 2. John xix. 12. Acts xxiv. 5.
e Lev. xxiv. 11—16. Num. xv. 35, 36. Deut. xiii. 10. xxi. 21. xxii. 21. 24. Josh. vii. 24, 25. 2 Kings ix. 26. Acts vii. 58, 59.
f 2 Sam. xi. 14—24. Ec. v. 8. viii. 14.
g *See on* 7.
h 2 Sam. i. 18—16. iv. 9—12. xi. 25—27. xxiii. 15—17. Ps. l. 18. Is. xxxiii. 15. Obad. 12—14. Rom. i. 32. 2 Pet. ii. 15.
i 2 Kings i. 15, 16. v. 25. Ps. ix. 12. Is. xxvi. 21.
k xiii. 32. 2 Chr. xxii. 9.
l Gen. iii. 11. iv. 9, 10. 2 Sam. xii. 9. Mic. iii. 1—4. Hab. ii. 9. 12.
m xxii. 38. Judg. i. 7. 2 Sam. xii. 11. 2 Kings ix. 25, 26. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 16. lviii. 10, 11.

'What! hast thou not power to crush such an adversary? Arise and enjoy thyself, and leave the business with me; I will speedily settle it to thy satisfaction.' This was her evident meaning, to which Ahab made no objection or opposition.

V. 8—14. Jezebel wrote in Ahab's name; and sealed the letters with *his* seal, which it seems he allowed her to use when and as she pleased. Thus the elders of Jezreel were required to obey her directions, as they valued the king's favour. She represented Naboth as a dangerous criminal, who must be taken off, without a particular enquiry into the nature of his offence: yet, as he bore a fair character, some charge must be brought against him, which might prevent the people from taking umbrage at his execution. A fast must therefore be proclaimed; as if some horrid wickedness had been discovered, which threatened the city with divine judgments, till solemnly expiated. (*Note, Is.* lviii. 3, 4.) This would excite general consternation: and on the day appointed, Naboth must be apprehended; and "men of Belial" procured, (that is men wholly unprincipled, and free from all restraints of conscience, who would do any thing for hire;) to testify that he had blasphemed God and the king: thus he would be condemned to be stoned for the blasphemy; for the treasonable words, his estate would be confiscated; and the elders were required to see the sentence immediately executed. These infamous orders were as infamously obeyed, without hesitation or reluctance; and by elders and nobles of Israel, though in contempt of all religion, law, and justice! —It seems they stoned Naboth's sons also, that there might be none to avenge his death, or to demand his estate. (2 *Kings* ix. 26.) When Jezebel cut off the Lord's prophets, she had doubtless inured the magistrates to similar practices, and rewarded their wickedness: so that she did not fear a refusal from the elders of Jezreel. They also knew from whom the orders came, and reported the execution of them to Jezebel, not to Ahab.—The elders of the same city, not long after, paid as implicit an obedience to Jehu's orders, in putting to death seventy of Ahab's descendants. (2 *Kings* x. 3—10.)

Nobles. (8) חֹרִים: (from חוּר *album esse, albescere;* Robertson:) *candidi, candidati, togati.—Didst blaspheme.* (10) בֵּרַכְתָּ. *Note, Job* i. 5.

V. 15, 16. Ahab proved, that he was pleased with the conduct of Jezebel and her agents; and indeed he made it his own, by readily going in person to take possession of the estate, for which the atrocious murder had been committed. (*Note,* 17—19.)

V. 17—19. Other prophets or sons of the prophets had been sent upon ordinary messages to Ahab: but Elijah himself was employed on this occasion, whose very presence would dismay the proud tyrant, and whose strong

20 And Ahab said to Elijah, [n] Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found *thee:* because [o] thou hast sold thyself [p] to work evil in the sight of the LORD.

21 Behold, [z] I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab [a] him that pisseth against the wall, and [b] him that is shut up and left in Israel.

22 And will [c] make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked *me* to anger, and [d] made Israel to sin.

23 And of [e] Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the * wall of Jezreel.

24 Him [f] that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

25 But [g] there was none like unto Ahab, which did [h] sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, [i] whom Jezebel his wife † stirred up.

26 And he did [k] very abominably in following idols, [l] according to all *things* as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

27 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that [m] he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his

n xviii. 17. xxii. 8. 2 Chr. xviii. 7. 17. Am. v. 10. Mark xii. 12 Gal. iv. 16. Rev. xi. 10.
o 25. 2 Kings xvii. 17. Is. l. 1. lii. 3. Rom. vii. 14.
p xvi. 30. 2 Kings xxi. 2. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Eph. iv. 19.
z See on xiv. 10. —Ex. xx. 5. 2 Kings ix. 7—9. x. 1—7. 11—14. 17. 30.
a See on 1 Sam. xxv. 22. 34.
b Deut. xxxii. 36. 2 Kings ix. 8, 9. xiv. 26.
c xv. 29. xvi. 3, 4. 11.
d See on xiv. 16. xv. 30. 34. xvi. 26.
e See on 25.—2 Kings ix. 10. 30—37.
* Or, *ditch.*
f xiv. 11. xvi. 4. Is. xiv. 19. Jer. xv. 3. Ez. xxxii. 4, 5. xxxix. 18—20. Rev. xix. 18.
g xvi. 30—33. 2 Kings xxiii. 25.
h See on 20.—2 Kings xvii. 17. Is. l. 1. lii. 3. Rom. vi. 19. vii. 14.
i 7. xi. 1—4. xvi. 31. xviii. 4. xix. 2. Prov. xxii. 14. Ec. vii. 26. Mark vi. 17—27. Acts vi. 12. xiv. 2.
† Or, *incited.*
k 2 Chr. xv. 8. Is. lxv. 4. Jer. xvi. 18. xliv. 4. Ez. xviii. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 3. Rev. xxi. 8.
l Gen. xv. 16. Lev. xviii. 28—30. xx. 22, 23. Deut. xii. 31. 2 Kings xvi. 3. xxi. 2. 11. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. 9. xxxvi. 14. Ezra ix. 11—14. Ps. cvi. 35—39. Ez. xvi. 47.
m Gen. xxxvii. 34. 2 Kings vi. 30, 31. xviii. 37. Jon. iii. 6.

faith and intrepid spirit qualified him for such a service. (*Notes,* xviii. 17—20.) In the very vineyard of Naboth, even whilst Ahab was seizing on his prey, and surrounded by his officers, the prophet delivered this message to him, for his deeper mortification, and that it might be more noticed by others. He directly charged Ahab with the murder of Naboth, nor did he attempt to deny it, or to excuse himself. The prediction, that dogs should lick the blood of Ahab, certainly implied that he would be cut off by a violent death: but the expression, "in the place where, &c." occasions considerable difficulty; because the city Samaria was at some distance from Jezreel. Some learned men think that the word rendered "the place where," may mean, *in like manner as:* but this signification of the original word is unprecedented. Others suppose, that the word *place* is taken in a large sense, for all the adjacent region; and so includes Samaria, where Ahab dwelt, and where he was buried; as well as the city of Jezreel. (xxii. 37, 38.) But may we not say, that, as dogs licked the blood of Ahab, *literally,* when his chariot was washed in the pool of Samaria; so they licked *his* blood, as flowing through and from the veins of his son Joram, when Joram was slain by Jehu, and his body thrown into this very spot? (*Note,* 2 *Kings* ix. 25, 26.)

V. 20. After the slaughter of Baal's prophets, and Elijah's flight from Jezebel, Ahab had returned to his wicked course of life, and he shunned the prophet as his worst enemy: and it does not appear, that Elijah had seen him since those events. (*Notes,* xxii. 8, 9.) Before indeed, Ahab had bestowed much pains to find the prophet: but being now determined in idolatry, and yet afraid of *him,* whose prayers had called for drought upon the land, and fire and rain from heaven; (*Notes,* xvii. 1. xviii. 38, 39. 41—44;) and especially still feeling in his conscience the anguish of his cutting rebukes, he even trembled at the thoughts of him. Others, called prophets, had come to him with milder messages, and he thought them more friendly; but Elijah's severity could not be mollified. His presence therefore on this occasion surprised, offended, and affrighted him: and when "his enemy had found him," he expected not to go well away, but to hear some awful judgment denounced against him, for his recent transgression.—Nor did Elijah deny that he was an enemy to his wickedness: he neither paid respect to him, nor was intimidated by his anger or power. He had found him, as a thief caught in the fact; and, in the name of God, he denounced the most tremendous sentence of condemnation on him and on his posterity. (*Note, Jer.* ii. 26—30.) For Ahab had "sold "himself," *as a willing slave to his lusts.* This is very different from "being sold under sin;" so that through the remaining power of corrupt nature, a man who "delights "in the law of God," and hates all sin, yet "cannot do "the things that he would." In the former case, the slavery is *voluntary,* the will itself is enslaved: in the latter, it is *involuntary,* and is a man's grief and distress. "To will is present with me: but how to perform that "which is good, I find not."—"Oh wretched man that I "am." (*Notes, Rom.* vii. 13—25.)

Thou hast sold thyself.] הִתְמַכַּרְתָּ; 25.—מָכַרְתִּי, *I have sold:* נִמְכַּרְתֶּם, *ye have sold yourselves, or have been sold. Is.* l. 1.

V. 21, 22. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* xiv. 9—11. xvi. 2—6.

V. 23. This circumstance not only predicted the dreadful manner in which Jezebel should be slain, but denoted the worst punishment of sin to be after death. (*Note,* 2 *Kings* ix. 30—37.)—*Jezreel.*] In the very place in which Naboth had been murdered. If Jezebel attended Ahab on this occasion, it was, as far as is recorded, the only time, in which Elijah spake in her presence.

V. 25, 26. Ahab's crime in respect of Naboth was not a detached part of his conduct, contrary to the general course of his life, as David's sin in the matter of Uriah had been; but it was a specimen of his continued rebellion against God: (*Note, Rom.* vii. 15—17:) and the gross and open idolatry to which Jezebel had first stirred him up, was even more abominable in the sight of God than his murder and other crimes. Having sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, as if in contempt and defiance of him, he was openly, constantly, and diligently employed in it, as a slave is in his master's business; and it was requisite that his punishment should be as notorious as his crimes had been. (*Marg. Ref.* k, l.)

V. 27—29. Ahab was greatly terrified at Elijah's mes-

flesh, and fasted, and [n] lay in sackcloth, and [o] went softly.

28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

29 [p] Seest thou how [q] Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, [r] I will not bring [s] the evil in his days: *but* [t] in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

n 2 Sam. xii. 17. Job xvi. 15. Is. xxii. 12. lviii. 5—6. Joel i. 13.
o Is. xxxviii. 15.
p Jer. vii. 17. Luke vii. 44.
q Ex. x. 3. Ps. xviii. 44. lxvi. 3. *margins.* lxxviii. 34—37.
r Ps. lxxxvi. 15. Ez. xxxiii. 10, 11. Mic. vii. 18 Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.
s *See on* 21—23.
t 2 Kings ix. 25, 26. 33—37. x. 1—7. 11.

sage; and at the severe, determined, and solemn manner in which he delivered it: but his humiliation was superficial, and productive of external observances only. He did not, that we find, so much as restore Naboth's vineyard to his heirs; much less did he put away Jezebel, or renounce idolatry, and establish the worship of God. But he rent his clothes, wore sackcloth and lay in it, fasted, and appeared in publick with the dejected air of a penitent.—However, though his humiliation was formal and hypocritical, it acknowledged the justice of God, and his own sin, and put an outward honour on the divine law. Neither Jeroboam, nor Baasha had even thus far humbled themselves. Inadequate as it was, Ahab would have acted still worse, if he had vindicated and gloried in his crimes, or attempted to put the prophet to death: and therefore the Lord recompensed his outward temporary repentance with a similar reward; for he granted him a respite of the judgment, as far as it respected his family, and spared him the anguish of witnessing the slaughter of his children. 'Accordingly it was his son's blood, not his, which was licked 'up by the dogs, in the portion of Jezreel.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 17—19.)—Jezebel was too hardened to shew any symptoms of remorse on this, or any other occasion. (*Note*, *Acts* xxiv. 24—27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

It is natural to us, as fallen creatures, to hanker after those things which are withheld from us; and every accession of wealth or prosperity, increases the violence of this propensity. The commandment indeed, which forbids us to covet, "is holy, just, and good," the fence of our neighbour's property, and of our own peace and integrity. (*Note*, *Ex.* xx. 17.) But alas! "it is weak through the flesh;" and the impetuous torrent of our lusts easily bursts the salutary barrier, and rages the more for having been opposed. (*Note*, *Rom.* viii. 3, 4.) Yet every violation of the precept proves its excellency; as indulged concupiscence opens the door to temptations, makes way for the most atrocious crimes, and prepares misery and destruction for every one who stands in the way of its gratification. If fair means fail to procure the object of inordinate desires, fraud or violence must be employed.—Pride cannot brook opposition: every plea of conscience is treated as mere pretence; and the best intended actions, of the most blameless and excellent persons, are ascribed to the worst of motives. But such passions are serpents cherished in a man's bosom, the bite of which inflicts exquisite torture and death.—Vain indeed are earthly advantages, if the want of a coveted spot of ground for a garden, and the supercilious or conscientious behaviour of an inferior, can rob a prosperous monarch of all his comfort, and render him sick with rage and vexation! (*Note*, *Esth.* v. 13.) This, however, is wholly the effect of men's lusts and passions, which, like children, are always most restless when most indulged. Providential blessings well answer the end for which they were intended, but cannot form a rational creature's felicity: and that degree of contradiction or disappointment, which would scarcely cause a humble man to heave one sigh, will break a proud man's heart. We should beware then of covetousness, pride, anger, envy, and discontent: we should "watch and pray "that we may not enter into temptation:" we should aim to make the spiritual precept, "thou shalt not covet," the barrier *in our hearts*, as well as in the law of God, against the violation of the other commandments; and not allow ourselves so to desire things lawful, as not to be able to brook a denial or disappointment. (*Note*, *Matt.* v. 27, 28.) Our more intimate connexions are in these respects of the highest importance. In the married state we expect, and should reciprocally impart, sympathy, counsel, encouragement, and assistance: but when, instead of a prudent and pious counsellor, a man has a factor for Satan in the form of an artful, unprincipled, and beloved woman, what fatal effects may not be expected! "Be ye not therefore un-"equally yoked with unbelievers."—It is hard to relate facts, respecting ourselves, with simplicity and impartiality; but much more difficult to restrain those within the strict limits of equity, who are able to seize on the objects of their desires, without fear of being called to account before any human tribunal. Hence rapines and oppressions have disgraced human nature, and desolated the earth, in all ages; every resistance to the will of a superior, however reasonable, conscientious, and mild, has been condemned as rebellion; and this has occasioned assassinations, massacres, or publick executions. A little acquaintance with history, and with human nature, will terminate our *astonishment* at such transactions; for "nothing "is new under the sun:" but they must ever excite our regret, our compassion, and our indignation.

V. 8—16.

The most flagrant injustice has generally been committed under the colour of *legal forms;* and the most horrid crimes have been perpetrated under the mask of piety: because the shew of *these good things* hides the deformity of such transactions, as otherwise could never be endured. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xxiii. 14. 25—28.)—Many command and reward villainy, who in their hearts despise and detest the mercenary wretches whom they employ. (*Note*, *Matt.* xxvii. 3—5.) It is grievous that men of Belial abound even in the lower order of society; but most horrible when judges and nobles deserve this harsh appellation. Yet there will always be found those in every rank, who will prostitute their talents, influence, and conscience, to the tyrant who rewards iniquity. (*Notes*, *Ps.* lviii. 1, 2. lxxxii. 2—4. *Ez.* xxii. 27, 28. *Mic.* ii. 1—3. vii. 1—4. *Matt.* xxvi. 57—62.) Let us then bless God for a *limited* government, and for security from such outrages of oppression: though, even in Britain, men of Belial, by false

CHAP. XXII.

Ahab persuades Jehoshaphat to go with him against Ramoth-gilead, 1—4. Jehoshaphat proposes to enquire of the LORD; and the false prophets assure Ahab of success, 5—7. At Jehoshaphat's request Micaiah, whom Ahab hates, is sent for, 8—12. The messenger's advice to Micaiah, and his answer, 13, 14. Micaiah, adjured by Ahab to declare the truth, predicts his death, and shews that his prophets are deceived by a lying spirit, 15—23. He is reviled, smitten, and sent to prison, 24—28. Jehoshaphat goes to battle in his robes, but Ahab in disguise, 29, 30. Jehoshaphat, mistaken for Ahab, narrowly escapes; Ahab is mortally wounded; and the people are dispersed by proclamation, 31—36. Ahab dies; and dogs lick his blood, 37, 38. The acts of Ahab, who is succeeded by Ahaziah, 39, 40. Jehoshaphat's good reign, and acts, 41—49. He dies and is succeeded by Jehoram, 50. Ahaziah's wicked reign, 51—53.

AND [a] they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. [a] See on xx.

2 And it came to pass [b] in the third year, that [c] Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. [b] 1. Matt. xii. 40. xvi. 21. [c] 41. 44.—See on xv. 24. 2 Kings viii. 18. 2 Chr. xviii. 1, 2.

testimony and perjury, may deprive us of our property, our liberty, our reputation, or our lives. We should therefore commit all that is dear to us to the Lord's keeping; seek those good things, which cannot be taken from us; and wait with cheerful patience for that approaching judgment, when all iniquitous sentences shall be reversed. And let judges, juries, and witnesses beware of being warped, in their decisions, verdicts, or testimony, by fear, affection, or interest: for those, who now are placed upon the tribunal, must shortly stand at the bar, to answer before a heart-searching, impartial Judge, for their conduct in their important stations.—Those who rejoice in iniquity, and gladly seize on the profit derived from the crimes of others, will be condemned equally with the perpetrators: and the triumphing of the wicked, in the success of their villainy, resembles the flash of lightning, which leaves the night more dark and gloomy than before: for the Lord beholds and is displeased; and his tremendous threatenings are only preludes to his more tremendous vengeance.

V. 17—29.

Such ministers of God, as are most decidedly faithful, must expect to be deemed morose, and even malevolent, by sinners, whose consciences have been galled with their plain warnings and rebukes, but whose hearts are wedded to their lusts. Men of this character often count the very persons to be their enemies, whose hearts bleed with compassion for them, and whose secret prayers in their behalf are recorded before God, as a demonstration of their disinterested love for them. Indeed this appears, in their being willing rather to incur their keenest resentment, than cease their endeavours to save their souls. If men allow that they hate the minister for his faithfulness, they condemn themselves; but if they dislike him for his excessive severity, and his ill-nature, they are perfectly excusable: and what sinner would not wish to stand fair with his own conscience, and with society? (*Note*, xxii. 8.) On the other hand, impenitent sinners often account those to be their friends, who speak smooth things, and help them to deceive themselves: and are very lavish in their commendation, by way of contrasting them with those whom they deem their enemies; that it may be thought they love religion, while they hate its firmest friends.—But "the man "of God" will neither desire the applause, nor fear the reproach, of those who have "sold themselves to work "wickedness," and evince that they are the enemies of God and holiness. His testimony will one day find out those who have rejected it to their condemnation. Terrible things may come upon the willing slaves of sin in this world; but they will surely receive its awful wages in the second death. (*Note, Rev.* xx. 11—15.)—At the tribunal of God, the difference will be manifest to all men, between the most lamentable falls of true believers, and the habitual wickedness of ungodly men; and between true repentance, and all external, partial, and temporary appearances of it.—Before the searching word of God, the most hardened conscience (with very few exceptions) will sometimes be disquieted, and the stoutest hearts tremble; and for a season sinners will speak and act as if truly penitent. But "by their fruits ye shall know them:" and as the heart remains unchanged, nature will soon return to that course from which it has been violently forced; so that relapses into former iniquities, with continuance and quietness, will evince such hopeful appearances to be widely different from "that repentance, which is unto "salvation not to be repented of." Yet, as these concessions *outwardly* yield the point in contest, and are thus honourable to God, he will notice and recompense them with respites and outward benefits. So that, whilst we are warned to beware of counterfeits, we are encouraged by the abounding grace of God, which he will never withhold from the upright humble soul; seeing he so delights in mercy, that he extends it even to wicked men, as far as consists with his justice, holiness, truth, and wisdom. We may also be animated to abound in the work of the Lord, assured that our labour will not be in vain; since he even recompenses *in kind* the formal services of his enemies. And finally, may we seek the blessings of the new covenant for the good of ourselves, and of our children after us, whilst wicked men leave their inheritances to their posterity, burdened with the curse of God; and ensure destruction to their own souls.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. *Three years.*] During this time Benhadad was, no doubt, recruiting his forces, and preparing for war; having by no means adhered to the treaty, which Ahab had made with him.

V. 2. We shall have a better opportunity hereafter, of fully considering Jehoshaphat's character. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xvii—xx.)—He was very criminal in marrying his son to one of the family of idolatrous Ahab, which probably occasioned his visit at Samaria, with all its consequences. (*Notes, 2 Kings* viii. 18. *2 Chr.* xviii. 1.)

3 And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye, that [d] Ramoth in Gilead *is* our's, and we *be* [*] still, *and* take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?

4 And he said unto Jehoshaphat, [e] Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, [f] I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.

5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, [g] Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day.

6 Then the king of Israel gathered [h] the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, [i] Go up; for the Lord shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

7 And Jehoshaphat said, [j] *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?

8 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* [k] yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD; [l] but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy [m] good [n] concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, [o] Let not the king say so.

d iv. 13. Deut. iv. 43. Josh. xx. 8.
* Heb. *silent from taking it.* Judg. xvi. 2. 2 Sam. xix. 10. *margins.*
e 2 Kings iii. 7. 2 Chr. xviii. 3.
f 2 Chr. xix. 2. Ps. cxxxix. 21, 22. Prov. xiii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 John 11. Rev. ii. 2. 6.
g Num. xxvii. 21. Josh. ix. 14. Judg. i. 1. xx. 18. 23. 28. 1 Sam. xiv. 18, 19. xxiii. 2. 4. 9—12. xxx. 8. 2 Kings i. 3. iii. 11. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xviii. 4, 5. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Jer. xxi. 2. xlii. 2—6. Ez. xiv. 3. xx. 1—3.
h xviii. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 3.
i 15. 22, 23. 2 Chr. xviii. 14. Jer. viii. 10, 11. xiv. 13, 14. xxiii. 14—17. xxviii. 1—9. Ez. xiii. 7—16. 22. Matt. vii. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. Rev. xix. 20.
j 2 Kings iii. 11—13. 2 Chr. xviii. 6, 7.
k xviii. 4. xix. 10. 14. xx. 41, 42.
l 27. xx. 43. xxi. 20. Gen. xxxvii. 8. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Prov. ix. 8. xv. 12. Is. xlix. 7. Jer. xviii. 18. xx. 10. xliii. 3, 4. Am. v. 10. Zech. xi. 8. Matt. x. 22. John iii. 19—21. vii. 7. xv. 18, 19. xvii. 14. Gal. iv. 16. Rev. xi. 7—10.
m 13. Is. xxx. 10. Jer. xxxviii. 4. Mic. ii. 11.
n xx. 35—42. 2 Kings ix. 22. Is. iii. 11. lvii. 19—21. 14. Mic. ii 7.
o xxi. 27—29. Prov. v. 12—

V. 3. *Ramoth*, &c.] This seems to have been one of the cities, that Ben-hadad had engaged to restore to Ahab: but, having recovered his liberty, he made no scruple of violating his word. (*Note*, xx. 31—34.) Ramoth in Gilead was allotted to the tribe of Gad, and appointed by Moses to be one of the cities of Refuge. (*Deut.* iv. 43. *Josh.* xx. 8.) It was also given to the Levites of the family of Merari. (*Josh.* xxi. 38.) Yet it was at this time possessed by the king of Syria.

V. 4. Jehoshaphat meant nothing more, than to express his readiness to afford Ahab every assistance in his power; as both he and his forces were at his command: but the language seemed to countenance all Ahab's undertakings; or at least to treat all the differences in opinion and conduct between him and Ahab as unimportant! Yet surely there was an essential difference between the reformer of Judah, and the corrupter of Israel! But excessive pliability of temper was the grand defect in Jehoshaphat's character; which exposed him to many temptations, and involved him and his kingdom in many and complicated calamities; and terminated in the extirpation of his whole family, Joash alone excepted. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* viii. 18. ix. 27, 28. x. 13, 14. xi. 1, 2. 2 *Chr.* xviii. 1. xix. 2.)

V. 5. Jehoshaphat had been used to "acknowledge "God in all his ways," and not to engage in any important undertaking without enquiring of him by his prophets, or high priest; and he was not satisfied that Ahab should do otherwise. But what true servant of God could bring an acceptable, or even a tolerable message, to a gross idolater and cruel oppressor, who, for twenty-two years after he came to the throne, had been hardening himself in iniquity, amidst warnings, judgments, mercies, and convictions?

V. 6. It is most probable, that these were the prophets of the groves, who escaped, when the prophets of Baal were slain at the command of Elijah; for certainly they were false prophets. (*Notes*, xviii. 18—20. 40.) No doubt, they commonly prophesied in the name of Baal, or of some idol: but it seems that occasionally they could speak in the name of the LORD. In this verse indeed the word is not JEHOVAH, but *Adonai*, which is used with greater latitude: but afterwards both Zedekiah, and the rest of them, used the word JEHOVAH. (11, 12.) Like some modern philosophers and poets, they perhaps would argue, that it was all one, whether the Supreme Being were called Baal, or JEHOVAH, or Jupiter. To accommodate themselves therefore to Jehoshaphat, and to shew that they were not bigots, but men of candour and liberality, they would for once prophesy in the name of JEHOVAH. They perhaps allowed Jehoshaphat to be a good sort of man: but he had some narrow prejudices, and would not be satisfied, if they said, 'Go up, for Baal shall deliver it into the hand of 'the King;' and they would scorn to disagree with him about a trifling variation, which they could make with little trouble, and without expense.—They perceived also which way Ahab's inclinations leaned, and to please him likewise they assured him of success. It is however to be supposed, that the number and valour of Ahab's forces, his alliance with Jehoshaphat, and the scandalous treachery of Ben-hadad, concurred in encouraging their hopes that he should obtain the victory: especially as, notwithstanding his idolatries, he had before been rendered successful. (*Notes*, xx.)

V. 7. Jehoshaphat must have regarded these prophets as deceivers and sycophants, whose interest it was to counsel Ahab to please himself. He knew that Israel was favoured with Elijah, Elisha, and other eminent prophets, though none of them appeared at court: he felt dissatisfied; but being too afraid of giving offence, he seemed to allow that these were prophets of God, yet he wished to consult some other, if there were any to be found. Perhaps he took occasion, from their using the word *Adonai*, (which might mean either the God of Israel, or a false god,) to enquire after some other prophet of JEHOVAH: and this might induce them afterwards to change their language in this respect. His subsequent conduct, however, shews that he paid far more regard to them, than he ought to have done, or than they deserved. Indeed, he ought to have decidedly entered his protest against them, and warned Ahab of his danger, if he hearkened to them; as Micaiah did. At least he should have done this, after he had heard Micaiah's message. (*Notes*, 17—28.)

V. 8. Micaiah is never mentioned in the history, except in this chapter and the history in Chronicles: (2 *Chr.* xviii:) yet he doubtless had several times been sent with messages of rebuke and warning to this haughty idolater: (*Note*, 9:)

9 Then the king of Israel called an
* Or, *eunuch.* officer, and said, [p] Hasten *hither* Micaiah the son of Imlah.

10 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each
[q] on his throne, [q] having put on their
[†] Heb. *floor.* robes, in a [†] void place in the entrance
[r] of the gate of Samaria; and [r] all the prophets prophesied before them.

11 And Zedekiah the son of Che-
[s] naanah made him [s] horns of iron: and
[t] he said, [t] Thus saith the LORD, With
[u] these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.

12 And all the prophets prophesied
[u] so, saying, [u] Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper; for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the king's hand.

13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah, spake unto him, saying, [x] Behold now, the words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak *that which is* good.

14 And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, [y] what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.

15 ¶ So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, [z] shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, [a] Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

16 And the king said unto him, How many times [b] shall I adjure thee, [c] that thou tell me nothing but *that which is* true in the name of the LORD?

p 26, 27.
q 30. Esth. v. 1. vi. 8, 9. Matt. vi. 20. xi. 8. Acts xii. 21. xxv. 23.
r xviii. 29. 2 Chr. xviii. 9—11. Jer. xxvii. 14—16 Ez. xiii. 1—9.
s Jer. xxvii. 2. xxviii. 10—14. Zech. i. 18—21. Acts xix. 13—16. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. 2 Tim. iii. 8.
t Jer. xxiii. 17. 25. 31. xxviii. 2, 3. xxix. 21. Ez. xiii. 6. xxii. 27, 28. Mic. iii. 11.
u *See on* 6—15. 32—36.
x Ps. x. 11. xi. 1. xiv. 1. l. 21. Is. xxx. 10, 11. Hos. vii. 3. Am. vii. 13—17. Mic. ii. 6, 7. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16.
y Num. xxii. 38. 2 Chr. xviii. 12, 13. Jer. xxiii. 28. xxvi. 2, 3. xliii. 4. Ez. ii. 4—8. iii. 17—19. Acts xx. 20. 26, 27. 2 Cor. ii. 17. iv. 2.
z *See on* 6.
a xviii. 27. Judg. x. 14. 2 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chr. xviii. 14. Ec. xi. 9. Matt. xxvi. 45.
b Josh. vi. 26. 1 Sam. xiv. 24. 2 Chr. xviii. 15. Matt. xxvi. 63. Mark v. 7. Acts xix. 13.
c Jer. xlii. 3—6. Matt. xxii. 16, 17.

Ahab, therefore, while he allowed, that they might enquire of the LORD by him, acknowledged that he hated him! (*Notes, Is.* xxx. 8—11. *John* vii. 3—10. xv. 17—21.) But Jehoshaphat ventured gently to intimate that he ought not to speak thus: he ought neither to hate him, nor be displeased with his word, nor seek agreeable but useful things; and he hoped on this occasion he would bring an encouraging message.

V. 9. Ahab knew where to find Micaiah, whom he perhaps had put in prison for some of his faithful reproofs. (*Note*, 26, 27.)—Some conjecture that Micaiah was the prophet, who three years before had chagrined Ahab, and that he had kept him in prison ever since. (*Note*, xx. 43.)

V. 10, 11. (*Marg. Ref.* q, r.—*Note*, 24, 25.) *Horns*, &c. (11) These horns of iron were, probably, intended to represent the joint forces of the two kings, made successful by the power of God. The false prophets imitated the true ones in using external signs, the more deeply to impress the minds of those whom they addressed. (*Marg. Ref.* s, t.)

V. 13, 14. Perhaps this man intended to be friendly to Micaiah: and thought it was a pity, that he should hinder his preferment, and expose himself to Ahab's resentment, by a needless or useless scrupulousness. He advised him to shew some deference to royalty; to have some respect to the other prophets; and not to affect singularity, or presume that he alone was divinely inspired. But he must have entertained most absurd notions concerning prophecy; either considering the whole to be a mere imposition; or supposing that the truth, will, and purpose of God, could be modelled according to the inclinations of man. If he thought that Micaiah, by speaking that which was good to Ahab, could promote the success of the enterprize, he must have been extremely ignorant. And it was still worse, if he advised Micaiah to please the king, without regard to consequences. Perhaps he concluded, that the unanimity and confidence, with which so great a number of prophets assured Ahab of success in the name of the LORD, proved them to be in the right; and that it would be foolish in Micaiah to oppose his single voice to such a multitude. And indeed, not only Ahab, but Jehoshaphat himself, seems to have been imposed upon by the same delusive argument; which, in one form or other, has been urged as cogent, if not unanswerable, by very able and sensible men, in every age of the church. 'He thought 'he could persuade Micaiah, not to dissent from the rest, 'lest he should fall under the censure of singularity, 'peevishness, and privacy of spirit. And thus it is in the 'church at this day.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Micaiah however at once silenced the courtier; and with a solemn oath protested, that he would deliver the message of JEHOVAH without any alteration, whatever the king thought of it, and whatever the other prophets might agree in.—A most noble example!

V. 15. *Go*, &c.] The prophet did not preface this address, with "Thus saith the LORD:" and Ahab evidently perceived that he did not speak with his usual decision and authority. It was, as if he had said, 'You intend to go up against Ramoth-gilead, and your prophets assure you of success; and if I do not, you will disregard my warning, and treat me as an enemy. But you have my good will and good wishes, if they could profit you: and if my conscience would allow me, I too could easily seek your favour, by saying, "Go, and prosper, for the LORD shall deliver "it into the hand of the king."—'You have a mind to go, 'and do so: try the truth of their prediction.'—*Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xviii. 27—29. *Ec.* xi. 9, 10.)

V. 16. Ahab spake as if he had, on former occasions, thus adjured Micaiah to speak nothing to him but "that "which was true in the name of the Lord;" and with some intimation, that the prophet needed such adjurations. He evidently aimed to be thought, especially by Jehoshaphat, exceedingly solicitous about discovering the will of God. Perhaps Micaiah hesitated, till repeatedly urged to speak: and some think, that he did not receive his message, till the very moment before he delivered it.—The adjuring a person to speak, was equivalent to putting

17 And he said, [d] I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, [e] as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.

18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, [f] Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?

19 And he said, [g] Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: [h] I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and [i] all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left:

20 And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

21 And [k] there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

22 And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be [l] a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, [m] Thou shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.

23 Now therefore, behold, [n] the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and [o] the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

24 But [p] Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and [q] smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, [r] Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?

25 And Micaiah said, [s] Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go [†] into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

d 1 Sam. ix. 9. Jer. l. 11—16. Ez. i. 4. Acts x. 11—17.
e 34—36. Num. xxvii. 17. 2 Chr. xviii. 16, 17. Jer. xxiii. 1, 2. l. 6. 17. Ez. xxxiv. 4—6. Zech. x. 2. xiii. 7. Matt. ix. 36.
f *See on* 8.—Prov. x. 24. xxvii. 22. xxix. 1. Luke xi. 45.
g Is. i. 10. xxviii. 14. Jer. 'ii. 4. xxix. 20. xlii. 15. Ez. xiii. 2. Am. vii. 16.
h 2 Chr. xviii. 18—22. Is. vi. 1. Ez. i. 26—28. Dan. vii. 9, 10. Acts vii. 55, 56. Rev. iv. 2, 3.
i Ps. ciii. 20, 21. Is. vi. 2, 3. Zech. i. 10. Matt. xviii. 10. Heb. i. 7. 14. xii. 22. Rev. v. 11.
* Or, *deceive.* Job xii. 16. Jer. iv. 10. Ez. xiv. 9.
k 23. Job i. 6, 7. ii. 1.
l Job i. 8—12. ii 4—6. John viii. 44. Acts v. 3, 4. 2 Thes. ii. 9, 10. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. 1 John iv. 6. Rev. xii. 9, 10. xiii. 14. xvi. 13, 14. xx. 3. 7, 8. 10.
m *See on* 20.—Judg. ix. 23. Ps. cix. 17. 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12. Rev. xvii. 17.
n Ex. iv. 21. x. 20. Deut. ii. 30. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Is. vi. 9, 10. xliv. 20. Ez. xiv. 3—5. 9. Matt. xiii. 13—15. xxiv. 24, 25.
o *See on* 8.—11. xx. 42. xxi. 19. Num. xxiii. 19, 20. xxiv. 13. Is. iii. 11.
p 11.
q 2 Chr. xviii. 23, 24. Is. l. 5, 6. Lam. iii. 30. Mic. v. 1. Mark xiv. 65. xv. 19. 20. John xv. 18. 20. Acts xxiii. 2.
r Jer. xxviii. 10, 11. xxix. 26, 27. Matt. xxvi. 68. xxvii. 42, 43.
s Num. xxxi. 8. Is. ix. 14—16. Jer. xxiii. 15 xxviii. 16, 17. xxix. 21, 22. 32. Am. vii. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 1. Rev. xix. 20.
† Or, *from chamber to chamber.* Heb. *a chamber in a chamber.* xx. 30. *marg.*

him upon his oath; and calling on him, as in the presence and by the authority of God, to speak all he knew. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Matt.* xxvi. 63—68.)

V. 17. This vision exactly represented the condition of Ahab's forces, after he was slain; and shewed, that Ben-hadad, his pride and revenge being gratified by Ahab's death, would allow the Israelites, when vanquished, and scattered without a leader, to return home in peace. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 36.)

V. 18. Ahab aimed to persuade Jehoshaphat and *himself,* that this warning originated from Micaiah's malignity and enmity to him, being similar to the messages which he had formerly delivered; and therefore, that it ought not to be put in competition with the predictions of all the other prophets. (*Notes,* xxi. 17—19. *Prov.* xxix. 1. *Jer.* xxxviii. 1—6.)

V. 19—23. In order to leave this hardened criminal without excuse, and to give a salutary instruction and warning to others in future ages, Micaiah received and related this vision.—It is not requisite to enquire particularly, concerning what passes in that world, where the Lord unveils his glory; for *truths,* rather than *facts,* are revealed in such representations. (*Note, Job* i. 6.)—God had doomed Ahab to fall at Ramoth-gilead, by the army of Ben-hadad, whom he had sinfully spared. (*Notes,* xx. 31—34. 41, 42.) In order to bring him thither, he was pleased to give an evil spirit leave to impose on him, with the hopes of success in that expedition. "The devil and "his angels" are always ready for such attempts, and generally use false prophets and teachers as their ministers. (*Note, 2 Cor.* xi. 13—15.) This method the lying spirit proposed upon the present occasion, and prevailed against Ahab, by inducing all his prophets to assure him of victory. And by *permitting* him to do this, "the LORD put "a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets" (22). He neither commanded nor inclined the lying spirit to tempt Ahab's prophets; nor did he put the wickedness into their hearts, or the lies into their mouths. He likewise gave Ahab fair warning; and if he had not hated the truth, and loved a lie, he would not have gone to Ramoth-gilead: but God foresaw he would go, and would perish there.—The prophet "saw the LORD sitting upon his throne," and that made him disregard Ahab upon his throne, and not fear his frown and vengeance; nor the resentment of the four hundred prophets, who must have been enraged, even to madness, at being thus publickly declared to be the ministers of the devil, to deceive and persuade their king to his destruction. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Ez.* xiv. 1—11. 2 *Thes.* ii. 8—12.)

Persuade. (20) יְפַתֶּה. In piel פָּתָה *persuasit, seduxit: Suadere, veris rationibus, vel falsis,* et sic est *decipere. Hinc* πειθω *suadeo.* Robertson. *Judg.* xiv. 15. xvi. 5. *Jer.* xx. 7. Heb. (*Notes, Gen.* ix. 27. *Jer.* xx. 7—9.)

V. 24, 25. (*Note,* 10, 11.) Zedekiah seems to have been the principal person among Ahab's prophets: he therefore highly resented Micaiah's words, and both reviled and smote him in the presence of the king and his nobles; (*Marg. Ref.* q;) nay, in the presence of Jehoshaphat; and yet he met with no rebuke! As one who would appear confident, that he spake by the Spirit of the LORD, he enquired, when and how that Spirit left him to inspire Micaiah. But the prophet meekly answered, that the event would determine which of them spake by the Spirit of God; and he would not need information on that head, when he should conceal himself in the closest recess, "a "chamber," or closet, "within a chamber," (*marg.*) for fear of those who sought his life. Probably Zedekiah accompanied Ahab to the war, and this prediction was fulfilled when he fled from the enemy, after Ahab's death. Then he would have leisure to reflect on his own impiety, and the fatal effects of his counsel to his king, for whom he had pretended great friendship. (*Notes, Jer.* xxviii. 9—17. *Ez.* xiii. 6—16. *Am.* vii. 10—13.)—He would hide himself, 'for fear he should be seized, and punished as a

26 And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and [t] carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

27 And say, Thus saith the king, Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with [x] bread of affliction and with water of affliction, [y] until I come in peace.

28 And Micaiah said, [z] If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, [a] Hearken, O people, every one of you.

29 ¶ So [b] the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-gilead.

30 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but [c] put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel [d] disguised himself, and went into the battle.

31 But the king of Syria commanded his [e] thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, [f] Fight neither with [g] small nor great, save only with the king of Israel.

32 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it *is* the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and [h] Jehoshaphat cried out.

33 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it *was* not the king of Israel, [i] that they turned back from pursuing him.

34 And a *certain* man drew a bow [†] at a venture, [k] and smote the king of Israel between the [‡] joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am [§] wounded.

35 And the battle [‖] increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and [l] died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the [*] midst of the chariot.

t 9.
u 2 Chr. xvi. 10. xviii. 25—27. Jer. xx. 2. xxix. 26. xxxvii. 16. xxxviii. 6. Lam. iii. 53—55. Mark vi. 17—28. Luke iii. 20. Acts v. 18. xvi. 23, 24. xxiv. 25—27. xxvi. 10. Eph. iii. 1. Rev. ii. 10.
x Deut. xvi. 3. Ps. lxxx. 5. cii. 9. cxxvii. 2. Is. xxx. 20.
y Luke xii. 45, 46. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3. Jam. iv. 13, 14.
z Num. xvi. 29. Deut. xviii. 20—22. 2 Kings i. 10. 12. Is. xliv. 26. Jer. xxviii. 8, 9. Acts xiii. 10, 11.
a xviii. 21—24. 36, 37. 2 Chr. xviii. 27. Am. iii. 1. Mic. i. 2. Mark vii. 14—16. xii. 37.
b See on 2—6.—2 Chr. xviii. 28.
* Or, *when he was to disguise himself, and enter into the battle.*
c 10. Ps. xii. 2.
d xiv. 2. xx. 38. 1 Sam. xxviii. 8. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. 2 Chr. xviii. 29. xxxv. 22. Prov. xxi. 30. Jer. xxiii. 24.
e xx. 24. 2 Chr. xviii. 30.
f See on xx. 33—42.
g See on Gen. xix. 11. 1 Sam. xxx. 2. Jer. xvi. 6.
h Ex. xiv. 2 Chr. xviii. 3 Ps. l. 15. xci. 15. cxvi. 1, 2. cxxx. 1—4. Jon. ii. 1, 2.
i 31. Ps. lxxvi. 10.
† Heb. *in his simplicity.* 2 Sam. xv. 11.
k 1 Sam. xvii. 49. 2 Kings ix. 24.
‡ Heb. *joints and the breast-plate.* Rev. ix. 9.
§ Heb. *made sick.* 2 Chr. xviii. 30. xxxv. 23. *Margins.* Mic. vi. 13.
‖ Heb. *ascended.*
l 28. xx. 42.
* Heb. *bosom.*

'false prophet, and the cause of Ahab's death.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 26, 27. Ahab sent Micaiah back to the persons, who had him before in custody, one of whom was "Joash, "the king's son:" yet nothing is elsewhere said of a son of Ahab, of that name. To these, however, he sent orders, to "put him in the prison," some place of closer confinement than before; (*Note*, 9;) and there to treat him with severity in respect of his sustenance, and in other respects, until he should return in peace, probably intending then to put him to death, as a false prophet. Ahab forgot his own counsel to Ben-hadad, when he spake so confidently of returning in peace. (xx. 11.)

V. 28. Micaiah thus put the difference between himself and Ahab's prophets to the test, and made his appeal to the people at large; that, if the king despised the word of God, they might from his fate learn to reverence it. (*Notes*, xviii. 36, 37. *Num.* xvi. 28—34.)—*People.*] עַמִּים, *peoples*, meaning both the men of Judah who attended Jehoshaphat, and those of Israel.

V. 29. Jehoshaphat's silent connivance at Ahab's treatment of Micaiah, and his willingness to go with him to battle, after these solemn warnings, were very criminal, and almost unaccountable. Perhaps he feared personal insults; or he persuaded himself that in Ahab's court he had no business to intermeddle; or, matters were carried with such violence and precipitation, that he had scarcely time to reflect on his own conduct. (*Note*, 7.)

V. 30. Perhaps Ahab was secretly alarmed by the solemnity of Micaiah's address, though he scorned to desist from his enterprize; or he was aware, that he should be peculiarly aimed at by the Syrian forces. Under pretence of honouring Jehoshaphat as with the chief command, he made this insidious proposal, that by exposing him to the greatest danger he might favour his own escape. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xviii. 29.) Such was his friendship! But Jehoshaphat meant no harm, and suspected none: yet in such a case, the wisdom of the serpent was as needful, as the harmlessness of the dove. (*Notes*, *Matt.* x. 16—18. 1 *Cor.* xiv. 20—25, *v.* 20.)

V. 31. (xx. 24.) Some have imagined, that Ben-hadad wished to wipe off the disgrace of his own captivity, by making Ahab prisoner in return; and to reciprocate his kindness, in liberating him without ransom. (*Note*, xx. 31—34.) But his proud heart seems to have rankled with a far more malignant resentment; and Ahab's triumphant success against him had excited such hatred, as no subsequent kindness could erase.

V. 32—35. Jehoshaphat in extreme danger cried unto the LORD, and he wonderfully preserved him. 'They 'turned back from pursuing him;" which was to be 'ascribed to the secret providence of God,... who resolved 'as wonderfully to preserve Jehoshaphat, as to destroy 'Ahab.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xviii. 30—34, *v.* 31. xix. 1, 2.) But Ahab, notwithstanding all his precaution, could not escape the destined blow. The captains of Ben-hadad knew not where to seek for him: but an arrow shot at random by a Syrian was directed by God, to penetrate the joints of his breast-plate, or coat of mail, and to give him a mortal wound.—"Joints of the harness" in the text, seems less proper than the marginal reading.—Perhaps Ahab did not think that the wound would prove fatal, and was unwilling to intimidate his forces by wholly leaving the field of battle; and therefore probably having re-

36 And [m] there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, [n] Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.

37 So the king died, and * was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria.

38 And *one* washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, [o] and the dogs licked up his blood, and they washed his armour, according unto the word of the LORD which he spake.

39 Now [p] the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and [q] the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

40 So Ahab [r] slept with his fathers; and [s] Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

41 ¶ And [t] Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.

42 Jehoshaphat *was* [u] thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem: [x] and his mother's name *was* Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.

43 And [y] he walked in all the ways of Asa his father, [z] he turned not aside from it, [a] doing *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless [b] the high places were not taken away; *for* the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.

44 And Jehoshaphat [c] made peace with the king of Israel.

45 Now [d] the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, [e] *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

46 And [f] the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

47 *There was* then [g] no king in Edom: a deputy *was* king.

48 [h] Jehoshaphat † made [i] ships of Tharshish to go [k] to Ophir for gold: but [l] they went not; for the ships were broken at [m] Ezion-geber.

49 Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships: but Jehoshaphat would not.

50 And Jehoshaphat [n] slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers [o] in the city of David his father: and [p] Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

51 ¶ Ahaziah the son of Ahab [q] began to reign over Israel in Samaria, the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat

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tired that his wound might be dressed, he returned, and remained in his chariot till he died.

V. 36. When Ahab's death was known, either Jehoshaphat, or those who succeeded in command, issued this proclamation, probably with reference to Micaiah's vision. (*Note*, 17.)

V. 38. *Note*, xxi. 17—19.

V. 39. *Ivory-house.*] It cannot be supposed, that this house was built of ivory: but it was so inlaid and ornamented with ivory, that it thence derived its principal elegance, or magnificence. (*Marg. Ref.* q.)

V. 41—45. Perhaps this general account is here given, of Jehoshaphat's reign over Judah, in order to contrast it with Ahab's wicked reign over Israel. The chief blemish in Jehoshaphat's character and conduct is hinted at, when it is said, "He made peace with the king of Israel:" not merely engaging to avoid all hostile measures; but entering into the most intimate alliance with him, and confirming the treaty by marrying his son to Ahab's daughter, which introduced much idolatry and wickedness into Judah, brought great calamities on the inhabitants, and occasioned the almost entire ruin of Jehoshaphat's family. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2—5. *2 Chr.* xvii—xx.)

High places. (43) 'This error was so deeply rooted, 'that the best of the kings, till Hezekiah's time, ... con-'nived at it.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, 2 Kings* xviii. 4. 22. *2 Chr.* xxxi. 1.)

V. 46. xv. 12. *Notes*, xiv. 22—24. *Deut.* xxiii. 17, 18.

V. 47. David had conquered Edom; and it is probable, that till this time the nominal king of Edom had been merely a viceroy of the kings of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *2 Sam.* viii. 13, 14.)

V. 48, 49. Jehoshaphat at first joined with Ahaziah, and lost his fleet: but, being reproved by a prophet, he would not consent to Ahaziah's proposals the second time. (*Note*, *2 Chr.* xx. 35—37.) These ships of Tharshish were made to go to Ophir: yet it is said in Chronicles, they were "made to go to Tarshish." Was there not therefore a Tarshish near Ophir, as well as a place of that name in Spain? (*Note*, x. 22.)

V. 51. Jehoshaphat began to reign in the *fourth* year of Ahab, who reigned *twenty and two* years (41); yet Ahaziah succeeded Ahab, in the *seventeenth* year of Jehoshaphat. This occasions some difficulty: but learned men suppose, that the chronology of the kings of Israel was adjusted to that of the kings of Judah. Now Ahab began to reign,

king of Judah, and reigned [r] two years over Israel.

52 And [s] he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and [t] in the way of his mother, [u] and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

53 For [x] he served Baal, and worshipped him, and [y] provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, [z] according to all that his father had done.

r xv. 25. 2 Kings i. 17.
s *See on* xv. 26. xvi. 30—33. 2 Kings i. 2—7.
t xxi. 25. 2 Kings viii. 27. ix. 22. 2 Chr. xxii. 3. Mark vi. 24. Rev. iii. 20.
u *See on* xiv. 9—16. xv. 34. 2 Kings iii. 3.
x Judg. ii. 1—11. 2 Kings i. 2. iii. 2.
y xvi. 7. Ps cvi. 29. Is. lxv. 3. Ez. viii. 3.
z xxi. 29. Ez. xviii. 14—18.

after Asa had entered on his thirty-eighth year, and Asa died before the end of his forty-first year. (xvi. 29. 2 *Chr.* xvi. 13.) And Jehoshaphat began to reign in the same year, which thus was reckoned both to Asa and Jehoshaphat. Ahab therefore is computed to have reigned four years in Asa's time, and eighteen in Jehoshaphat's, including a part of the year in which Asa died, and in which Jehoshaphat succeeded him: though Ahab did not live till Jehoshaphat had fully completed his seventeenth year; having died nearer the beginning of the year, than Asa had done.—It is difficult to make this intelligible to persons not acquainted with the Jewish method of computing time; who, (whether in days or years,) take in both the first and last of the account, as if entire, even though only a small part of each had actually passed. Thus Ahaziah, having reigned part of the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and part of the eighteenth, (for he died in the eighteenth,) is said to have reigned *two* years. (*Note*, xvi. 8—14.)

V. 52, 53. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, 2 Kings* i.—*Baal*, &c. (53) 'Which worship had been introduced by his mo-'ther Jezebel; beyond the impiety of Jeroboam. Taking 'no warning by the hand of God against his father, which 'was very remarkable; nor believing the dreadful threat-'enings of Elijah against his mother, and their whole 'family.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xxi. 17—23.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

They, who neglect the word of God to rely on the promises of ungodly men, generally meet with merited disappointment: but this does not excuse the treachery and ingratitude of those, who deceive and injure the very persons, that have been criminally kind to them.—There are certain critical seasons, when advantages are placed within our reach: but if we let the opportunity pass we shall in vain attempt to recall it, and our endeavours will only serve to increase our losses. (*Note*, *Ec.* viii. 6, 7.)—Wicked men court the friendship of the righteous, when they can render their assistance subservient to their own purposes: but their professions of regard must be insincere.—That same compliant spirit, which betrays some pious persons into amity with the declared enemies of religion, renders the connexion peculiarly dangerous to them: they are perpetually persuaded to improper concessions of every kind; and induced to connive at, and even sanction, such converse and conduct, as they ought decidedly to protest against: and the fear of being deemed uncourteous, and the desire of escaping censure, ridicule, or insult, for their religious peculiarities, stop their mouths, and cause them to deviate from *sincerity* in their expressions of *civility* or courteousness. Yet these alone are the godly persons whose acquaintance the men of the world will much desire. If, however, we are necessarily placed among profane or infidel characters; we must not yield either to fear or shame, so as to conceal our dependence on God and devotedness to him; for these mark the difference "between those who serve him, and "those who serve him not."—If it were to be decided by vote, what is the true religion, we see plainly, that those abominations which God abhors would gain the election, against that worship which he has instituted. Even in the visible church, numbers, authority, and unanimity, have repeatedly been in favour of delusions, nay, destructive heresies, and abominable idolatries, against a single poor despised prophet of the Lord!—It is indeed, *in a worldly sense*, worth while, for a man of competent talents and address, to employ himself in reconciling men's consciences to their inclinations; and if great men cannot discard their religious scruples, to enable them, by help of some false system, to render them subservient to the commission of sin without remorse. In some places and at some times, such false prophets will be well paid for their delusions: and those, who from ambition, avarice, or sensuality, "turn away their ears from the truth," and "can-"not endure sound doctrine," will "heap to themselves "teachers of this kind, after their own lusts:" (*Note*, 2 *Tim.* iv. 1—5, *vv.* 3, 4:) that the agreement of so many ministers may embolden them to disregard those *singular* and uncourteous persons, who are always robbing them of their comfort, and putting them upon an unnecessary strictness. A few individuals indeed hint, that something is wanting in their favourite instructors; nay, prefer such as they dislike. But then, are not these too scrupulous? Do they not carry matters too far? Do they make proper allowances for human frailty, and peculiar situations? Thus eventually smooth doctrine, united with confidence, ingenuity, and courtly manners, obtains the preference, and opens the way to the favour of the great and of the many. The faithful servants of God must therefore lay their account with hatred, contempt, and insult. They know not to give flattering words, or to call base crimes by soft names, or to buoy up the hopes of hypocrites with insinuating falsehoods: they cannot be silent, when called to speak; but must declare the counsel of God, and not keep back any thing profitable, however displeasing. Their conscientiousness will often be ascribed to pride and obstinacy; the language of their tender compassion for souls will be called severity or malevolence; and their plain-dealing will be branded as insolence and ill-manners. But they must commit their cause to God: and wicked men, who hate them for the truth's sake, will at length find, that they were their own enemies in so doing, and that in opposing them they strove against the Almighty.

V. 10—28.

Unprincipled teachers are sufficiently pliable in matters of religion: they carefully avoid the imputation of bigotry; they make great pretensions to candour, and even treat the

most fundamental truths of Revelation, as matters of indifference or uncertainty: but the same men are exceedingly tenacious of their own interests, and stubborn in their own concerns. Whereas we ought to be as pliant as the willow, where our own ease, credit, advantage, or indulgence are at stake; and as firm as the sturdy oak, in standing up for the great things, which relate to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.—Those who are rising in the world, or possessed of wealth, are apt to counsel the ministers of Christ, *what they ought to speak in the name of the LORD;* though they betray their own ignorance and love of the world by every word. We should indeed be accessible and teachable, and willing to take a friendly hint from any man: but when others would persuade us to consult our own ease and interest, to shun the cross, to prefer courtesy to integrity, and to bend the word of God to the humours of the rich and great; we must recognize the tempter in such counsellors, and by peremptory language stop at once their insidious proposals, by declaring our determination, whatever others do, to adhere to what we consider as the truth and will of our Lord and Judge. (*Notes, Am.* vii. 12—17. *Matt.* xvi. 21—23.)—In some cases however we should not be forward to speak: when men evidently do not wish to hear the truth, and appear determinately set against our testimony, it may be enough to express our compassionate good will, and our fears for them; or to shew our disapprobation by silence. But if we are fairly called upon to give our sentiments, we must do it with all seriousness and firmness, without regarding personal consequences.—A believing view of the presence and glory of the King of Heaven, will raise us above the fear of our fellow-creatures, however powerful or enraged; and will enable us to commit ourselves to his protection, in the discharge of our duty, in the midst of apparent danger. But we must not expect exemption from hardship and ill usage; and need not wonder, if we eat the bread of affliction, and are even rewarded with blows, imprisonment, and cruel mockings: and when princes, false teachers, and apostates unite against the servants of God, even the remnant of his people will often be afraid to interfere in their behalf.—Alas! how should we be ashamed to complain of what we in this day call *trials*, when we consider what the servants of God formerly endured! Yet it will be well, if our exemption from trouble prove not more injurious to us, than persecutions did to them: for we are more easily allured and bribed into unfaithfulness and conformity to the world, than influenced by terrors and threats. Let us then watch and pray, and prepare for temptations of every kind: and be careful that the quietness of our enemies do not arise from our making too many concessions, and going upon their ground, to meet them half way, in order to form the worst of all coalitions.—Nothing can by any means harm us, if we continue faithful, and meekly valiant for the truth: the Lord will remove every aspersion from our characters, and bear testimony to his truth, in his due time: and some will profit by our warnings, though others rush headlong on ruin.—Little do unbelievers suspect how many legions of crafty, malicious, and powerful enemies are unwearied in plotting their destruction; restrained by no hand, but that of him whom they despise and disobey. (*P. O. Job* i. 6—12.)—The whole multitude of those, "who privily bring in damnable "heresies," or propagate infidelity with vast industry and ingenuity, speak and write no other things, than are suggested to them by the prompter behind the curtain. Let us then fear suppressing our convictions, and returning back to sin after professions of repentance, lest Satan should thus prevail against us. For if he obtain leave to deceive, the disposition of our hearts to prefer a flattering lie, to a humbling truth that opposes our inclinations, will give him such an advantage, that every attempt of others to prevent his success, will only exasperate the mind to persecution or blasphemy.

V. 29—53.

Those, who are rebellious against God, and injurious to his people, will not often be very faithful or grateful to their friends. Self-love is their supreme principle, to which all other considerations must be sacrificed; and the children of God are seldom so politick as the children of the wicked one. When, however, the Lord has rebuked his offending people, he will mark that difference between them and his enemies, which they did not sufficiently observe. "His eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears "are open to their prayers: but his face is against the "workers of iniquity." None "can hide themselves in "secret places from him." That which is casual to man, is the appointment of God, to fulfil his word of mercy or of wrath; so that, "men shall say, This hath God "wrought, for they shall perceive that it is his work." The deceiver and deceived are his, and the flatterer and flattered shall be taken in the same net, and fall into the same destruction. Alas! what will all riches, monuments, or splendid achievements avail, when God shall require the sinner's soul? Happy are they in death, who have served him in their generation: but the best of mere men, nay their best actions, are so defective, if not defiled, that "blessed is he" alone "whose iniquity is forgiven, and "whose sin is covered." Yet sincere endeavours to do good are the proper evidences and effects of saving faith: and the concurring reproofs of God's word and rod will lead the upright believer to repent of every transgression, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance: whilst hardened sinners rush forward, unawed and unmoved, in the ways which have led others before them into everlasting misery.

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE

KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THIS book is merely a continuation of the preceding, to which it is joined in the Hebrew Canon: the remarks therefore already made on *that*, in a great measure apply to *this*.—It contains the history of above three hundred years. —In Israel the kings were uniformly idolatrous and wicked: and, though the labours of Elijah, Elisha, and other prophets, were prospered to preserve a considerable number of the people from the general contagion; yet the measure of their national iniquity was soon filled up; so that they were conquered and carried captive by the kings of the Assyrians, and dispersed among the Gentiles, no more, as a collected body, to be restored to their own land. Their country was after this, planted by the conquerors with a mingled people, who established a corrupt and partial worship of JEHOVAH, from whom originated the nation and religion of the Samaritans. These events began to take place considerably above a hundred years before the Babylonish captivity.—In Judah indeed some remarkable revivals of religion took place under the pious princes of David's family, and by means of the faithful labours of the prophets: but these promising appearances were of short duration; several of the kings were idolatrous and extremely wicked; the priests and Levites exceedingly neglected their important duty; and the people were generally prone to idolatry and iniquity. So that, after the death of pious Josiah, the nation became almost universally corrupt; and the melancholy account closes with the destruction of the city and temple, the desolation of the country, and the enslaving and carrying away of the inhabitants, by the Chaldeans.—As all the prophets, (commonly so called,) whose writings have been preserved, lived in the latter part of this period; (those excepted who lived during or after the captivity;) and as they continually refer to the facts recorded in this history; we may consider all their predictions as sanctioning, by their accomplishment, the divine authority of the narrative; though it does not contain any express prophecy, the completion of which extended much beyond the term of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity.

B. C. 896.

CHAP. I.

Moab rebels against Israel, 1 Ahaziah, being sick, sends to enquire of Baal-zebub; and Elijah is sent by an angel to order the messengers to inform him, in the name of JEHOVAH, that he should surely die, 2—4. Ahaziah sends to apprehend Elijah, who twice calls down fire to consume those who came against him, 5—12. The captain of the third company sues for mercy; and Elijah, encouraged by an angel, goes to Ahaziah, and assures him that he would die at that time, 13—16. Ahaziah dies, and is succeeded by Jehoram, 17, 18.

B. C. 896.

THEN [a] Moab rebelled against Israel [b] after the death of Ahab.

2 ¶ And Ahaziah fell down through [c] a lattice in his upper chamber that *was* in Samaria, and [d] was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of [e] Baal-zebub the [f] god of Ekron, [g] whether I shall recover of this disease.

[a] Num. xxiv. 17. 2 Sam. viii. 2. 1 Chr. xviii. 2. Ps. lx. 8.
[b] iii. 4, 5. viii. 20. 22
[c] Judg. v. 28. Cant. ii. 9. Acts xx. 9.
[d] 1 Kings xxii. 34. *Marg.* 2 Chr. xxi. 14, 15. Job xxxi. 3.
[e] 3. 6. 16 Matt. x. 25. xii. 24—27. Mark iii. 22. Luke xi. 15. *Beelzebub.*
[f] Judg. xi. 24. 1 Sam. v. 10. 1 Kings xi. 33. Is. xxxvii. 12. 19.
[g] viii. 7—9. 1 Kings xiv. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. After David had subjugated the Moabites, they continued in subjection till the division of the kingdom; when their vassalage and tribute were transferred to the kings of Israel, as those of Edom remained to the kings of Judah. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 47.) But after Ahab's death the Moabites revolted. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, iii. 4—27. 2 *Sam.* viii. 1, 2.)

V. 2. The lattice, through which Ahaziah fell, is supposed to have had some curious ornamental net-work, which being decayed, gave way when he leaned upon it.—"Baal-zebub" signifies *the lord of a fly*, or *flies*. Probably, the country was grievously infested with swarms of flies, and

3 But [h] the angel of the LORD said to [i] Elijah the Tishbite, [k] Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, [l] *Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that* [m] ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?

4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, [*] Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, [n] but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.

5 And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back?

6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, *Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that* thou sendest to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? [o] therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

7 And he said unto them, [†] What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet you, and told you these words?

8 And they answered him, *He was* [p] an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It *is* Elijah the Tishbite.

9 ¶ Then the king [q] sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty: and he went up to him; and, behold, [r] he sat on the top of an hill: and he spake unto him, [s] Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.

10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, [t] If I *be* a man of God, then [u] let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, [x] and consumed him and his fifty.

h 15. 1 Kings xix. 5. 7. Acts viii. 26. xii. 7—11.
i 8. *See on* 1 Kings xvii. 1.
k 1 Kings xviii. 1.
l 6. 16. v. 8. 15. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 1 Kings xviii. 36. Ps. lxxvi. 1.
m Jer. ii. 11—13. Jon. ii. 8.
* Heb. *The bed whither thou art gone up, thou shalt not come down from it.*
n Gen. ii. 17. iii. 4. Num. xxvi. 65. 1 Sam. xxviii. 19. 1 Kings xiv. 12. Prov. xi. 19. xiv. 32. Ez. xviii. 4.
o *See on* 3, 4.—1 Chr. x. 13, 14.
† Heb. *What was the manner of the man?* Judg. viii. 18. 1 Sam. xxviii. 14.
p Is. xx. 2. Zech. xiii. 4. Matt. iii. 4. xi. 8. Luke i. 17. Rev. xi. 3.
q vi. 13, 14. 1 Kings xviii. 4. 10. xix. 2. xxii. 8. 26, 27. Matt. xiv. 3.
r 1 Kings xviii. 42. Luke vi. 11, 12.
s Am. vii. 12. Matt. xxvi. 68. xxvii. 29. 41—43. Mark xv. 29. 32. Heb. xi. 36.
t ii. 23, 24. Num. xvi. 28—30. 1 Kings xviii. 36—38. xxii. 28. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Ps. cv. 15. Matt. xxi. 41. xxiii. 34—37. Acts v. 3—10.
u Num. xi. 1. xvi. 35. Job i. 16. Ps. cvi. 18. Luke ix. 54. Rev. xi. 5.
x Dan. iii. 22. vi. 24. Acts xii. 19.

the Ekronites fancied that their idol delivered or preserved them from these. (*Note, Ex.* viii. 21.) Beelzebub, (which is the same name,) is called in the New Testament "the "prince of the devils;" and hence we learn that, under these names and images, evil spirits were actually worshipped as gods. (*Note, Matt.* xii. 22—24.)—The Baal generally worshipped in Israel at that time, was the god of the Zidonians; but Baal-zebub was the god of Ekron in Philistia: for they "had lords many, and gods many." It seems that his oracle was then in great repute, as that of Delphos was in Greece some ages afterwards.—Ahaziah did not send to enquire what he was to do in order to his recovery, but merely to know whether he should recover or not. (*Notes,* viii. 7, 8. 1 *Kings* xiv. 1—4.) Perhaps he had been making preparations for reducing the Moabites, and was impatient to march against them.

V. 3, 4. When a king of Israel sent to enquire of a heathen oracle, he proclaimed to the Gentiles his want of confidence in JEHOVAH: as if the only nation favoured with revelation, and the knowledge of the true God, had been the only nation in which no God was known! This was peculiarly dishonourable and provoking to the Lord; (*Notes,* v. 8. 15, 16. 1 *Kings* xviii. 36, 37. *Ps.* lxxvi. 1, 2;) and therefore the Lord by his angel commissioned Elijah to answer the enquiry of the messengers, and to send them back to Ahaziah, with the solemn denunciation of his speedy death by the disease which confined him to his bed. The prophet accordingly went and met the messengers, and sent them back with this sentence. And he departed, yet did not conceal himself; but continued so near to the same place, that the captains and their soldiers readily found him. (9, 10.)

V. 5, 6. The speedy return of the messengers convinced Ahaziah, that they had not gone to Ekron; and they punctually delivered the message of God, which Elijah had sent by them, without softening it in the least, or changing a word in it. Something peculiarly venerable in the appearance of the prophet, with the firm solemnity of his manner in speaking to them, seems to have overawed them; and probably they were convinced, that his words would be verified.

V. 8. Elijah was a hairy man, either in his person, or by reason of the coarseness and roughness of his garments, made perhaps of hair, and girded round him with a piece of undressed skin. In this manner he shewed his mortifiedness to the world, and expressed his concern and grief for the idolatry and iniquity of his people. (*Note, Matt.* iii. 4.)

V. 9. This officer called Elijah a "man of God" by way of derision, not out of respect as others did.—Jezebel's name is not mentioned in this transaction; but probably she stirred up her son, as she formerly had done her husband, against the prophets of the Lord.

On the top of a hill.] Some think mount Carmel is meant: but Carmel was far *north,* or *north-west,* of Samaria, where Ahaziah lay, (*Josh.* xix. 26,) and the road to Ekron lay to the *south-west.* Had the prophet retired to mount Carmel, the captain could not so readily have found him.

V. 10. No doubt Elijah was moved, to call for fire from heaven on these men, by immediate revelation. He was influenced by a holy zeal for the honour of the Lord, which was attacked in his person as a man of God, by the worshippers of Baalim; for if he had been actuated by resentment or selfish passions, the fire from heaven would not have come at his word. (*Notes,* ii. 23, 24. 2 *Cor.* xiii. 7—10.)—He had before demonstrated JEHOVAH to be the only true God, by fire from heaven consuming the sacrifice; (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xviii. 32—39;) yet the nation in general, and especially the rulers, adhered to the worship

11 [y] Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty, with his fifty: and he answered and said unto him, [z] O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.

12 And Elijah answered and said unto them, [a] If I *be* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

13 And [b] he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty: and the third captain of fifty went up, and came and [*] fell on his knees before Elijah, and [c] besought him, and said unto him, [d] O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.

14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties, with their fifties: therefore let my [e] life now be precious in thy sight.

15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him; [f] be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [g] Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, *is it* not because *there is* no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed, on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

17 So he died, according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken: and Jehoram reigned in his stead, [h] in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.

18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, *are* they not written [i] in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

[y] Num. xvi. 41. 1 Sam. vi. 9. Is. xxvi. 11. Jer. v. 3. John xviii. 5—12. Acts iv. 16, 17.
[z] *See on* 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19.—Prov. xxix. 12. Is. xxxii. 7. Matt. ii. 16. Luke xxii. 63, 64.
[a] *See on* 9, 10.
[b] Job xv. 25, 26. Prov. xxvii. 22. Ec. ix. 3. Is. i. 5.
[*] Heb. *bowed.*
[c] Ex. xi. 8. Num. xii. 11—13. 1 Kings xiii. 6. Is. lx. 14. Rev. iii. 9.
[d] Ps. cii. 17. Jam. iv. 7.
[e] 1 Sam. xxvi. 21. 24. Ps. xlix. 8. cxvi. 15. Prov. vi. 26. Matt. xvi. 25, 26. Acts xx. 24.
[f] Gen. xv. 1 Kings xviii. 15. Ps. xxvii. 1. Is. li. 12, 13. Jer. i. 17. xv. 20. Ezek. ii. 6. Matt. x. 28. Heb. xi. 27.
[g] *See on* 3, 4.—Ex. iv. 22, 23. 1 Kings xiv. 6—13. xxi. 18—24. xxii. 28.
[h] iii. 1. viii. 16, 17. 1 Kings xxii. 51.
[i] *See on* 1 Kings xiv. 19. xxii. 39.

of Baal: it was therefore proper, that they should receive a more awful proof; and be made sensible that all the enemies of the Lord would at length be destroyed. The officers and soldiers, who were slain, not only deserved death as idolaters, but doubtless they had been the instruments of Ahab and Jezebel in persecution: and the example would have salutary effects on many in Israel. (*Notes, Dan.* iii. 19—23. *Luke* ix. 51—56. *Acts* xii. 18, 19.)

V. 11, 12. It is hard to say, which was on this occasion the more wonderful, the madness of the wounded and enfeebled Ahaziah, when the report of the awful event reached him, or the presumption of this officer and his soldiers: for the second attempt was made in a more peremptory and haughty manner, than the foregoing. But perhaps the former calamity was ascribed to chance. 'Indeed it had so happened that terrible lightning, just at that moment, slew the captain and his fifty men.' None of the persons concerned appear to have been convinced, that JEHOVAH had sent the fire from heaven, for this express purpose, in answer to the words of Elijah. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* vi. 2—9.)

V. 13, 14. This officer had not courage to refuse obedience to the infatuated tyrant, who ordered him on this desperate service; and yet he dared not attempt any thing against Elijah: he therefore employed humble intreaties, with every expression of respect and submission; and in this manner his life and the lives of his soldiers were preserved. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15, 16. Elijah had so exasperated Jezebel and her party, by putting the prophets of Baal to death; and by the awful sentence on Ahab and Jezebel, and the whole family, denounced in the vineyard of Naboth; that he had no further prospect of doing them good. In general he lived in a retired manner; and laboured among the inferior inhabitants without exposing himself to the rage of the king: but on this occasion, he was especially commissioned to go to him, along with the captain and his fifty. And his presence and authoritative boldness in delivering in person the solemn message before sent by the messengers, so dismayed Ahaziah, that he did not attempt any thing against him: and shortly after he died (17), according to Elijah's word, for attempting to consult a heathen oracle. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* x. 13, 14.)

V. 17. Jehoshaphat lived some time after this: it is therefore supposed that he admitted his son Jehoram to reign with him, eight or nine years before his death; and Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel, in the second year of that term, or in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. (*Notes*, viii. 16, 17. 1 *Kings* xxii. 51.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Man's revolt from God is often punished by the rebellion of those who owe subjection to him.—Death meets men in the most unexpected places and forms, but always under the direction of the all-wise and righteous God. If reconciled to him by faith in the Saviour, and walking in his ways, "death is our's," and can never come in a wrong time or manner: but to the impenitent and unbelieving he is and must be "the king of terrors."—False religion amuses men's minds, and gratifies a vain curiosity: but the Bible declares the way of acceptance, and the path of duty; and, without informing us of the events of our future lives, or the time and manner of our death, it teaches us to be always ready; and instructs us how to behave under every dispensation of Providence, and thus to find comfort under them all, and derive benefit from them.—With such instructions, and access to the mercy-

CHAP. II.

Elijah when about to be translated, cannot induce Elisha not to attend him in his progress, 1—7. With his mantle he divides Jordan, and they pass over, 8. Elijah allows conditionally of Elisha's request of a double measure of the Spirit, and is taken to heaven in a fiery chariot, 9—11. Elisha takes up Elijah's mantle; smites and divides Jordan with it, and passes over; and is received as Elijah's successor, 12—15. The sons of the prophets in vain seek for Elijah, 16—18. Elisha heals with salt the bad waters of Jericho, 19—22. Bears destroy the children that mock him, 23—25.

AND it came to pass, when the LORD would [a] take up Elijah into heaven [b] by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with [c] Elisha from [d] Gilgal.

2 And Elijah said unto Elisha, [e] Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said

a Gen. v. 24. 1 Kings xix. 4. Luke ix. 51. Acts i. 9. Heb. xi. 5. Rev. xi. 12.
b 1 Kings xviii. 12. xix. 11. Job xxxviii.
c *See on* 1 Kings xix. 16—21.
d Josh. iv. 19. v. 9.
e Ruth i. 15. 2 Sam. xv. 19, 20. John vi. 67, 68.

seat of our God and Father, we have no occasion to consult any of those oracles, which pretend to unfold what God has been pleased to conceal. The believer, assured by the word of God that all things shall work together for his good, may rejoice in hope, and look forward with comfort: but the foreknowledge of the afflictions of future life, joined to the terror of final misery, would mar the little enjoyment which the unbeliever has in this world, and torment him before his time. (*P. O. Gen.* xv. 12—21.)—Men are prone to act, as if there were no God; and as if they were left to take care of themselves, as well as to spend their lives in following their own inclinations: hence they are so readily induced to yield to every temptation, and to make rapid progress in wickedness, when in pursuit of the objects which they idolize, or when afraid of losing them.—Those who would be valiant for the truth, and in the cause of God, before the great ones of this world, must learn temperance, and frugality; and evince that they neither envy nor covet their luxuries and embellishments, but are indifferent about all other things, compared with the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls.

V. 9—18.

The conduct of some persons, as impartially recorded in the word of God, appears so infatuated, that we should scarcely be able to credit the account, did we not sometimes witness actions equally unaccountable. Often has it been observed, that men upon a death-bed, and aware that they could not recover, have appeared more trifling, profane, avaricious, morose, fierce, or cruel, than at any former period: so that those around them have been tempted, by their intolerable conduct, to wish them dead before the hour arrived! Some have even seemed to regret with their dying lips, that they could do no more mischief in the world before they left it! And in many other ways men are continually acting in a manner inexplicable, except upon the principles of the wise man; "The heart of the "sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart "whilst they live, and after that they go to the dead." (*Notes, Ec.* ix. 1—3. *Matt.* ii. 16—18.)—Haughty persecutors will always meet with wretches, ready to execute their most impious and desperate mandates: and when providential mercies, means of grace, warnings and corrections, leave them thus desperate in enmity against God and his servants, we may be confident that vengeance slumbereth not.—If the wicked face death in its most tremendous forms, to obtain or preserve the favour of an earthly prince, whose "breath goeth forth, and he re-"turneth to his dust, and all his thoughts perish;" what danger and hardship ought we not to welcome in the service of the everlasting God, who can give us the gracious recompence of eternal life. (*Notes, Ps.* cxlvi. 3—6.)—There are proper seasons for different methods of behaving towards sinners, and we must ask wisdom of God to direct us: and, as the same action may be either right or wrong, according to the principle from which it springs, we should look well to our own spirits, and be candid in judging our brethren. It is, however, our general rule, "not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with "good."—The judgments of God under the Christian dispensation are commonly *spiritual:* and the more mildly we behave to those, who insult and injure us for the Lord's sake, the more terrible punishment will he at length inflict upon them. But our God is ever ready to forgive the humble supplicant, however rebellious he has been; and the way to prevail with him is to bow before him. We therefore should be followers of him, and be ready to pray for and favour our bitterest enemies, especially when under any alarm of conscience they intreat us so to do.—We may safely venture into the presence of our most enraged foes, when he requires us, who has all hearts in his hand: the courage of faith has often struck terror into the heart of the proudest sinner: how then shall any be able to stand before God, when he arises to execute judgment? His words will surely take effect: and while some sinners, being long spared, increase their own condemnation; others are cut off speedily, and hurried into destruction. Both are intended to warn others to seek the Lord whilst he may be found: and his servants will, one way or other, survive and witness the destruction of all his enemies.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. None, Enoch alone excepted, had ever been favoured with exemption from the general sentence denounced against sinful man, "Dust thou art, and "to dust shalt thou return." (*Note, Gen.* v. 22—24. *P. O.* 21—32.) But the Lord had given Elijah some previous intimations, that he intended thus to distinguish him, and that the day was at hand. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xix. 3, 4.) At that time, he and Elisha were at Gilgal: (*Notes, Josh.* v. 9. x. 7. 40—43:) and thence Elijah went in circuit to several of the schools of the prophets in different places, to give them his parting exhortations and blessing. Doubtless most of them were established, and all of them were superintended, by him. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xix. 20, 21.)—It is not known how old Elijah was, when translated.

V. 2. Elijah might intend by this proposal to make trial of the strength of Elisha's attachment; or perhaps he longed for retirement, and shunned ostentation. But

unto him, [f] *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, [g] I will not leave thee. So they went down to [h] Beth-el.

3 And [i] the sons of the prophets that *were* at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away [k] thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know *it;* hold ye your peace.

4 And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to [l] Jericho. And he said, [m] *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away [n] thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, [o] Yea, I know *it;* hold ye your peace.

6 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here: for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

7 And [p] fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood [*] to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

8 And Elijah took [q] his mantle and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and they [r] were divided hither and thither; so that they two went [s] over on dry ground.

9 And it came to pass when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, [s] Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And [t] Elisha said, I pray thee, let [u] a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me.

10 And he said, [v] Thou hast [†] asked a hard thing: *nevertheless,* [x] if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so.*

f 4. 6. iv. 30. 1 Sam. i. 26. xvii. 55. xxv. 26.
g Ruth i. 16—18. 2 Sam. xv. 21. John ii. 19.
h Gen. xxviii. 19. *J* Kings xii. 29. 33. xiii. 1, 2.
i 5. 7. 15. iv. 1. 38. ix. 1. 1 Sam. x. 10—12. xix. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 4. xx. 35. Is. viii. 18.
k Deut. xxxiii. 3. Acts xxii. 3.
l Josh. vi. 26. 1 Kings xvi. 34. Luke xix. 1.
m *See* on 2.—iv. 30. Acts ii. 42. xi. 23.
n *See* on 3.—Josh. i. 1, 2. Luke xxiv. 51. John xvii. 5—7. Acts i. 2. 11. xx. 25.
o Gen. xlviii. 19. Ec. iii. 7. Is. xli. 1. Hab. ii. 20.
p 17. 1 Kings xviii. 4. 13.
* Heb. *in sight,* or, *over against.*
q 1 Kings xix. 13. 19.
r 14. Ex. xiv. 21, 22. Josh. iii. 16, 17. Ps. cxiv. 5—7. Is. xi. 15. Heb. xi. 29. Rev. xvi. 12.
s xiii. 14—19. Num. xxvii. 16—23. Deut. xxxiv. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 18, 19. Ps. lxxii. 1. 20. Luke xxiv. 45—51. John xvii. 9—13. Acts i. 8. viii. 17. xx. 25. 36.
t Num. xi. 17. 25. 1 Kings iii. 9. 2 Chr. i. 9, 10. John xiv. 12—14. xvi. 7. 1 Cor. xii. 31.
u Deut. xxi. 17. Zech. ix. 12. xii. 8. 1 Tim. v. 17.
v Mark xi. 22—24. John xvi. 24.
† Heb. *done hard in asking.*
x 12. Acts i. 9, 10.

Elisha expressed his determination to enjoy the pleasure and reap the benefit of his company to the last; and, if it might be, to witness his translation: and this he confirmed with a most solemn asseveration. (*Notes, Ruth* i. 16, 17. 2 *Sam.* xv. 18—22.)—As the life and soul of man entirely depend on God, to mention them in a solemn oath, either alone, or along with him, was deemed equivalent to swearing by the name of the LORD. (*Notes, Matt.* v. 33—37. xxiii. 16—22.)

V. 3. *Beth-el.*] (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 1 *Kings* xii. 26—33. xiii. 1, 2.) 'In that place where the golden calves 'were worshipped, God...continued the schools of the 'prophets among them. For by "the sons of the pro-'"phets" are meant the scholars of the prophets, whom 'they educated and trained up in religion and piety. And 'God...bestowed on some of them the Spirit of prophecy. '...This was a great testimony of God's love to an apostate 'people. ...And it is still more remarkable, that prophets 'of greater excellency for miracles were continued in Israel, 'than were in Judah; because they needed them more.... 'It seems to me very probable, that these "sons of the '"prophets" were such ministers to the prophets, as the 'evangelists were to the apostles; whom the prophets sent 'to publish their prophecies and instructions to the people, 'where they could not go themselves.' *Bp. Patrick.*—"The sons of the prophets" at Bethel, and other places had received a divine intimation, that Elijah was on that day to be taken from them: and as Elisha was next in precedency after Elijah, sitting nearest under him, or at his feet, while he delivered his instructions; he would be considered as their superintendent, when his master was taken "from his head," or from above him. (*Note, Acts* xxii. 1—5.)—Elisha however, would not allow them to interrupt the composure of Elijah's mind at this solemn season by any lamentations: it is probable, that he forbad them publickly to speak of it, lest multitudes should be collected to witness the event; or he counselled them to be calm, and not to disquiet themselves, for the Lord would make up the loss.

V. 4, 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) *Jericho.*] *Notes,* 19—22. 1 *Kings* xvi. 34.

V. 6. 'He hoped for some great blessing from him, 'when he was carried up to heaven; and therefore conti-'nued firm in his resolution, to attend that wonderful 'change.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note,* 9, 10.)

V. 7, 8. These fifty men seem to have hoped to witness Elijah's translation, but this favour was granted only to Elisha. They, however, saw Jordan twice divided, first before Elijah and Elisha, and then afterwards before Elisha alone, by smiting the waters with Elijah's mantle. (*Notes,* 14. *Josh.* iii. 15—17.)

Mantle. (8) אַדֶּרֶת. In all the places, where this word is used, the LXX translate it μηλωτὴ, *a sheep-skin. Heb.* xi. 37. Gr. (*Note,* i. 8.)

V. 9, 10. Elisha was thus reminded to make his request before Elijah was taken from him: for the prophet did not give the least intimation of being prayed to as an intercessor, after he was gone to heaven; nay, his words imply the contrary, in a very decisive manner. If the request were not made before he was taken away, it would afterwards be too late. Elisha, therefore, knowing the efficacy of Elijah's prayer, desired him to ask for him a double portion of his spirit. (*Notes, Num.* xi. 25—29. xxvii. 18. 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14.) He seems only to have meant a double portion of the Spirit of prophecy, and of wisdom, courage, faith, and grace, to what was ordinarily bestowed upon the prophets: but as he was to succeed so eminent a person in a most important work, and in arduous times, his desires and expectations might be enlarged by zeal for the honour of God, and for the revival of true re-

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* [y] a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up [z] by a whirlwind [a] into heaven.

12 And Elisha [b] saw *it*, and he cried, [c] My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And [d] he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and [e] rent them in two pieces.

13 He took up also [f] the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the [*] bank of Jordan;

14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and [g] smote the waters, and said, [h] Where *is* the LORD God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither; and Elisha went over.

15 And when the sons of the prophets, which *were* [i] to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, [j] The Spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and [k] bowed themselves to the ground before him;

16 And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty [†] strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master; lest peradventure [l] the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon [‡] some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send.

17 And when [m] they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but [n] found him not.

18 And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

y vi. 17. Ps. lxviii. 17. civ. 3, 4. Ez. i. 4, &c. x. 9, &c. Hab. iii. 8. Zech. vi. 1—8. Heb. i. 14.
z *See on* 1.
a Mark xvi. 19.
b 10.
c xiii. 14. Job xxii. 30. Prov. xi. 11. Ec. vii. 19. ix. 16—18. Is. xxxvii. 4. 15. 21. Acts xxvii. 24.
d Prov. xxx. 4. Mark xvi. 19. Luke ii. 15. xxiv. 51. John iii. 13. Acts i. 9. 2 Cor. v. 2. 4. Eph. iv. 8. Rev. xi. 12.
e Job i. 20, 21. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Acts viii. 2.
f 8. 1 Kings xix. 19.
* Heb. *lip.* 1 Kings ix. 26. *marg.*
g *See on* 8—10.—Josh. i. 1—9. Mark xvi. 20. John xiv. 12. Acts ii. 33. iii. 12, 13.
h Judg. vi. 13. 1 Kings xviii. 36—39. Ps. xlii. 2. 10. cxv. 2. Joel ii. 17.
i *See on* 7.
j Num. xi. 25—29. xxvii. 20. Josh. iii. 7. Is. xi. 2. lix. 21. John xv. 26, 27. Acts i. 8. 2 Cor. xii. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 14.
k 19. iv. 1—4. 37. vi. 1—7. Josh. iv. 14.
† Heb. *sons of strength.*
l 1 Kings xviii. 12. Ez. iii. 14. viii. 3. xi. 24. xl. 2. Acts viii. 39. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3.
‡ Heb. *one of the mountains.*
m 2 Sam. xviii. 22, 23. Luke xi. 8. Rom. x. 2.
n Heb. xi. 5.

ligion; so that he was led to use words, which may signify even double the portion which Elijah had possessed: and Elijah's answer seems to imply, that this was the import of them.—It appears from the history, that Elisha wrought twice as many miracles as Elijah had done: and being more constantly among the people, as their example and instructor, for above sixty years, from his first calling by Elijah, he seems to have been favoured with more extensive usefulness than he; though in other respects he may be considered as his inferior. (*Note*, xiii. 14.) Thus our Lord said to his apostles, (referring to the extensive usefulness of their labours, compared with that of his personal ministry, and to the number, variety, and long continuance of the miracles wrought by them,) "Greater "works than these shall ye do:" yet was he infinitely greater than they. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xi. 7—11. *John* xiv. 7—14.)

V. 11. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 1.) Elijah's translation was doubtless performed by the ministration of angels, who caused the appearances and effects here described. The event was a distinguished honour put upon one, who had been peculiarly zealous for the honour of God, and had ventured all consequences in his cause, by opposing the idolatry of an apostate and persecuting age and nation. It was a publick attestation of the doctrine of a future state of retributions, for the encouragement of God's suffering people; and it was also a prefiguration of the Redeemer's ascension. (*Notes*, *Luke* xxiv. 50—53. *Acts* i. 9—12.)—The prophet had on one occasion passionately wished to die; but the Lord was graciously pleased to deal with him better than his wishes. He had passed over Jordan to his native country, and was conferring with Elisha, perhaps about the joys of heaven, or the interests of true religion in Israel, when they were thus suddenly interrupted and separated.

V. 12. The manner in which Elijah was taken away, amidst his most interesting discourse, must have been exceedingly affecting to Elisha, who could not but congratulate his felicity. But he had lost one whom he loved and revered as a father; and Israel had lost a reformer, whose labours and prayers did more to preserve the nation from ruin, than chariots and horsemen, however numerous, could have done: and on these accounts he grieved, and expressed his regret by rending his clothes. (*Note*, xiii. 14.) Nor was he reconciled to his own and the publick loss, by being the president of all the schools of the prophets, or by being assured of a double portion of Elijah's Spirit.

V. 13. The prophet went to heaven in the body; yet, as a token of the different state into which he was entered, and the change which had taken place, he dropped his mantle or upper garment. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 50—54. 2 *Cor.* v. 1—4.) Elisha had been first called to attend Elijah, by the casting of his mantle over him; and he now received and valued this mantle, as a token of his receiving a double portion of his Spirit. (*Notes*, 9, 10. 1 *Kings* xix. 19.)

V. 14. Elisha was inwardly moved to make trial, whether Elijah's words were indeed fulfilled to him; and whether the LORD God, who had wrought such miracles by Elijah, and had just before divided the waters of Jericho when he smote them with his mantle, was with him in like manner. The original is more expressive than the translation, and may be rendered, "Where is JEHOVAH, "the God of Elijah, even He?" He is still with me: though Elijah be not here, the God of Elijah is. (*Notes*, *Josh.* iii. 7. *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20.)

V. 15. These "sons of the prophets" had witnessed the division of Jordan, both by Elijah, and afterwards by Elisha; (*Note*, 7, 8;) thence they concluded, that the Spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha; and by bowing to the ground before him, they gave him honour as their superintendent from that time.

V. 16—18. These sons of the prophets might think,

19 ¶ And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of the city *is* pleasant, as [o] my lord seeth: but [p] the water *is* naught, and the ground [*] barren.

20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put [q] salt therein: and they brought *it* to him.

21 And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and [r] cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, [s] I have healed these waters: [t] there shall not be from thence any more death or barren *land*.

22 So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

23 ¶ And he went up from thence unto [u] Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth [x] little children out of the city, and [y] mocked him, and said unto him, [z] Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.

24 And he turned back, and looked on them, and [a] cursed them in the name of the LORD: and there came forth two [b] she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two [c] children of them.

25 And he went from thence to [d] mount Carmel; and from thence he returned to Samaria.

o Num. xii. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 7. 13. 1 Tim. v. 17.
p Ex. vii. 19. xv. 23. Josh. vi. 17. 26. 1 Kings xvi. 34.
* Heb. *causing to miscarry.* Ex. xxiii. 26. Deut. xxviii. 2—4. 11. 15—18. Hos. ix. 14.
q Judg. ix. 45. Ez. xlvii. 11. Zeph. ii. 9.
r iv. 41. vi. 6. Ex. xv. 25, 26. John ix. 6.
s Is. xlvii. 8—11. 1 Cor. i. 18—28. Rev. xxii. 2, 3.
t Ps. cvii. 34—38. Rev. xxi. 4.
u 1 Kings xii 28—32. Hos. iv. 15. x. 5. 15. Am. iii. 14. iv. 4. v. 5. vii. 13.
x Job xix. 18. Prov. xx. 11. xxii. 6. 15. Ec. xi. 10. Is. i. 4. iii. 5. Jer. vii. 18.
y Gen. xxi. 9. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Job xxx. 1. 8, 9. Ps. xxxv. 15. lx. lvii. 3, 4. Gal. iv. 29. Heb. xi. 36.
z 11. Matt. xxvii. 29—31. 40—43.
a i. 10—12. Gen. ix. 25. Deut. xxviii. 15—26. Jer. xxviii. 16. xxix. 21—23. Am. vii. 17. Mark xi. 14. 21. Acts v. 5. 9. viii. 20. xiii. 9—11. 2 Cor. x. 6.
b 2 Sam. xvii. 8. Prov. xvii. 12. xxviii. 15. Hos. xiii. 8.
c Ex. xx. 5. 1 Kings xiii. 24. xix. 17. xx. 36.
d iv. 25. 1 Kings xviii. 19. 42.

that even in case Elijah was finally taken from them, his soul alone was gone to heaven; and that his body might be found, and buried with due honour: but perhaps they also doubted, whether he was really removed; or had only been carried to some other place in a supernatural manner, as he seems to have been on former occasions. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 1 *Kings* xviii. 12—16.) Elisha, however, might fear lest they should suspect, if he persisted in refusing their request, that he was influenced by an undue desire of filling Elijah's honourable place; and the event tended to establish his authority.

V. 19—22. Jericho had not long before been rebuilt, in defiance of the curse which Joshua had denounced against him who ventured to rebuild it; and it is probable, that the pleasantness of the situation had been the inducement. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xvi. 34.) But, as an evidence of God's displeasure, the water was unwholesome; and, perhaps in consequence, the ground, (though not otherwise deficient in fertility,) had the property of causing the cattle to cast their young; and as some think, the immature fruit to fall from the trees. It is not unlikely, that similar effects were produced on the women also. (*Marg.*) But, as the inhabitants had admitted a seminary of prophets among them, these tokens of the divine displeasure were miraculously removed.—The new cruse, and the salt, could have no natural efficacy to heal the water, and remove the bad property of the land: but were merely signs of JEHOVAH's powerful operation. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, iv. 40, 41. vi. 1—7. *Ez.* xlvii. 11. *Matt.* v. 13.)

V. 23, 24. Several learned men have endeavoured to prove, that these offenders were not children, but grown up persons: and, no doubt the first word (נְעָרִים), rendered *children*, is often used in that sense. The addition, however, of the word rendered *little*, seems clearly to evince, that they were not men, but young boys, who had been trained up in idolatry, and taught to despise the prophets of the Lord. They had heard that Elijah was "gone up" to heaven, and they insultingly bade Elisha follow him, that they might be rid of him also; and they reviled him for the baldness of his head. Thus they united the crimes of abusing him for a supposed bodily infirmity, contemptuous behaviour towards a venerable person, and enmity against him as the prophet of God. The sin therefore even of these children was very heinous: yet the greater guilt was chargeable on their parents and teachers; and their fate was a severe rebuke and awful warning to them. If the Spirit of God had not dictated Elisha's solemn curse of them, Providence would not have followed it with so terrible a judgment. (*Notes*, i. 10. *Prov.* xxvi. 2.) The children of the city in general seem to have been present; and the insult was perhaps the effect of a pre-concerted plan, to drive the sons of the prophets from Beth-el by ill-treatment. The forty-two children (יְלָדִים), which were devoured, seem to have been only a part of the whole company, and perhaps they were the most guilty. However, the Judge of all the earth surely did right. Had he cut them off by a fever, no one would have objected to it: but, while the dispensation would have been as severe towards them, it would not have been suited, in any adequate measure, to make the same useful impression on the minds of the survivors, or to inculcate the same important instructions to other ages and nations, as this solemn sentence and immediate execution were. (*Notes, Num.* xxxi. 2. *Josh.* vi. 21. *Acts* v. 1—11.)—It seems that the inhabitants of Beth-el were so overawed, that they no more ventured to molest Elisha or the sons of the prophets.—*She-bears.* (24) *Note, Hos.* xiii. 5—8.

V. 25. (*Marg. Ref.*) *To Samaria.*] Perhaps, there was a seminary of the sons of the prophets even in Samaria: or Elisha had lodgings in that city, to which he returned after his circuits in other parts, for whatever service might there be performed by him. (*Note*, vi. 32, 33.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The Lord always acts with perfect wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth; but he does not always deign to explain to us the reasons of his conduct. In exempting sinners from *merited* condemnation, and in conferring *unmerited* blessings, he "divideth to every man severally as he will." (*Note, Acts* x. 34, 35.) We are assured, that they who repent and believe the gospel, shall be saved; that the Lord will honour those who honour him: and if we obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we need

CHAP. III.

Jehoram reigns wickedly, 1—3. Mesha king of Moab revolts, 4, 5. Jehoram, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, march against him; and being greatly distressed for want of water, they apply to Elisha, who sharply reproves Jehoram, but shews respect to Jehoshaphat, 6—14. He promises them water, and victory, 15—19. Plenty of water is sent; the Moabites are deceived by the appearance, and are entirely defeated, 20—24. The allied kings destroy the cities, spoil the country, and besiege Kir-haraseth, 25. The king of Moab, sacrificing his eldest son, causes them to raise the siege, 26, 27.

not greatly regret, that we do not pass the same way to it, as Enoch and Elijah did; being comfortably assured, that we shall be more than conquerors in the last conflict, through him "who hath loved us;" and that at last "death "will be swallowed up in victory." (*P. O. Gen.* v. 21—32. *Note*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 50—58.)—As we know not the time of our departure, we should give diligence to be habitually ready: and we ought to mind our proper work with greater assiduity, if able, when we perceive that the time approaches. Whether ministers or private Christians, we are called to "serve our generation;" and should aim to leave all around us deeply convinced of the nearness and reality of eternal things, and animated with the desire of glorifying God and doing good: and our example, exhortations, and prayers should especially be directed to these important objects, when we approach the solemn closing scene. (*Note*, 2 *Pet.* i. 12—15.) On the other hand, we should gladly embrace opportunities of visiting the deathbeds of eminent believers, that we may learn heavenly wisdom, and catch holy fire, as it were, from their converse and behaviour. But such occasions require seriousness, calmness, and submission to the will of God; and we should learn even to repress our own feelings, rather than distract the minds, or interrupt the devotions and discourse, of the departing Christian. As long as pious persons are with us, we should beg an interest in their prayers; that, by "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ," we may be enabled to tread in their steps, and to be serviceable to the church as they have been. And if from zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, we should covet earnestly to abound still more in grace, wisdom, and usefulness; neither God, nor his dying saints, will blame the largeness of our desires. Nor is this hard in itself, however it may appear to us; for that fulness, whence prophets and apostles derived all their endowments, still remains, and we are invited to ask large supplies from it: (*Note*, *John* i. 16:) and those who are called to succeed eminent men in arduous and important stations, and are conscious of their own insufficiency, are peculiarly encouraged to expect a double portion of the Spirit of God, that they may not disgrace their situations, or remain useless in them.

V. 11—18.

Angels delight to be employed in removing the saints to their glorious rest, in any way that the Lord pleases. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xxiv. 2—9. *Luke* xvi. 22, 23. *Heb.* i. 13, 14.) Yet the event, which is so joyful to them, often causes painful separations to those who are left behind: many on these occasions are bereft of such, as have been more dear and useful to them, than the tenderest parent: yea, even the publick has been deprived of some of its strongest bulwarks, though most men are insensible to the loss. (*Note*, *Is.* lvii. 1, 2.) On these accounts it is allowable to grieve: but believers should be warned "not to sorrow, "as men without hope;" the separation will at length issue in a more joyful meeting, and the loss shall be made up to them. Though Elijah be removed, "the LORD God "of Elijah" lives. Thus, when the Saviour ascended into heaven, he left not his disciples comfortless; but he bequeathed to them his precious gospel, like Elijah's mantle, as the token of the divine power being exerted to subvert the empire of Satan, and to set up the kingdom of God in the world: and he poured out upon them his Holy Spirit, both to qualify them fully for their most important and arduous ministry, and to render their labours abundantly successful. The same gospel still remains with us; and, though the miraculous powers are withdrawn, it still is attended with a divine energy for the conversion and salvation of sinners. Oh, may that power be more abundantly experienced, wherever the word of God is truly preached! And may we all seriously enquire, whether it be not suspended, retarded, or removed, through some criminal cause in us!—Having, however, the same exceeding great and precious promises, the same throne of grace, the same Mediator, the same powerful God and Father, as the primitive Christians had; if we have also the same "precious faith," we need not fear breaking through all difficulties, opposing enemies, and at last passing comfortably through the Jordan of death, as on dry ground.—When we perceive men averse to conviction, and bent upon their own schemes, though vain and empty; it is sometimes best to leave them to take their own course: and their fruitless labours and enquiries often most effectually discover to them their mistakes.

V. 19—25.

The nature of man, in its best estate, and adorned with all the embellishments of which it is capable, resembles the unwholesome water and soil of Jericho. It is throughout infected with sin, and barren of real good; and man's best actions, *till renewed by grace*, proceed from selfish and carnal motives, are directed to unworthy purposes, and measured by a false rule. But when that remedy is applied, a blessed change takes place through all the powers of the soul: and repentance, faith, and love of God and man, produce good works, performed from the purest principles, and for the most important ends; and regulated according to the holy law of God, and the example of the Redeemer. In this way sometimes whole towns and cities have assumed a new appearance, through the preaching of the gospel, and by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit; so that the curse of sin and ungodliness has been converted into the blessing of fruitfulness "in the works "of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ to the "praise and glory of God:" and when this blessing is vouchsafed to seminaries of learning, and places of publick education; the fertilizing streams may flow through whole countries, nay into the most distant lands, and produce the most happy change. (*Notes*, *Ez.* xlvii. 1—11.)—While the special favour of God evidently rests on those

NOW [a]Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria, the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years.

2 And he [b] wrought evil in the sight of the LORD, [c] but not like his father, and [d] like his mother; for he put away the [*] image of [e] Baal that his father had made.

3 Nevertheless [f] he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, [g] which made Israel to sin; [h] he departed not therefrom.

4 ¶ And Mesha king of Moab was [i] a sheep-master, and [k] rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.

5 But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, [l] that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

6 And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and [m] numbered all Israel.

7 And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: [n] wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up; I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, *and* my horses as thy horses.

8 And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through [o] the wilderness of Edom.

9 So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and [p] the king of Edom; and they fetched a compass of seven days' journey: and there was [q] no water for the host, and for the cattle [r] that followed them.

[a] i. 17. viii. 16. *Joram.* 1 Kings xxii. 51.
[b] vi. 31, 32. xxi. 6. 20.—*See on* 1 Sam. xv. 19. 1 Kings xvi. 19.
[c] 1 Kings xvi. 33. xxi. 26. 25.
[d] ix. 22. 34. 1 Kings xxi. 5—15. 25.
[*] Heb. *statue.*
[e] x. 18. 26—28. 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32.
[f] x. 20—31.—*See on* 1 Kings xii. 28—33.
[g] *See on* 1 Kings xiv. 16.—xv. 26. 34. xvi. 31.
[h] xiii. 2. 6. 11. xiv. 24. xv. 9. 18. xvii. 22. 1 Kings xii. 26—28. xiii. 33. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.
[i] Gen. xiii. 2. xxvi. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. Job i. 3. xlii. 12.
[k] 2 Sam. viii. 2. 1 Chr. xviii. 2. Ps. lx. 8. Is. xvi. 1.
[l] *See on* i. 1.—2 Chr. xxi. 8—10.
[m] 1 Sam. xi. 8. xv. 4. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Kings xx. 27.
[n] *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 4. 32, 33.—2 Chr. xviii. 3. 29—32. xix. 2. xxi. 4—7. xxii. 3, 4. 10—12.
[o] Num. xxi. 4. Mal. i. 2, 3.
[p] *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 47.
[q] Ex. xv. 22. xvii. 1. Num. xx. 2. 4. xxi. 5. xxxiii. 14.
[r] Heb. *at their feet.* Ex. xi. 8, *marg.* Judg. iv. 10.

places where his gospel is welcomed; his heaviest wrath will light on those who reject the gracious message, and insult and abuse his ministers. The words and actions even of children, yea, of "little children," are noticed by him. Let then the youngest who read or hear these observations, "stand in awe, and sin not:" let them think of the terror and anguish of the children of Beth-el, when they are tempted to deride the deformed, the lame, or the infirm; when they are induced to shew contempt to the aged; and especially when they are about to join those, who revile or ridicule such as are in reputation for sanctity: for this is to despise the holiness of God in them. And if any have the misfortune to have parents or teachers so wicked, as to set them an example of such profaneness, or to instruct or encourage them to behave in such a manner; let them remember that they should "obey God "rather than man," and that they must answer to him for their offence, whoever commands them to commit it. But words cannot express what strikes the imagination on this awful subject. We can scarcely conceive the horror which seized the parents of Beth-el, on the view of the mangled bodies of their children, whom they had taught that impiety, which brought the dreadful judgment upon them. What then will be the anguish, at the great decisive day, of those parents, who witness the everlasting condemnation of their offspring, occasioned by their negligence and wickedness! Let us turn from the dreadful meditation, and take warning to train up our families, with increasing earnestness, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" hoping and praying that we shall be enabled, at that important season, to appear before God, and to adopt the language of the prophet, "Behold, I and the children that "thou hast given me."—Indeed the ministers of Christ must and will in all ordinary circumstances continue to bless, and not curse: but the Lord is still glorious in holiness, and all creatures serve him; and while he protects his people, even among their enraged foes, he can soon call for instruments of his vengeance on those, whom he sees to be ripe for destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. *Note*, i. 17.

V. 2, 3. Jehoram threw aside, but did not destroy, the image of Baal: and if he suppressed the worship of Baal for a time, in order to please Jehoshaphat, and secure his alliance, or through terror at the awful end of his father and brother, it was soon allowed to revive. (*Notes*, x. 18—31. 1 *Kings* xvi. 30—33.) But he was not so eager on that idolatry, or so vehement a persecutor of the prophets, and worshippers of the Lord, as his predecessors had been; preferring the more politick measures of Jeroboam. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xii. 26—29.) Yet, it seems, Jezebel retained her influence, and promoted her favourite idolatry; though for reasons of state, or being discouraged by various calamities, she acquiesced in her son's measures at the beginning of his reign.

V. 4—6. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, i. 1.—*Rams.* (4) Or *wethers*, as some understand it.

V. 7. Jehoshaphat used exactly the same words in this answer to Jehoram, as he had done to his father Ahab. But the ill success of Ahab's expedition, his own extreme danger and merciful deliverance, and the sharp reproof given him by the prophet, should have taught him a different conduct. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 4. 30. 32—35. 2 *Chr.* xix. 2, 3.)—As Jehoram had put away the image of Baal, Jehoshaphat perhaps was in hopes of effecting a more complete reformation in Israel, by this compliance: but he thus almost entirely ruined his own family. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 41—46.)

V. 8, 9. This way was far about for Jehoram, and through a part of the desert in which Israel had wanted water, when they came out of Egypt; and the same difficulty might reasonably have been expected. (*Notes, Num.* xx. 2—5. 14—21. xxi. 16—18.) Jehoshaphat seems to

10 And the king of Israel said, Alas! that [r] the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!

11 But Jehoshaphat said, [s] *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD, [t] that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here *is* Elisha the son of Shaphat, [u] which poured water on the hands of Elijah.

12 And Jehoshaphat said, [x] The word of the LORD is with him. So [y] the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, [z] What have I to do with thee? [a] get thee to [b] the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, [c] Nay; for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.

14 And Elisha said, [d] *As* the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that [e] I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, [f] I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

15 But now [g] bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that [h] the hand of the LORD came upon him.

16 And he said, Thus saith the LORD, [i] Make this valley full of ditches:

17 For thus saith the LORD, [k] Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, [l] that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.

18 And [m] this is *but* [n] a light thing in the sight of the LORD: [o] he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand.

19 And [p] ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall [q] fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and [*] mar every good piece of land with stones.

r vi. 33. Gen. iv. 13. Ps. lxxviii. 34—36. Prov. xix. 3. Is. viii. 21. li. 20.

s *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 7. Ps. lxxiv. 9.—Am. iii. 7.

t 1. 3. Josh. ix. 14. Judg. xx. 8—11. 18. 23. 26—28. 1 Chr. x. 13. xiv. 10. 14. xv. 13.

u Gen. xviii. 4. Josh. i. 1. 1 Kings xix. 21. Luke xxii. 26, 27. John xiii. 4, 5. 13, 14. Phil. ii. 22.

x ii. 14, 15. 21. 24. 1 Sam. iii. 19—21.

y v. 8, 9. 15. Is. xlix. 23. lx. 14. Rev. iii. 9.

z Ez. xiv. 3—5. Matt. viii. 29. John ii. 4. 2 Cor. v. 16. vi. 15.

a Judg. x. 14. Jer. ii. 27, 28.

b 1 Kings xviii. 19. xxii. 6. 10, 11. 22—25.

c *See on* 10.—Deut. xxxii. 37—39. Hos. vi. 1.

d v. 16. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 15.

e 2 Chr. xvii. 3—9. xix. 3, 4. Ps. xv. 4.

f 1 Sam. xv. 26—31. 1 Kings xiv. 5, &c. xxi. 20. Jer. i. 18. Dan. v. 17—23. Matt. xxii. 16.

g 1 Sam. x. 5. xvi. 23. xviii. 10. 1 Chr. xxv. 2, 3. Eph. v. 18, 19

h 1 Kings xviii. 46. Ez. i. 3. iii. 14. 22. viii. 1. Acts xi. 21.

i iv. 3. Num. xxi. 8. 16—18.

k 1 Kings xviii. 36—39. Ps. lxxxiv. 6. cvii. 35. Is. xli. 17, 18. xliii. 19, 20. xlviii. 21.

l Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 8—11.

m 1 Kings iii. 13. Jer. xxxii. 17. 27. Luke i. 37. Eph. iii. 20.

n xx. 10. 1 Kings xvi. 31. Is. vii. 13. xlix. 6. Ez. viii. 17.

o 1 Kings xx. 13. 28. Is. vii. 1—9.

p xiii. 17. Num. xxiv. 17. Judg. vi. 16. 1 Sam. xv. 3. xxiii. 2.

q Deut. xx. 19, 20.

* Heb. *grieve*. 25.

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have intended to prevent the revolt, and secure the assistance of the deputy-king of Edom, and to attack the Moabites by surprise: (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 47:) but he neglected to enquire of the Lord, for which he was speedily rebuked. It is probable, that the army either missed the direct road, or was hindered in its march, and turned out of the way which the kings had intended to take, by some unforeseen impediments: or a great drought prevailed in that region, of which they had not been aware.

V. 10. Jehoram had planned this expedition, without any divine direction, for his own interest, and had drawn the other two kings into it. Had they succeeded, he would not have given God the glory; yet when calamities came upon him, through his own inadvertency, "his heart fretted against the LORD:" but he expressed neither repentance, nor faith, nor submission to the will of God. (*Notes*, vi. 24—33. *Prov.* xix. 3.)

V. 11, 12. Doubtless, the prophet was divinely directed to follow the camp on this occasion. The servant of Jehoram was better acquainted with Elisha, than his master was; and he was known, as having been the attendant of Elijah, to assist him in washing his hands, and other menial offices; yet as appointed to be his successor. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xix. 20, 21.) Jehoshaphat was now made sensible of his fault in neglecting to enquire of the Lord: and the three kings concurred in shewing respect to Elisha; not ordering his attendance, but waiting on him. (*Notes*, v. 8—12. *Ex.* xi. 8. *Is.* lx. 10—14. *Rev.* iii. 8, 9.)

V. 13, 14. It is probable, that Elisha meant to shew Jehoshaphat the deficiency and hypocrisy of Jehoram's reformation; as his heart still went after the prophets and worship of Baal: and he had no real regard for the prophets of God, though he consulted him in his distress. He would not therefore shew him any respect or honour, that he might understand how the Lord detested his iniquity: but he treated Jehoshaphat with respect, though he also was faulty. (*Notes*, *Judg.* x. 13—18. *Ez.* xiv. 1—5. xx. 39.)—Doubtless he was directed to act in his *publick character*, differently from what he would have done as *a private subject* of Jehoram's kingdom. This indeed is implied in the words of the oath, by which he confirmed what he spake. "As the LORD of hosts liveth, before "whom I stand." (*Marg. Ref.* d.)

V. 15. The "minstrel" was one skilful in playing on a harp, or some other musical instrument: and it is probable, that he sang the praises of God, accompanied with soft and sweet musick.—This was intended to calm the prophet's mind, which had been discomposed with a holy indignation, by recollecting the abominations of Ahab's family; and so to prepare him for those illapses of the Holy Spirit, which he assuredly expected, and accordingly received. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* x. 5, 6. xvi. 15—23.)

V. 16, 17. With the prophetical promise of a sufficient supply of water, for them, their cattle, and beasts of burden, a commandment was given which required considerable labour, and was a trial of the faith and obedience of the persons concerned. It is useless to enquire whence this water came: He, that caused the rock to pour forth rivers, could never want resources. (*Note*, *Ex.* xvii. 5, 6.) The supply, however, was evidently miraculous: and those who have insinuated the contrary, as if Elisha had merely known that there was water in the place, if they would only dig for it; must suppose that the prophet, whom they attempt to disparage, had more sagacity in matters of this kind, than these three kings, with all their officers, and counsellors, and soldiers.

V. 18, 19. (*Marg. Ref.*) Providence put it in Jehoram's power to execute that severe vengeance upon the re-

20 And it came to pass in the morning, [r] when the meat-offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom; and the country was [s] filled with water.

21 And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they [*] gathered all that were able to [†] put on armour and upward, and stood in the border.

22 And they arose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side, *as* red as blood:

23 And they said, [t] This *is* blood: [‡] the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: [u] now therefore Moab to the spoil.

24 And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and [x] smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they [§] went forward smiting the Moabites, even in *their* country.

25 And they [y] beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they [z] stopped all the wells of water, [a] and felled all the good trees: [‖] only in [b] Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about *it*, and smote it.

26 And when the king of Moab saw

[r] Ex. xxix. 39, 40. Kings xviii. 36. Dan. ix. 21.

[s] See on Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16. 20. Is. xxxv. 6, 7.

[*] Heb. *were cried together.*

[†] Heb. *gird himself with a girdle.* 1 Kings xx. 11. Eph. vi. 14.

[t] vi. 18—20. vii. 6.

[‡] Heb. *destroyed.*

[u] Ex. xv. 9. Judg. v. 30. 2 Chr. xx. 25. Is. x. 14.

[x] Josh. viii. 20—22. Judg. xx. 40—46. 1 Thes. v. 3, 4.

[§] Or, *smote in it even smiting.*

[y] 19. Judg. ix. 45. 2 Sam. viii. 2. Is. xxxvii. 26, 27.

[z] Gen. xxvi. 15. 18. 2 Chr. xxxii. 4.

[a] Deut. xx. 19, 20.

[‖] Heb. *until he left the stones thereof in Kir-haraseth.*

[b] Is. xvi. 7. 11. Jer. xlviii. 31. 36. *Kir-heres.*

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volted Moabites, which he meditated. But it is not certain, whether the words of Elisha implied a *permission* to do so, or were merely *prophetical* of the event. (*Deut.* xx. 19, 20.)—It is probable, that much of the land could not be cultivated, till the stones were gathered off: and these, lying in heaps upon the corners of the fields, would speedily be dispersed by a numerous army, and occasion great hindrance and difficulty in the future cultivation of the country.

V. 20. The time of the morning-sacrifice at Jerusalem was chosen by the Lord for this miracle, to intimate to the whole company, that the deliverance was vouchsafed them through the sacrifices and the worship there performed. (*Marg. Ref.* r.)—It may here very properly be noted, that neither Elijah nor Elisha seems ever to have resorted to the worship at the temple, or to have required the people, under the government of the kings of Israel, to do so; though that worship was appointed by God, and it is evident that his spiritual worshippers had respect to it. The peculiar circumstances of Israel were such, that without uninterrupted miracles, or subverting the foundation of the civil establishment, the people could not exactly observe the ritual law. The prophets were therefore directed, by God himself, to accommodate their conduct to these circumstances, and to spend their lives in recovering or preserving the people from idolatry, and in teaching them the grand essentials of acceptable religion.—In every age hitherto, considerate and faithful ministers have found it impracticable, for them to rectify every external deviation from what to them appeared most scriptural: but, having adverted to the distinction between what is *desirable*, and what is *attainable;* and between the essentials of true religion in every age, and matters more circumstantial; they have accommodated themselves to that state of things which they could not alter; and endeavoured to bring men to repentance, faith in Christ, and holiness of life, and to as scriptural an external worship as they could. And, though some of their brethren have censured them, the Lord God of Elijah and Elisha has evidently pleaded their cause, by making them the instruments of numerous conversions, and great revivals of religion: whilst others, scrupulously exact in external forms, and earnest to magnify them, have worn out their lives in vainly attempting to new model the church and the world, and have missed their opportunity of more essential usefulness. (*Notes*, iv. 23. 1 *Sam.* vii. 9. 17. 1 *Kings* xviii. 4. 36, 37.) In due time the Lord will regulate every thing externally, as well as internally, in the best manner: in the mean while we must make the best of things: we must aim to be satisfied respecting our own conduct as in the sight of God; to be moderate and candid in our own judgment concerning those who differ from us, and patient under their censures of us; and, learning what that means, "I will have mercy "and not sacrifice," to be careful not to lose sight of the great end of all religion, for the sake of some of the *disputable* means of attaining it. For at last, nothing "avail-"eth in Christ Jesus, but faith which worketh by love," and "a new creature" manifested in "newness of life." (*Notes, Gal.* v. 1—6. vi. 11—16.)

The way of Edom.] Mount Seir was inhabited by Edom: and some think, that plentiful rains on the mountains of Edom supplied the water. But this is uncertain; and mount Seir was not so distant, but that tokens of wind or rain would have been perceived by the army (17).

V. 22, 23. The sun shining upon the water in ditches, probably in a red soil, had the appearance of blood; and deceived the Moabites, who knew that it was just before a dry valley, and that no rain had fallen: and as combined armies have often quarrelled, and destroyed each other, they hastily concluded this to be the case, and acted as if it had been fully proved to them. 'The Moabites easily 'believing what they wished, imagined they had nothing 'to do, but to go and gather the spoil, and not to fight at 'all.' *Bp. Patrick.* God permitted them to be thus infatuated for their destruction. (*Note, Judg.* vii. 16—22. 2 *Chr.* xx. 22—25.)

V. 24, 25. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 18, 19. 27.

V. 26. The camp of the vice-roy of Edom seems not to have been so well fortified, as the camps of the other kings: and therefore the king of Moab, in his extreme danger, thought to force his way through in this direction; but he was not able.

that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through
c 9. Am. ii. 1. *even* [c] unto the king of Edom: but they could not.

27 Then he took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and [d] offered him *for* a burnt-offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and [e] they departed from him, and returned to *their own* land.

d Gen. xxii 2. 13. Deut. xii. 31. Judg. xi. 31. 39. Ps. cvi. 37, 38. Ez. xvi. 20. Mic. vi. 7
e 1 Sam. xiv. 36—46. 1 Kings xx. 13. 28. 43.

V. 27. It has been supposed that the king of Moab offered in sacrifice the eldest son of the king of Edom, whom he had taken prisoner: but the narrative does not admit of this interpretation. It is evident, that he sacrificed his own eldest son, and the heir apparent of his crown, to procure the assistance of his idols, or to avert their indignation. It has been thought, that a tradition of Abraham's offering his son Isaac, nay, that even a distorted tradition concerning the sacrifice of the Redeemer, gave occasion to those horrid human sacrifices, which have been, and still are, very common in the gentile world. But this at most could only be the *occasion*: the *cause* was two-fold; the depravity and blindness of the human heart, and the subtlety and malignity of Satan; in whose worship, as directed by him, it must be a first principle, that the more costly, painful, unnatural, and cruel the oblation is, the more acceptable the sacrifice; because it best gratifies his pride, envy, and malice. (*Notes, Lev.* xx. 2—5. *Mic.* vi. 6—8.)—This horrid sacrifice the king of Moab offered in the sight of the combined armies, that they might see his desperate determination to endure and inflict all extremities, rather than be reduced: his remaining forces were thus fired with indignation against Israel; and perhaps Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, expressed their disapprobation of those severities which occasioned the dreadful deed. In this manner the minds of the assailants being filled with horror, and their measures disconcerted, they, by common consent, raised the siege of Kir-haraseth, the principal city of Moab, before the walls of which these transactions took place. Thus it escaped the destruction which had overwhelmed the other cities (25): and the allied armies returned home, without having fully completed their design.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Partial reformations often originate from the hope of advantage in *temporal* things, by the favour of godly men: and even the selfish will sometimes renounce those sins, which occasion them loss and trouble; and then detect their own hypocrisy by adhering to those which promise present advantage. True piety, however, disposes men to judge favourably: and this candour is apt to carry them too far; while they indulge the hope of drawing half-converts further into the ways of God, by complying with their inclinations, and cultivating their acquaintance. We should indeed endeavour, by kindness, both to win upon the affections of our neighbours, and to evince the tendency of our religion: yet our conduct in all things should be regulated by the word of God; and it is there declared that "evil "communications corrupt good manners;" and we are commanded "to come out, and be separate" from the ungodly.—Worldly men are quick-sighted to their temporal interests, but they seek nothing further; and often seduce pious persons to forget their own principles, and to "lean "to their own understandings," instead of "acknowledg-"ing the LORD in all their ways." But whilst the wicked in their difficulties are ready to "fret against the Lord," as the author of those calamities, which their own sin and folly have brought upon them; the believer will be humbled before him for neglect of duties, and disposed to enquire his will and seek his help. And when corrections have brought men to this temper, relief will be afforded them; and their ungodly connexions will often succeed the better on their account.—Those, who would be eminent in the church of the living God, must readily stoop to the meanest service and the hardest labour: for such as have thus distinguished themselves, have generally attained to singular honour and usefulness. (*Notes, Matt.* xx. 24—28.)

V. 13—27.

Many shew respect to the ministers of God under heavy trials, who despise them at other times. In that case, they might be justly left to seek help from the worldly idols, the vicious companions, the worthless forms, or infidel principles, which they have preferred to the favour and truth of God: and they should be shewn, that with him "there is no respect of persons." The minister may also properly let them know, that he is no stranger to their character, and will pay no court to them, whatever he would do or suffer for their good: and he, who in private life is the allowed inferior, and willing to be the servant of all, when speaking in the name of the Lord, is commissioned to "rebuke with all authority." In *all ordinary cases*, however, it should be with evident affection and respect; and it is proper so to change the voice, and regulate the conduct, as decisively to mark the difference between the offending believer and the mere hypocrite.—Composure of mind favours the reception of heavenly communications: when the wickedness and misery of man have ruffled us, meditation on the glorious perfections and wonderful works of God is suited to restore the calm: and it is well, when the sweet, but much perverted arts of poetry and musick, are used with such caution and propriety, as to favour communion with him.—The Lord will take occasion, from the distresses of his offending servants, to manifest the glory of his power, truth, and love: and, whilst all good gifts are from him alone, we must shew our believing expectation, and prepare for their reception, by observing the directions of his word.—It is a light thing for him to preserve his people from becoming a prey to their enemies: he will make them more than conquerors over them all.—Our rule is to do good and not evil to *our* adversaries: but we shall hereafter behold and rejoice in the destruction of all the enemies of God. And they who are expressly commissioned by him, (as the Israelites of old, and magistrates at present,) to execute his vengeance upon the wicked, are authorized in those severities, which in others would be extremely criminal.—The Lord will put honour upon his own institutions: and sin-

CHAP. IV.

· At Elisha's word the oil of a poor prophet's widow is increased, to enable her to pay her debt, 1—7. He is hospitably entertained by a woman of Shunem, who is rewarded by having a son in her old age, 8—17. The child dies, but is restored to life in answer to Elisha's prayer, 18—37. Elisha heals the pottage made with poisonous herbs, 38—41; and feeds a hundred men with twenty small barley loaves, 42—44.

NOW there cried a certain woman
a 38. *See on* ii. 3. 5. 1 Kings xx. 35. of the wives of the [a] sons of the pro-
b Gen. xxii. 12. 1 Kings xviii. 3. Neh. vii. 2. Ps. cii. 11. 17. cxii. 1, 2. cxv. 13. cxlvii. 11. Ec. viii. 12. xii. 13. Mal. iii. 16. iv. 2. Acts xiii. 26. Rev. xv. 4. xix. 5. phets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that [b] thy servant did fear the LORD: and [c] the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

c Lev. xxv. 39, 40. 48. Neh. v. 2—5. x. 31. Jer. xxxiv. 14. Matt. xviii. 25. 30. 35. Jam. ii. 13. 2 And Elisha said unto her, [d] What shall I do for thee? tell me: what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house [e] save a pot of oil.

d ii. 9. vi. 26, 27. Matt. xv. 34. John vi. 5—7. Acts iii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 10. 3 Then he said, Go, borrow thee
e 1 Kings xvii. 12. Jam. ii. 5. vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, *even* [f] empty vessels; [*] borrow not a few.

f iii. 16. John ii. 7.
* Heb. *scant not.* xiii. 18, 19. Ps. lxxxi. 10. John xvi. 24.

4 And when thou art come in, [g] thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, [h] and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

g 32, 33. 1 Kings xvii. 19, 20. Is. xxvi. 20. Matt. vi. 6. Mark v. 40. Acts ix. 40.
h John ii. 7—9. vi. 11.

5 So [i] she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, [j] who brought *the vessels* to her, and she poured out.

i v. 11. 1 Kings xvii. 15, 16. Luke i. 45. Heb. xi. 7, 8.
j 43, 44. Matt. ix. 29. xiii. 58. xiv. 20. xv. 37. Luke vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 12, 13.

6 And it came to pass when [j] the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, *There is* not a vessel more. [k] And the oil stayed.

k xiii. 19. Josh. v. 12. 1 Kings xvii. 14. John vi. 12.

7 Then she came, and told the man of God: and he said, Go, sell the oil, and [l] pay thy [†] debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

l Ps. xxxvii. 21. Rom. xii. 17. Phil. iv. 8. 1 Thes. ii. 9, 10. iv. 12. 2 Thes. iii. 7—12.
† Or, *creditor.*

8 ¶ And [‡] it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to [m] Shunem, where *was* [n] a great woman: and [o] she [§] constrained him to

‡ Heb. *there was a day.* 11. 18.
m 12. Josh. xix. 18. 1 Sam. xxviii. 4. 1 Kings i. 3.
n 2 Sam. xix. 32. Job i. 3. xxxii. 9. Luke i. 15.
o Gen. xix. 3. Judg. xix. 20. Prov. vii. 21. Luke xiv. 23. xxiv. 29. Acts xvi. 15.
§ Heb. *laid hold on him.*

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ners left to themselves are speedily infatuated; for if men could not believe what they wish to be true, *without proof, and in defiance of demonstration,* "the fool" would not "say in his heart, there is no God."—When sinners are promising themselves peace and safety, sudden and inevitable destruction comes upon them; desperation succeeds their mad presumption; and in Satan's service, and at his suggestion, such horrid deeds have been perpetrated, as cause even the natural feelings of humanity to recoil. We should, however, be careful not to urge the worst of men to extremities, lest we should occasion blasphemies, murder, or suicide: we ought rather to recede from our right, and leave them to the judgment of God.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. The prophets were ministers by *selection,* and not by *entail,* as the priests were: yet they seem in general to have married and brought up families; though Elijah and Elisha are supposed to have continued in a single state.—Except the prophets had private fortunes, which probably was not often the case, their incomes must have been very precarious; and would arise either from the donations of pious persons, or from their own manual labour. The people perhaps sometimes gave them the first fruits, and some other of the oblations, which would have belonged to the priests and Levites, if they had not departed from among them. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xi. 13—17.) Many of them, however, seem to have been very scantily provided for: and this servant of God, who was of approved piety, not only left his family destitute, but involved in debt. Yet the creditor paid no more regard to the distress of the widow, than to the character of the deceased; nay, perhaps he was the more severe in his demands, because of the attachment of the debtor to the worship of JEHOVAH, and his zeal against idolatry. As therefore the widow had no effects, with which to discharge the debt, he proceeded to sell her sons for slaves in order to pay himself. (*Marg. Ref.* c.—*Notes, Ex.* xxi. 2. *Neh.* v. 1—13. *Matt.* xviii. 23—27.)—Elisha had no wealth from which to assist the widow; yet it was proper, for the honour of religion, that the creditor should be satisfied: and the Lord directed him to a method of effectually answering this demand, and of supplying her future necessities.

V. 2. The woman had parted with every thing of value, to satisfy other demands, or to supply her urgent necessities. Probably this oil was a present from some friend of her deceased husband, out of the produce of his olive-yard, but it was utterly insufficient to satisfy the creditor.

V. 3. *Not a few.*] As many, and as large, as she could procure. (*Marg.*)

V. 4. *Shut,* &c.] This direction was given, in order that the woman might avoid interruption and ostentation; and that in retirement, she with her sons might the more leisurely consider and adore the goodness of the Lord. (*Note, Matt.* vi. 6.)

V. 6. The woman was ordered "to borrow empty ves-"sels not a few;" and, as her neighbours were willing to lend her, we may conclude, that she borrowed as many as she thought could be wanted: yet the oil stayed not, till all the vessels were filled. Had her expectations been larger, the supply would have been still more abundant. (*Note,* xiii. 15—19.)

V. 7. The woman would not make use of the miraculous supply, till she had received the prophet's direction: and by his orders, she *first* discharged her whole debt, and then used the remainder for the subsistence of herself and her children. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Rom.* xiii. 8—10.)

V. 8—10. Elisha seems to have generally resided at or near mount Carmel: but he went his circuits through the

eat bread. And *so* it was, *that* as oft as he passed by he turned in thither to eat bread.

9 And [p] she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that [q] this *is* a holy [r] man of God, which passeth by us continually.

10 [s] Let us make [t] a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

11 And it fell on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

12 And he said to [u] Gehazi his [v] servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.

13 And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, [x] thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what *is* to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for [y] to the king, or [z] to the captain of the host? And she answered, [a] I dwell [b] among mine own people.

14 And he said, What then *is* to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily [c] she hath no child, and her husband is old.

15 And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.

16 And he said, [d] About this [*] season, according to the time of life, [e] thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, [f] my lord, *thou* man of God, [g] do not lie unto thine handmaid.

17 And [h] the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day that he went out to his father [i] to the reapers.

19 And he said unto his father, [j] My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother.

20 And when he had taken him, and brought him to [k] his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, [l] and *then* died.

21 And she went up, and laid him on [m] the bed of the man of God, and shut *the door* upon him, and went out.

p Prov. xxxi. 10, 11. 1 Pet. iii. 1.
q 1 Thes. ii. 10. Tit. i. 8. 2 Pet. i. 21. iii. 2.
r *See on* Deut. xxxiii. 1.—1 Kings xiii 1. xvii. 18. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 11.
s Is. xxxii. 8. Matt. xxv. 40. Luke viii. 3. Rom. xii. 13. Heb. x. 24. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 9, 10.
t 1 Kings xvii. 19.
u 29—31. v. 20—27. viii. 4, 5.
v iii. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 43. xix. 3. Acts xiii. 5.
x Matt. x. 40—42. Luke ix. 3—5. Rom. xvi. 2. 6. Phil. iv. 18, 19. 1 Thes. v. 12, 13. 2 Tim. i. 16—18.
y iii. 15—18. viii. 3—6. Gen. xiv. 24. 2 Sam xix. 32—38.
z ix. 5. 2 Sam. xix. 13. 1 Kings ii. 32.
a 1 Tim. vi. 6—8. Heb. xiii. 5.
b viii. 1. Ruth i. 1—4. Ps. xxxvii. 3.
c Gen. xv. 2, 3. xvii. 17. xviii. 10—14. xxv. 21. xxx. 1. Judg. xiii. 2. 1 Sam. i. 2. 8. Luke i. 7.
d Gen. xvii. 21. xviii. 10. 14.
* Heb. *set time.*
e Gen. xvii. 16, 17. Luke i. 13. 30, 31.
f *See on* q. ii. 19.
g 28. v. 10, 11. Gen. xviii. 12—15. 1 Kings xvii. 18. xviii. 9. Ps. cxvi. 11. Luke i. 18—20.
B. C. 893.
h Gen. xxi. 1. 1 Sam. i. 19, 20. Ps. cxiii. 9. Luke i. 24, 25. Heb. xi. 11.
B. C. 889.
i Ruth ii. 4.
j Job xiv. 1, 2. Jer. iv. 19.
k Is. xlix. 15. lxvi. 13. Luke vii. 12.
l Gen. xxii. 2. xxxvii. 3. 35. 1 Kings xvii. 17. Ez. xxiv. 16—18. Luke ii. 36. John xi. 3. 5. 14.
m 10. 1 Kings xvii. 19.

land, to visit the seminaries of the prophets, and to instruct the people, which probably was his stated employment, when not sent on some special service. (*Notes*, ii. 1. 1 *Kings* xix. 20, 21.) At Shunem there lived a woman of wealth and piety, who invited him to come to her house, and with some difficulty prevailed on him. But when he became acquainted with her character, he never failed to call upon her when he journeyed that way. Her husband seems to have been a pious person, but not so zealous and active as she was: and, as he confided his domestick affairs to her care, she is chiefly noticed. By his approbation she prepared for the prophet a retired lodging; perhaps perceiving that the hurry of a large family did not suit his contemplative mind.—The plain, simple manner in which the prophet's chamber was furnished, (though he was the patriarch, if I may so speak, of the whole church of Israel,) is worthy of our notice. There was nothing provided for ornament or indulgence, but merely for necessity, for study, and for devotion.—*Shunem.* (8) In the lot of Issachar. (*Marg. Ref.* in.—*Note, Josh.* xix. 17—23.)

V. 13. Elisha had no doubt acquired considerable influence with Jehoram, or his captains, by the singular deliverance and victory obtained through him: (*Notes*, iii. 4—27:) and, though he would ask nothing for himself, he was willing to shew his gratitude in behalf of his kind hostess, by interposing in her behalf, if she had any petition to present.—Perhaps Jehoram's soldiers or taxgatherers might be oppressive or troublesome in the neighbourhood; and he thought she might desire to seek redress of this, or some other grievance. (*Notes*, viii. 3—6.) Or perhaps he made the proposal, with an intention of manifesting her indifference to temporal interests. Accordingly she answered, that, living safe and contented among her friends and relatives, and those who behaved kindly to her, she had no request to make. Having said this, she seems to have withdrawn; but Elisha further conversed on the subject with Gehazi.

Thou hast been careful.] חָרַדְתְּ. חָרַד, *tremere, turbari, commoveri curâ.* Robertson. Probably, the same word was used by our Lord to Martha, rendered τυρβάζῃ, *art troubled*, *Luke* x. 41.

V. 14—17. Gehazi, as having more leisure and opportunity to observe the affairs of the family than Elisha had, discovered what favour would be most acceptable; and he seems not to have doubted the prevalence of his master's prayers in this respect. In addressing his benefactress, Elisha used words, which some think implied, not only the time, but the very day, on which she should embrace *a son.* (*Marg. Ref.*—*Gen.* xvii. 21. xviii. 14.)—Her answer reminded him of his character, and intimated that she could not suppose he would mock her with delusive expectations: especially as she had expressed no impatience under her trial, and had not so much as mentioned a desire of having children. (28. *Notes, Gen.* xxx. 1, 2. 1 *Sam.* i. 4—8.)

V. 21. *On the bed,* &c.] This implied, that the woman had some expectation of her son's being restored to her; as he had at first been given her in so extraordi-

22 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the
n 24. 26. John xi. 3. Acts ix. 38. asses, that [n] I may run to the man of God, and come again.

23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? *it is* neither
o Num. x. 10. xxviii. 11. 1 Chr. xxiii. 31. Is. i. 13—15. [o] new moon nor sabbath. And she said, *It shall be* [*] well.

* Heb. *peace.* 26.
p Ex. iv. 20. 1 Sam. xxv. 20. 1 Kings xiii. 13. 23. 24 Then [p] she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, [q] Drive, and go forward; [†] slack not *thy* riding for me, except I bid thee.

q 1 Sam. xxv. 19.
† Heb. *restrain not for me to ride.*

25 So she went and came unto the
r ii. 25. 1 Kings xviii. 19. 42. man of God [r] to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, *yonder is* that Shunammite:

s Zech. ii. 4. 26 [s] Run now, I pray thee, to meet
t Gen. xxix. 6. xxxvii. 14. 1 Sam. xvii. 18. Matt. x. 12, 13. Acts xv. 36. her, and say unto her, [t] *Is it* well with thee? *is it* well with thy husband? *is it* well with the child? And she an-
u 23. 1 Sam. iii. 18. Job i. 21. swered, [u] *It is* well.

27 And when she came to the man
‡ Heb. *by his feet.* of God to the hill, she caught [‡] him [v] by the feet: but Gehazi came near
v Matt. xxviii. 9. Luke vii. 38. to [x] thrust her away. And the man of
x Matt. xv. 23. Mark x. 13. John iv. 27. xii. 4—6. God said, [y] Let her alone; for her soul *is* [§] vexed within her: and the LORD
y Mark xiv. 6. John xii. 7.
§ Heb. *bitter.* 1 Sam. i. 10. Job xx. 1. Prov. xiv. 10. xviii. 14. hath [z] hid *it* from me, and hath not told me.

z vi. 12. Gen. xviii. 17. 2 Sam. vii. 3. Am. iii. 7. John xv. 15. 28 Then she said, [a] Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, [b] Do not deceive me?

a Gen. xxx. 1.
b *See on* 16.

29 Then he said to Gehazi, [c] Gird up
c ix. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 46. Eph. vi. 14. 1 Pet. i. 13. thy loins, and [d] take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet
d ii. 14. Ex. iv. 17. any man, [e] salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and
e Luke x. 4.
f Ex. vii. 19, 20. xiv. 16. Josh. vi. 4, 5. Acts iii. 16. xix. 12. [f] lay my staff upon the face of the child.

30 And the mother of the child said,
g *See on* ii. 2. 4.
h Ex. xxxiii. 12—16. Ruth i. 16—18. [g] *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, [h] I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

i 1 Sam. xiv. 37. xxviii. 6. Ez. xiv. 3. Matt. xvii. 16—21. Mark ix. 19—29. Acts xix. 13—17. 31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but *there was* [i] neither
‖ Heb. *attention.* 1 Kings xviii. 26. 29. voice nor [‖] hearing: wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child *is*
k Job xiv. 12. Dan. xii. 2. John xi. 11. 43, 44. Eph. v. 14. [k] not awaked.

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nary a manner: (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xvii. 17—24. *Heb.* xi. 17. 19:) yet this hope was not sufficiently prevalent to exclude her anguish of spirit, under this unexpected and sudden affliction.

V. 22. The field, where the woman's husband superintended his reapers, was near to the house; as this request must have been made by some messenger.

V. 23. It appears, that on the sabbaths, new moons, and other solemnities, the people were accustomed to assemble in appointed places, to worship God, and to receive instruction from the prophets; and it was thought allowable to use the cattle on the sabbath-day, to go to the prophet, or to these places, if at a distance. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xx. 8—11.)—It is not certain whether they assembled in synagogues, or private houses; but probably it was done in most parts of the land of Israel.—In Judah, pious people had the advantage of the temple-worship, and the instructions of the priests and Levites; they were generally countenanced and protected by their kings; and they thankfully availed themselves of these advantages. But in Israel, the ruling powers were against them: yet they served God according to their consciences, as their circumstances would admit. (*Note*, iii. 20.)—The afflicted mother would not needlessly distress her husband, by informing him of the death of the child, still hoping, that the restoration of the child, by the miraculous interposition of Elisha, would prevent his grief; but merely said it would be well for her to go: and he had that confidence in her, that he required no further explanation.

V. 24—26. Mount Carmel was at some distance from Shunem; and the words, "Slack not thy riding," imply, that the servant also rode on an ass. The word, (נְהַג) rendered *Drive*, properly means, *Lead* the way, or, *Go before.*—Elisha did not expect to see her at this time; and, being afraid that some calamity had befallen her, sent Gehazi to make very particular enquiries; to which she answered, "*It is well,*" or *peace* (שָׁלוֹם). Some suppose that she only meant to put off Gehazi with this answer, as in part true, in respect of herself and her husband, though not the whole of the case: but it is probable that it was also the language of her faith and submission; as she was persuaded, that the affliction was in mercy, and would terminate well, though her passions conflicted against her better judgment. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Lev.* x. 3.)

V. 27. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is plain from this verse, that the prophets derived all their supernatural knowledge from immediate communication; and not from any power of discerning, habitually inherent in them.

V. 28. Doubtless the acute feelings of the Shunammite mingled some impatience in these expostulations: yet she meant them as arguments, to prevail with the prophet to come to her relief; being satisfied of the prevalency of his prayers. For, as she had not impatiently desired children, she could not think that her son had been given her without solicitation, merely to become the occasion of her far deeper distress. (*Notes*, 14—17. 21.)

V. 29—31. It is difficult to determine what the prophet meant, by thus sending Gehazi. He had divided Jordan by using Elijah's mantle; and perhaps he thought his own staff, in the hands of Gehazi, would be as efficacious. (*Note*, ii. 14.) Or perhaps he meant to make trial of the Shunammite's faith. Gehazi, however, was ordered to

32 And when Elisha was come into
l 1 Kings xvii. 17. Luke viii. 52, 53. John xi. 17. the house, behold l the child was dead, *and* laid upon his bed.

m See on 4.—Matt. vi. 6. 33 He went in therefore, and m shut
n v. 11. vi. 17, 18. 20. 1 Kings xvii. 20. xviii. 26, 27. John xi. 41, 42. Acts ix. 40. Jam. v. 13—18. the door upon them twain, and n prayed unto the LORD.

o 1 Kings xvii. 21. Acts xx. 10. 34 And he went up, and o lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35 Then he returned, and walked in
* Heb. *once hither and once thither.* the house * to and fro, and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and
p viii. 1. & xiii. 21. 1 Kings xvii. 22. Luke vii. 14, 15. viii. 55. John xi. 43, 44. Acts ix. 40. the child sneezed seven times, p and the child opened his eyes.

q 12. 36 And he called Gehazi, and said, q Call this Shunammite. So he called her: and when she was come in unto
r 1 Kings xvii. 23. Luke vii. 15. Heb. xi. 35. him, he said, r Take up thy son.

s 27. ii. 15. 1 Kings xvii. 24. 37 Then she went in, and s fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went
t ii. 1. 1 Sam. vii. 16, 17. Acts x. 38. xv. 36. out.

38 ¶ And Elisha t came again to Gilgal; and *there was* u a dearth in the land, and x the sons of the prophets y *were* sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, z Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

u viii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 26. Deut. xxviii. 22—24. 38—40. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Jer. xiv. 1—6. Ez. xiv. 13. Luke iv. 25.
x *See on* ii. 3.
y 1 Sam. xix. 20. Prov. viii. 34. Luke ii. 46. viii. 35. 38. x. 39. Acts xxii. 3.
z Mark vi. 37. viii. 2—6. Luke ix. 13. John xxi. 5. 9.

39 And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred *them* into the pot of pottage: for they knew *them* not.

a Is. v. 4. Jer. ii. 21.

40 So they poured out for the men to eat: and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, b O *thou* man of God, *there is* c death in the pot! and they could not eat *thereof.*

b *See on* 9. i. 9. 11. 13. Deut. xxxiii. 1. 1 Kings xvii. 18.
c Ex. x. 17. xv. 23. Mark xvi. 18.

41 But he said, Then bring meal: d and he cast *it* into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat: and e there was no † harm in the pot.

d ii. 21. v. 10. vi. 6. Ex. xv. 25. John ix. 6. 1 Cor. i 25.
e Acts xxviii. 5.
† Heb. *evil thing.*

42 ¶ And there came a man from f Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God g bread of the first fruits, twenty

f 1 Sam. ix. 4.
g 38. Ex. xxiii. 16. Deut. xii. 6. xxvi. 2—10. 1 Sam. ix. 7. 2 Chr. xi. 13, 14. Prov. iii. 9, 10. 1 Cor. ix. 11. Gal. vi. 6.

proceed as a man upon urgent business, who may not be delayed even by attention to ordinary civilities: (*Luke* x. 4:) and he would thus arrive at Shunem some time before Elisha could. He seems to have observed his directions punctually, but in vain; either through his own unbelief; (*Notes, Matt.* xvii. 19—21. *Acts* xix. 13—20;) or because the woman had no expectations from him; or because Elisha was faulty in attempting to perform the miracle by a substitute; or, as some think, because the prophet altered his purpose, at the importunity of the woman, and so did not pray for Gehazi's success. (*Notes,* v. 20—27.)

V. 33—35. It is instructive to compare the *manner,* in which Elijah and Elisha wrought their miracles, especially in raising the dead, with that of Jesus Christ. Every part of their conduct expressed a consciousness of inability *in themselves,* and an entire dependence on another, and earnest application to him for his interposition: but Jesus wrought by his own power; "he spake, and it was done;" "Young man, I say unto thee, arise;" "*Talitha, cúmi;*" "Lazarus, come forth." (*Notes, Mark* v. 35—43. *Luke* vii. 11—17. *John* xi. 41—46. *Acts* ix. 36—43.)—On this occasion, Elisha, by his great attention, shewed his earnest desire of restoring the child to his afflicted mother: and the actions which he employed were significant expressions of his expectation, that God, by communicating life to the body, would enable each part to perform its proper office. The recovery of the child was gradual: life was communicated, and then one symptom and another of it appeared. As his disorder had been in his head, it has been observed that his sneezing might remove the cause of it, and restore him to health also. (*Notes, Ez.* xxxvii. 1—10. *Mark* viii. 22—26.)

V. 36, 37. (*Notes, 1 Kings* xvii. 21, 22. *Heb.* xi. 35—38.) The joyful mother not only expressed her high respect for the prophet, but worshipped God also, giving him humble thanks for his great goodness to her: for the words may be rendered, "She fell at his feet, and worshipped."

V. 38, 39. (*Marg. Ref.*) *Wild gourds.* (39) These are supposed to have been gathered from the plant called *colocynthida,* which is of a most nauseous bitter, and, if taken improperly, operates as a fatal poison. The sons of the prophets seem to have fared very hardly; and in a season of urgent scarcity they were glad to gather what they could find, and thus one of them ignorantly brought the produce of this noxious plant.

V. 40, 41. It is probable that these men were alarmed, not only by the nauseous taste of the food, but by the effects produced on those who had begun to eat of it.—Yet we may take occasion to remark the goodness of God, in giving us the senses of smelling and tasting, to be, as it were, centinels to keep watch, that nothing prejudicial may be received into the stomach.—The "meal cast into "the pot," was only a token of the divine operation, in changing the taste and properties of the pottage, that his servants might not want a necessary refreshment. (*Notes,* ii. 19—22. *Ex.* xv. 25, 26. *Mark* xvi. 17, 18.)

V. 42—44. This would be a considerable present in a time of famine. (*Note,* 1.)—'Unto whom' (the prophets) 'it is probable, pious persons gave that portion, which was 'assigned by God for the priests, to whom they could not 'now carry their first-fruits, they being in the land of

h vii. 1. 16—18. Deut. viii. 8. xxxii. 14. John vi. 9. 13.
* Or, *his scrip, or, garment.*
i *See on* 12.
k Matt. xiv. 16, 17. xv. 33, 34. Mark vi. 37—39. viii. 4. Luke ix. 13. John vi. 9.

loaves [h] of barley, and full ears of corn in [*] the husk thereof: and he said, Give unto the people that they may eat.

43 And [i] his servitor said, [k] What! should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, [l] They shall eat, and shall leave *thereof.*

l Matt. xiv. 20. xv. 37. xvi. 8—10. Mark vi. 42, 43. viii. 20. Luke ix. 17. John vi. 11—13.

44 So he set *it* before them, and they did eat, and left *thereof,* according to the word of the LORD.

'Judah. And I suppose the schools of the prophets might 'be partly maintained by this means.' *Bp. Patrick.* The loaves seem to have been small; perhaps each intended to be a meal for one man. The supply, however, was deemed greatly inadequate to the company: but the increase was little, compared with the miracles of this kind wrought by Jesus Christ. (*Notes, Matt.* xiv. 15—21. xv. 32—38.)—The sons of the prophets seem at this time to have become very numerous: but perhaps some of the people, who came from a distance to receive instruction, shared the repast. And this might be one reason of the servant's objection to setting so little food before such a number of persons. (*Notes,* 1—7. 1 *Kings* xvii. 10—16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

It is incumbent on all Christians, and especially on ministers, to submit to Providence in respect of their temporal provision; and, while they trust in God for their daily bread, not to tempt him by negligence or extravagance. They ought not to contract debts, for things not absolutely necessary, which they have not a reasonable prospect of discharging: for nothing tends more to bring reproach on the gospel, and excite prejudice against it; nothing more distracts men's minds whilst they live, or more distresses their families when they are dead, than a burden of debt, without effects with which to pay it. Many hardships therefore should be endured, and many pleasant things renounced, rather than that such injurious consequences should be occasioned. Yet, in the mystery of providence, this may sometimes unavoidably prove the case, even of those who are eminent for piety; nor can the strictest prudence avert the calamity: besides, many good men are deficient in worldly sagacity, and their unsuspecting simplicity exposes them to the designs of the artful. But, when this is a man's misfortune rather than his fault, he will have a testimony to his integrity in the consciences of all impartial persons: the Lord's people will be inclined to relieve him or his, according to their ability: and God himself will, in some way, interpose to clear up his character, and to provide for his wants.—He who has all hearts in his hand is able, without a miracle, to procure as effectual a supply, as the increase of the widow's oil: and when the ability is given, the creditor, though unreasonable and severe, must first be satisfied, after which the remainder may be enjoyed with comfort.—We should then be careful to perform our present duty, and to commit all our concerns to the Lord: we should study to adorn the gospel in our life and conversation, and he will take care of us and ours: and if he bring us into distress, he will manifest his power and truth in our deliverance. He generally supplies what is requisite for honesty and charity to his people, by blessing them while they are occupying with a little. And the best directed benevolence of man consists, in teaching and helping the poor to make the most of what they acquire by honest industry: but in every way we should shew a readiness to relieve those in distress; and to give them our counsel and prayers, when we have nothing else.—If our hearts were more prepared to receive spiritual blessings, and if we, in retirement and fervent prayer, expected larger supplies, we should be more richly replenished.—At length all the vessels of mercy shall be filled with the Lord's goodness: and the Redeemer's all-sufficiency will only be stayed from supplying the wants and saving the souls of sinners, when there are no more inclined to come to him for salvation.

V. 8—17.

The ministers of religion should not seek great things for themselves, or court the intimacy of the great, except to do good *to them,* or *by them:* but they ought to be unwearied in their useful labours, like him "who went about "doing good," that all may "perceive that they are holy "men of God," simply dependent on him, walking with him, devoted to his service, and seeking his glory. Though backward to form connexions with their superiors, lest they should be taken off from their important work, and entangled in the world; they may yet find a few in that sphere, whose acquaintance may be deemed a privilege. But, whilst they do not refuse their countenance and friendship, they feel, that "it is more blessed to give than to "receive;" and they will endeavour to make such returns of gratitude as are in their power, and especially they will seek the blessing of God upon their benefactors: nay, they will go further with man to ask favours in behalf of others, than for themselves. But it is a great happiness to know when it is well with us, and to be content among our friends and relatives, without coveting the splendour or pleasures of courts and publick life: and when we have so learned submission to the will of God, as to express no desire for those objects, which others can perceive are wanting to our comfort. The Lord however sees the secret wish, which is suppressed in obedience to his will; and will hear the prayers of his servants in behalf of their benefactors, by communicating unsolicited and unexpected mercies: nor must the promises and engagements of the men of God be deemed fallacious, like those of the men of the world.

V. 18—37.

Alas! all earthly comforts are sources of trouble and sorrow: anxious fears counterbalance our pleasure from our beloved children, when most hopeful: and their sudden sickness and death may turn all our joy into poignant anguish. On such occasions it is right to keep silence, or to say that "all is well:" nor must we think it hard to bring up children for the grave, or for the kingdom of heaven.—We indeed cannot expect a present resurrection of our deceased friends: but in many of our troubles we may find relief; in all of them peace and comfort, from the counsel and prayers of the Lord's faithful servants, who can

CHAP. V

Naaman, captain of the host of Syria, is a leper, 1. By the report of a captive maid of Israel, concerning the prophet, he comes to the king of Israel at Samaria to be healed, 2—7. Elisha sends for him; he goes to him, and is ordered to wash seven times in Jordan: he is angry; but, persuaded by his servants, he complies and is cleansed, 8—14. He acknowledges the true God; offers presents to Elisha, who refuses them; and is sent away in peace, resolving to worship the LORD alone, 15—19. Gehazi, by a lie, obtains presents from Naaman, and is punished by leprosy, entailed also on his descendants, 20—27.

a Luke iv. 27.
b iv. 8. Ex. xi. 3. Esth. ix. 4. x. 3.
* Heb. *before.*
† Or, *gracious.* Heb. *lifted up,* or, *accepted in countenance.*

NOW [a]Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was [b]a great man with his master, and [†]honourable; because [c]by him the LORD had given [‡]deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour; *but he was* [d]a leper.

2 And the Syrians had gone out [e]by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and [f]she [§]waited on Naaman's wife.

3 And she said unto her mistress, [g]Would God my lord *were* [‖]with the prophet that *is* in Samaria! for [h]he would [*]recover him of his leprosy.

4 And *one* went in [i]and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that *is* of the land of Israel.

c Prov. xxi. 31. Is. x. 5, 6. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6. Dan. ii. 37, 38. John xix. 11. Rom. xv. 18.
‡ Or, *victory.*
d 27. vii. 3. Lev. xiii. 2, 3. 44—46. Num. xii. 10—12. 2 Sam. iii. 29. 2 Chr. xxvi. 19—23. 2 Cor. xii. 7.
e vi. 23. xiii. 20. Judg. ix. 34. 1 Sam. xiii. 17 18.
f Ps. cxxiii. 2.
§ Heb. *was before.*
g Num. xi. 29. Acts xxvi. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 8.
‖ Heb. *before.*
h 8. Matt. viii. 2, 3. xi. 5. Luke xvii 12—14.
* Heb. *gather in.*
i vii. 9—11. Mark v. 19. xvi. 9, 10. John i. 42—46. iv. 28, 29. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27.

teach us how to turn all our losses into the richest gain. Their company therefore, with the ordinances of God, and the throne of grace, should be doubly welcome to the afflicted and bereaved.—We should treat those with great tenderness whose souls are vexed in them; making allowance for improprieties in their conduct, and impatience in their expressions; and suffer them to open before us their griefs, as well as be ready to attempt their consolation: and in general we should not avoid trouble, nor affect state, by doing those things by others which we are able to do ourselves.—When we have used proper means with diligence and earnestness, we may expect the efficacious blessing of God, both in things temporal and spiritual; but not otherwise.—The gospel of salvation will no more effect the sinner's conversion, without the presence and blessing of God, than the condemning law will: and if the minister be a hypocrite, and destitute of faith, little good can be expected from the most exact external observances; 'the sinners are "*not awaked*'" will generally be the doleful report. Not so, when the use of appointed means is accompanied by the spirit of fervent believing prayer, and persevering expectation from the Lord: then the change, which takes place in the conduct of many, shall evince that "they are "quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."—As the choicest comforts occasion the severest trials, so our heaviest afflictions make way for the sweetest consolations: and, notwithstanding appearances, the Lord will not needlessly grieve his true people, by giving them blessings in order to take them away from them: but it is a comfort under temporal losses to reflect, that we did not inordinately desire the object of which we are bereft.—It is happy and comely when harmony prevails in domestick life; when the husband's authority is tempered with affection and unsuspecting confidence; when the wife answers that confidence with deference and submission, as well as fidelity; and when each party consults the other's inclinations, and both unite in attendance on the ordinances of God, and supporting his cause.

V. 38—44.

While the servants of the Lord are contented with mean accommodations, and put their trust in him, he can make their coarsest fare pleasant to them. Let them but observe his directions, and he will not only supply their wants, but extract *the death*, the evil, from such things as most alarm them. When he pleases, the scantiest provisions shall suffice; and whilst he communicates to us, we should in faith impart a portion to others; and thus all will be clean and salutary to us. But to those, who feed themselves without fear, their table becomes a snare, and perdition entwines around their sensual enjoyments. Aware of this danger, let us learn to use temporal good things with caution and moderation, in dependence on him, by whose blessing alone our food is made wholesome and nutrimental.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. The Syrians were idolaters, and often oppressors of Israel; yet the deliverance of which Naaman had been the instrument, is here ascribed to the power and goodness of God. "By him JEHOVAH had given de-"liverance (or *salvation*, תְּשׁוּעָה) to Syria." Such is the *rational* language of the sacred writers: whilst the arguments and phraseology of those in general, who compose what is justly called *profane* history, too evidently shew that God is not in all their thoughts. (*Notes, Josh.* x. 9, 10. *Ps.* cxliv. 10.)—The leprosy was a loathsome and distressing distemper: and though Naaman was not under the restrictions prescribed for Israel; yet doubtless, he found it a great deduction from the satisfaction, which he might otherwise have found in his high preferments and honours. (*Notes, Lev.* xiii. 45, 46. *Num.* xii. 11—15.)

V. 2—4. This young damsel, though taken captive, and torn from her relatives and country, and made a slave to Naaman, having, it is likely, been treated with kindness, and employed to wait on his wife, entertained a cordial affection for her master, and earnestly desired the removal of his affliction. Young as she was, she had heard of the piety and miracles of Elisha; and, though he had not cleansed any lepers, she was persuaded he would be inclined to shew kindness even to a heathen, and be enabled to effect his cure. Nor did Naaman despise the information as coming from such a quarter. He had doubtless tried to the utmost, what the physicians could do for him, but in vain; and his earnest desire of a cure prevented him from disdaining an application to the prophet

5 And the king of Syria said, [j] Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, [k] and took *with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand *pieces* of gold, and [l] ten changes of raiment.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have *therewith* sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, [m] that he rent his clothes, and said, [n] *Am* I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and [o] see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8 And it was *so*, when Elisha the man of God had heard that [p] the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? [q] let him come now to me, [r] and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

9 So [s] Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

10 And Elisha [t] sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and [u] wash in Jordan [x] seven times, and [y] thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou [z] shalt be clean.

11 But [z] Naaman was wroth, and [a] went away, and said, [b] Behold, [†] I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and [‡] strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 *Are* not [§] Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, [c] better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

j Gen. xi. 3, 4. 7. Ec. ii. 1. Is. v. 5. Jam. iv. 13. v. 1.
k viii. 8, 9. Num. xxii. 7. 17, 18. xxiv. 11—13. 1 Sam. ix. 8. 1 Kings xiii. 7. xiv. 3. Acts viii. 18—20.
* Heb. *in his hand.*
l Gen. xlv. 22. Judg. xiv. 12. Jam. v. 2, 3.
m xi. 14. xviii. 37. xix. 1. Num. xiv. 6. Jer. xxxvi. 24. Matt. xxvi. 65. Acts xiv. 14.
n Gen. xxx. 2. Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Dan. ii. 11. Hos. vi. 1.
o 1 Kings xx. 7. Luke xi. 54.
p *See on* 2 Sam. iii. 31.
q 3. 15. i. 6. 1 Kings xvii. 24. xviii. 36.
r Ex. xi. 8. Rom. xi. 13. Hos. xii. 13.
s iii. 12. vi. 32. Is. lx. 14. Acts xvi. 29, 30. 37—39.
t Matt. xv. 23—26.
u ii. 21. iii. 16. iv. 41. John ix. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 11.
x Lev. xiv. 7. 16. 51. xvi. 14. 19. Num. xix. 4. 19. Josh. vi. 4. 13—16.
y 14. Ex. iv. 6, 7.
z Prov. xiii. 10. Matt. viii. 8. xv. 27. Luke xiv. 11.
a Prov. i. 32. Matt. xix. 22. John vi. 66—69. xiii. 20. Heb. xii. 25.
b Prov. iii. 7. Is. lv. 8, 9. 1 Cor. i. 21—25. ii. 14—16. iii. 18—20.
† Heb. *I said, &c.* Or, *I said with myself, He will surely come out, &c.*
‡ Heb. *move up and down.*
§ Or, *Amana.*
c 17. ii. 8. 14. Josh. iii. 15—17. Ez. xlvii. 1—8. Zech. xiii. 1. xiv. 8. Mark i. 9.

of Israel. (*Note, Luke* xvii. 11—19.) Either the prophet was at Samaria, when the damsel was taken captive; or the adjacent district is meant.

V. 5, 6. Ben-hadad king of Syria, having heard, probably from Naaman himself, that there was a prophet in Israel, who, it was supposed, could heal the leprosy, seems to have concluded that he must be at the command of the king of Israel, and perform his miracles for his pleasure and advantage: and if the Israelitish maid knew so much of the prophet, the king must have him continually in his presence, or in his thoughts. He therefore concluded, that he had only to ask it as a favour of Jehoram, that Naaman might be cured, and it would be granted of course. Naaman also would prefer going in state to the king of Israel, to becoming a supplicant to a poor prophet: yet it seems he intended liberally to reward Elisha for the service.

V. 7. Jehoram interpreted the ignorant language and absurd request of the king of Syria, into blasphemy against God, as well as malice against himself, and a pretence for waging war against him. Though an idolater, and a very wicked man, he would be thought concerned about the honour of God: and as full of abhorrence of Ben-hadad's supposed crime, "he rent his clothes."—He had either for the moment forgotten the miracles wrought by Elisha; (*Note,* iii. 16, 17;) or he did not desire to witness any more of them; or he thought this beyond his power: for it seems it was deemed as impracticable, by human skill, to cleanse a rooted leprosy, as to raise the dead. (*Note, Lev.* xiii. 1, 2.) By this concession of the king, the miracle wrought by Elisha became the more illustrious. (*Marg. Ref.* n.)

V. 8. It is probable, that Elisha was at or near Samaria, when Naaman arrived; and the report of what had occurred was directly brought to him. This induced him, not to go to Jehoram, but to send, it may be supposed by one of the sons of the prophets, this message to him. Naaman had come into the land of Israel, expecting relief from a prophet of the God of Israel: and Elisha would by no means have him go back disappointed, lest he should conclude that JEHOVAH was like the gods of the nations, and as unable to do good or evil as they were. On the contrary, he would have it known, that God had "a prophet "in Israel," by whom he performed such cures, as none of the heathen prophets, priests, or physicians could effect; and which were far beyond all the power of the mightiest monarchs.

V. 9—12. The prophet knew how to stoop to the meanest service or person, when it was proper: but Naaman seemed to have come to him with great ideas of his own importance, as if he conferred a favour or honour upon him. Elisha was therefore directed to assume that superiority, which really belonged to him: and to shew Naaman, that he was far from being elated by the presence of so great a man; and that he regarded not his rank, desired not his friendship, and would not accept his presents; though, for the honour of the God of Israel, his leprosy should be cleansed, if he would observe the simple direction which he sent him by a messenger. But Naaman thought, that the prophet treated him with rudeness and neglect. He had previously formed an idea in his mind of the manner, in which the cure would be performed, and this message did not at all answer his expectations. He wanted to be cured as a man of consequence, who was entitled to regard; and not as a poor pensioner, who is glad of his alms by whomsoever sent. Abana and Pharpar were larger rivers than Jordan, and Naaman thought them more likely to effect a cure: but the rivers of Damascus had not been distinguished by miracles, as Jordan had been; (*Notes,* ii. 7, 8. 14. *Josh.* iii, iv;) and Naaman, in his

13 And [d] his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, [e] My father, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do* *some* great thing, wouldest thou not have done *it*? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, [f] Wash, and be clean?

14 Then [g] went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, [h] according to the saying of the man of God: and [i] his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, [k] and he was clean.

15 And [l] he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold, [m] now I know that *there is* no God in all the earth, but in Israel; now therefore, I pray thee, take [n] a blessing of thy servant.

16 But he said, [o] *As* the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, [p] I will receive none. And he urged him to take *it*; but he refused.

17 And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden [q] of earth? for thy servant [r] will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD.

18 In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, *that* when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he [s] leaneth on my hand, [t] and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon; when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, [u] the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing.

19 And [x] he said unto him, [y] Go in peace. So he departed from him a [*] little way.

d 3. 1 Sam. xxv. 24—17. 1 Kings xx. 24. 31. Job xxxii 8, 9. Jer. xxxviii. 7—10.
e ii. 12. vi. 21. xiii. 14. Gen. xli. 43. *Marg.* Mat. i. 6. Matt. xxiii. 9. 1 Cor. iv. 15.
f *See on* 10.—Ps. li. 2. 7. Is. i. 16. John xiii. 8. Acts xxii. 16. Eph. v. 26, 27. Tit. iii. 5. Heb. x. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rev. vii. 14.
g Job xxxi. 13. Prov. ix. 9. xxv. 11, 12.
h 2 Chr. xx. 20. John ii. 5. Heb. xi. 7, 8.
i 10. Job xxxiii. 25.
k Luke iv. 27. v. 13. Tit. ii. 14.
l Luke xvii. 15—18.
m 8. Josh. ii. 9—11. ix. 9, 24. 1 Sam. xvii. 46, 47. 1 Kings xviii. 36. Is. xliii. 10, 11. xliv. 6. 8. xlv. 6. Jer. x. 10, 11. xvi. 19—21. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 29. iv. 34, 35. vi. 26, 27. Rom. x. 10.
n Gen. xxxiii. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 27. 2 Cor. ix. 5. *Marg.*
o *See on* iii. 14. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 15.
p 20. 26. Gen. xiv. 22, 23. 1 Kings xiii. 8. Dan. v. 17. Matt. x. 8. Acts viii. 18—20. 1 Cor. vi. 12. x. 32, 33. 2 Cor. xi. 9, 10. xii. 14.
q 12. Rom. xiv. 1.
r Acts xxvi 18. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 3.
s vii. 2. 17.
t xvii. 35. Ex. xx. 5. 1 Kings xix. 18.
u 2 Chr. xxx. 18, 19. Jer. l. 20.
x Matt. ix. 16, 17. John xvi. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 2. Heb. v. 13, 14.
y Ex. iv. 18. 1 Sam. i. 17. xxv. 35. Mark v. 34. Luke vii. 50. viii. 48.
* Heb. *a little piece of ground.* Gen. xxxv. 16. *marg.*

haughtiness and wrath, forgot that JEHOVAH was to cleanse his leprosy by means of his own appointment, and not in a way of man's devising. (*Notes, Num.* xxi. 6—9. *John* iii. 14, 15, 2 *Cor.* iv. 7.)

V. 13, 14. This Syrian was favoured with very prudent, respectful, and affectionate servants; and probably he was in general a kind and considerate master, who could bear to be reasoned with by his inferiors. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 14—17.) They had, it may be supposed, heard a great deal from the Israelitish maid of Elisha's miracles; and were very desirous that Naaman should make the trial. Being more calm and impartial then he, they perceived that the prophet's directions were simple, easy, and safe. Had the prophet prescribed nauseous medicines, a tedious regimen, or some painful operations, or even some burdensome religious observances; or had he demanded a large sum of money as the price of the cure; they knew that Naaman would have complied without hesitation: how much more then ought he, in reason, to go to Jordan, and wash seven times in its waters? This remonstrance was "a word spoken in due season," and had its full effect: (*Note, Prov.* xxv. 11, 12:) and his cure immediately followed on his obedience; so that the decayed and loathsome parts of his skin and flesh became perfectly sound, and assumed the healthful appearance of the flesh of a child.—'This was the only cure of a leprosy, that we read 'of, till Christ the great Prophet came into the world.' *Bp. Patrick.* Though the remark be not quite correct, it is entitled to consideration. Miriam was cleansed, in answer to the prayer of Moses; but no other instance is recorded. (*Notes, Num.* xii. 9—15.)

V. 15, 16. Naaman, having received the cure, returned to Elisha, to express his gratitude, and to give glory to God: and now the prophet went out to confer with him. (*Note, Luke* xvii. 11—19.) His confession was very expressive and satisfactory. He not only allowed that JEHOVAH was the true God; but also, that there was "no "God in all the earth, but in Israel;" the gods of all other nations being helpless, worthless idols.—What an awful representation does this give us of the state of the Gentiles, "without hope, and without God in the world!" (*Note, Eph.* ii. 11—13.)—Naaman therefore urged the prophet to take a present, or *blessing*, of him, as a token of his gratitude; but he most decidedly refused. He did not scruple to receive presents from pious Israelites, and he seems to have accepted Ben-hadad's gift; (*Note*, viii. 7—9;) but the case of Naaman was singular. It was of great importance what impressions he, at that crisis, should receive, concerning the God of Israel and his worshippers. Elisha had sent for him, to confer a benefit on him; and had he taken the present, Naaman might have ascribed this to a selfish motive, and imbibed prejudices: but perfect disinterestedness would have a contrary tendency. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 13—18. 2 *Cor.* xi. 7—12.) 'He would 'have strangers to their religion know, how good the God 'of Israel was, who made his servants so good, that they 'did the greatest good to mankind for nothing. Which 'generous piety was apt to invite others to the worship 'and service of this great and good God. For it gives 'great authority to a teacher of virtue, not to be covetous.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17—19. Naaman in his first impressions conceived, that there must be a peculiar sanctity in the *earth* of Israel, having received such benefit from washing in one of its rivers: he therefore asked permission to carry home with him enough of it to build an altar, on which to offer sacrifices to JEHOVAH, whom alone he was determined in future to worship with burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as Israel did. Yet, as holding a high station in Ben-hadad's court, it would be expected that he should accompany him to the temple of Rimmon: and whilst the king, leaning on his arm, should bow before his idol, Naaman could not avoid bowing also. But as he meant to do this, not as an act of worship to Rimmon, but of service to his prince;

20 ¶ But [z] Gehazi the servant of Elisha the man of God said, Behold, [a] my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but [b] *as* the LORD liveth, I will run after him, [c] and take somewhat of him.

21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman: and when Naaman saw *him* running after him, [d] he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, [*] *Is* all well?

22 And he said, All *is* well. [e] My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of [f] the sons of the prophets: [g] give them, I pray thee, [h] a talent of silver and two changes of garments.

23 And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. [i] And he urged him, and [k] bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid *them* upon two of his servants, [l] and they bare *them* before him.

24 And when he came to the [†] tower, he took *them* from their hand, [m] and bestowed *them* in the house; and he let the men go, and they departed.

25 But he went in, and [n] stood before his master: and Elisha said unto

[z] iv. 12. 31. 36. Matt. x. 4. John vi. 70. xii. 6. xiii. 2. Acts viii. 18, 19.
[a] Prov. xxvi. 16. Luke xvi. 8. John xii. 5, 6. Acts v. 2.
[b] vi. 31. Ex. xx. 7. 1 Sam. xiv. 39.
[c] Ex. xx. 17. Ps. x. 3. Jer. xxii. 17. Hab. ii. 9. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 9—11. 2 Tim. iv. 10. Tit. i. 7. 1 Pet. v. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 14, 15.
[d] Luke vii. 6, 7. Acts viii. 31. x. 25, 26.
[*] Heb. *Is there peace?* iv. 26. ix. 17—22.
[e] 1 Kings xiii. 18. Is. lix. 3. Jer. ix. 3. 5. John viii. 44. Acts v. 3, 4. Rev. xxi. 8.
[f] *See* on ii. 3.—1 Kings xx. 35.
[g] 2 Cor. xii. 16—18.
[h] *See* on 5.—Ex. xxxviii. 24—28. 1 Kings xx. 39.
[i] 16 ii. 17.
[k] xii. 10. *Marg.*
[l] Is. xxx. 6.
[†] Or, *secret place.*
[m] Josh. vii. 1. 11, 12. 21. 1 Kings xxi. 16. Hab. ii. 6. Zech. v. 3, 4.
[n] Prov. xxx. 20. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Matt. xxvi. 15, 16. 21—25. John xiii. 2. 26—30.

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he hoped the Lord would pardon him in it: and some learned men have thought that his conduct in this respect was justifiable; because he was not an Israelite, and so not under the law of Moses. It is evident, however, that the prohibition of every kind and degree of idolatry, belongs to the *moral* law, which is universally obligatory. Our strict rule of duty certainly forbids such a conformity; the gospel grants no dispensations; and, in similar circumstances, a Christian would be absolutely required to renounce every advantage and preferment, which could not be retained without such communion with idolaters, and countenance of idolatry; nay, to endure the utmost effects of the persecutor's rage, rather than make such compliances, however palliated by salvos and mental reserves. (*Notes, Dan.* iii. 8—18.) The prophet however seems to have perceived, that Naaman was convinced, that even bowing with the king in the house of Rimmon was not right, and he left those convictions gradually to produce their effects: if they were the result of regenerating grace, they would in time bring him to make a more publick protest against idolatry, when his faith, judgment, and experience were matured. Moreover, as the whole work was from God in so extraordinary a manner, it is probable, that the prophet declined interposing his private judgment, when he had no immediate directions from heaven respecting it.—"In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, that "when my lord went into the house of Rimmon, to bow "down himself there, and leaned on my hand, I bowed "down myself there; that I bowed down myself—the "LORD pardon thy servant in this thing." *Whitby, Note on Luke* xii. 8.) This would imply, that Naaman had previously favourable thoughts of true religion, and had not been an idolater in other respects; though he had conformed in this particular, which now appeared to him the most heinous of his sins. Yet there is no intimation, that he had not been as gross an idolater as the other Syrians. This translation, which many learned men have endeavoured to establish, disregards the *vau conversive*, which generally changes the preterite into the future. All the versions or ancient translations understand the words of the *future*, and not of the *past*.—Elisha seems also to have been silent concerning the earth, which Naaman requested, and probably for the reasons before mentioned. (*Note, Matt.* ix. 16, 17.) Nor was any thing proposed to him, concerning his embracing in other respects the religion of Israel.

V. 20—25. It is probable, that Gehazi was one of the sons of the prophets, had long had the advantage of the society of Elisha, and kept up a profession of piety; yet he remained an avaricious and wicked man, and far worse than the servants of Naaman the Syrian! (*Notes, Matt.* xxvi. 14—16.) He deemed Elisha foolish, to miss so fair an opportunity of enriching himself, having a right to Naaman's money in return for the cure. But as for himself, he would not be so scrupulous; and with a solemn oath, (even when speaking to himself, which in this case was peculiarly profane,) he decl red that he would take somewhat of him. To accomplish his covetous purpose, he soon devised a plausible lie: and Naaman's heart was so affected by the benefit which he had obtained; that he treated even the prophet's servant with the greatest respect, and pressed his acceptance of a larger sum than he petitioned for. In this manner Gehazi appropriated above seven hundred pounds sterling in silver, which he secreted in some convenient place; and he then returned to Elisha with another direct falsehood, as if he could have deceived God, as well as his prophet. (*Notes, Acts* v. 1—11.) His whole conduct was wicked in a most aggravated degree: he did what he could to disgrace the God of Israel, and to misrepresent his religion: he behaved in a manner most injurious to his master's character: and he not only robbed Naaman of his property; but he took the most effectual method imaginable to prejudice him against the prophet and true religion, and to induce him to return to idolatry. (*Notes, Jer.* vii. 8—11. *John* xii. 1—8. *2 Cor.* xii. 16—21.)

Even now. (22) At *this very crisis*, (as Gehazi pretended) since Naaman had left Elisha's door and had gone perhaps a furlong or two on the way.—*The tower.* (24) "*Secret* "*place.*" (*Marg.*) עֹפֶל, *Ophel*; 2 *Chr.* xxvii. 3. xxxiii. 14. Perhaps this was a sort of store-house, for such provisions, as were brought for the sons of the prophets; of which Gehazi was store-keeper. Like Judas, who kept the bag. (*John* xiii. 29.)

him, [o] Whence *comest thou*, Gehazi? And he said, [p] Thy servant went [*] no whither.

26 And [q] he said unto him, [r] Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? [s] *Is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive-yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?

27 The [t] leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and [u] unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence [x] a leper *as white* as snow.

o xx. 14. Gen. iii. 8, 9. iv. 9. xvi. 8.
p 22. Acts v. 3, 4.
* Heb. *not hither or thither.*
q Ps. lxiii. 11. Prov. xii. 19. Acts v. 9.
r vi. 12. 1 Cor. v. 3. Col. ii. 5.
s 16. Gen. xiv. 23. Ec. iii. 1—8. Matt. x. 8. Acts xx. 33. 35. 1 Cor. ix. 11, 12. 2 Cor. xi. 8—12. 2 Thes. iii. 8, 9.
t *See on* d. 1.—Josh. vii. 25. Mal. ii. 3, 4. 8, 9. Matt. xxvii. 3—5. Acts v. 5. 10. viii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 3.
u 1 Sam. ii. 30—36. 2 Sam. iii. 29.
x xv. 5. Ex. iv. 6. Num. xii. 10.

V. 26, 27. The Spirit of God shewed Elisha what had passed, as plainly as if he had witnessed the whole transaction. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 5, 6.)—Considering the distressed state of Israel by reason of the famine, and the low estate of religion, other interests and employments called for Gehazi's attention. The prophets of JEHOVAH were required to shew themselves men of another spirit than the false prophets, by a disinterested indifference about the world; and the state of Naaman's mind, and the peculiarity of his case, rendered this action the most *ill-timed* that could be. (*Note*, 15, 16.)—We may suppose, that Gehazi was inwardly contriving how to lay out his money, in purchasing an olive-yard, or vineyard, that he might exchange the service of Elisha for a more profitable occupation. (*Notes*, *Josh.* vii.) And so he might: but it would be under the stigma and misery of a rooted and dreadful leprosy, entailed upon his posterity in perpetuity, or as long as one of them remained. This was the proper emblem of the polluted state of his soul. (*Note*, *Prov.* xxi. 6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

In whatever manner, or degree, a man is honoured and preferred by the princes of the earth, or made an instrument in Providence of publick benefit to others, he can obtain no exemption from trouble. Some bodily infirmity, or distressing disease, or domestick affliction, will counterbalance his advantages, and embitter his enjoyments: nor can we remedy this vanity and vexation, except by humble submission to the will of God, and believing confidence in his truth, wisdom, and mercy; and the enjoyment of that peace and consolation, which are communicated by "the "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."—The Lord overrules, to his own glory, those events which originate in man's wickedness: the young, or the poor, are often better acquainted with his servants and service, than the rich or aged: but as he works by despised instruments, so wise men will avail themselves of a useful hint from the lowest of their inferiors.—Kind behaviour to domesticks generally ensures a valuable recompence: and no injuries or hardship should indispose us to seek the welfare, or to compassionate the sorrows, of those among whom our lot is cast; especially when they are kind to us. This "little "maid" proved a richer treasure to Naaman, than any Ben-hadad could bestow: and good and pious servants are indeed invaluable benefits.—We carry our knowledge of God and of true religion with us, wherever we remove; none can deprive us of these true riches and this blessed liberty; and the meanest believer will find opportunities of glorifying God and being useful to man, if he act consistently with his character and profession: for such a conduct will attract regard from those who are ignorant or careless about religion, and dispose them to attend to his words, particularly in times of affliction. (*P. O. Acts* viii. 1—8.)—Those who know the servants of God, will not doubt their readiness to relieve the distressed; and, such as know him, are sensible that in answer to their prayer of faith, he frequently removes calamities, and imparts temporal benefits, even to those who serve him not. In these concerns men have keen sensibility, and readily make trial of any *probable* means of relief, though expensive, laborious, painful, and even uncertain: it would be well if they were equally sensible of the power of the divine wrath to which they are exposed, the burden of guilt with which they are chargeable, and the loathsome leprosy of unmortified sin with which they are polluted. (*Note*, *Matt.* viii. 1—4.)—The great ones of the earth are apt to suppose, that wealth, authority, and influence can command every thing: but when they seek those blessings, which the Lord communicates in answer to the prayers of his faithful servants, they will find that nothing can be done in this way; but that they must act as poor and needy persons, and come as humble supplicants for a free gift, and not as lords to demand, or to purchase. (*Notes*, *Matt.* v. 3. *Jam.* i. 9—11.) For the ministers of God must obey man, only so far as the will of their great Master allows them: and in his service they must not be directed or dictated to by any human authority.—The ignorance of many, in spiritual things, is manifested by every part of their conversation: yet we should not impute that to a blasphemous or malevolent intention, which they utter merely because they know no better.—No judges are more severe towards their fellow-sinners, than those who themselves have no fear of God before their eyes: and they are especially quick sighted to the atrocious conduct of those, whom they suspect of intentions to injure them; and vehement in their declamations against the crimes, of which themselves are not known to be guilty.

V. 8—19.

The minister of God should seize every opportunity to evince the truth and importance of his religious principles, and to display the glorious perfections of the Lord: yet he should not appear greatly pleased with the respect shewn him by great men; and he ought to be cautious lest, by his language and behaviour, he enhance that pride and vanity which need to be mortified. Rather he should aim to convince them of his earnest desire to do them good; and of his indifference about those external distinctions, which others envy, covet, or are delighted with.—All the commands of God are suited to make trial of men's spirits; especially those which direct a sinner how to apply for the blessings of salvation. These do not accord with the self-importance and self-sufficiency, the carnal prejudices and

CHAP. VI.

The sons of the prophets prepare to enlarge their dwelling, and Elisha causes iron to swim, 1—7. He discloses to Jehoram the counsels of the Syrian king, who sends troops to apprehend him, 8—14. Elisha's servant is terrified; but is encouraged by seeing horses and chariots of fire round his master, 15—17. The Syrians, at Elisha's prayer, are partially blinded; and he conducts them into Samaria, where they regain their sight, and by the prophet's proposal are entertained, and dismissed in peace, 18—23. Benhadad besieges Samaria, and reduces it to extreme famine, 24, 25. Women contest about eating their own children; and appeal to the king, who in a rage resolves to kill Elisha, 26—33.

pompous ideas, of an unhumbled heart: nor can they be cordially attended to, except by "the poor in spirit," or without that implicit faith which produces as implicit obedience. The way of a sinner's acceptance and sanctification, by the blood and Spirit of Christ, through faith alone in his name, does not sufficiently gratify or employ *self*, to please the sinner's heart. The method seems to many futile and inadequate: human wisdom and philosophy, (like Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus,) can furnish more rational and eligible methods of cleansing: nay, the operose and austere devices of superstition appear to numbers preferable to "the Fountain opened for sin and "for uncleanness;" and the very proposal shocks and affronts all the sons of pride and self-sufficiency. But the sinner, who is deeply burdened with guilt, and longs to escape the wrath to come, and the service of Satan, would do "great things," if required for that purpose. If pilgrimages, mortifications, and austerities could avail, they would not be evaded: to torture his body, to part with his wealth, or even lay down his life, would be deemed a low price at which to purchase forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation; but none of these things, *in this use of them*, can be accepted. (*Note, Mic.* vi. 6—8.) As, however, the Fountain is opened, and the access free, he will "much "more wash and be clean," as the Lord has directed.—Salvation is from the love and power of God, in the way of his appointing and revealing, for his own glory, and in the use of those means which he has instituted. In this manner the believer seeks for it, not neglecting, altering, or adding to the Saviour's directions; and by repeated washings he is made clean from the guilt and pollution of sin: whilst others, neglecting this great salvation, through proud contempt, sensual indulgence, covetousness, or sloth, live and die in their leprosy, and must for ever be excluded from the presence of a holy God. But when sinners are under serious impressions, and as yet prejudiced against the Lord's method of salvation, they should be reasoned with in meekness and love, and persuaded to make trial of it in simplicity. For he will not cast out the humble supplicant, however enormous his former crimes have been, or however weak and wavering his present faith may be.—If masters were courteous and condescending, and servants could give salutary advice with modesty and respect, many evils might be prevented, and the pernicious effects of hasty sallies of passion counteracted.—When temporal troubles and deliverances bring us acquainted with God, and lead us to his service, they are indeed precious blessings; and gratitude to the Lord will dictate liberality to the instruments of his mercies. But different circumstances will render it necessary to adopt different measures. "The man of God" will never allow himself to "covet any man's gold, or silver, or apparel;" but be content with daily bread, and learn to trust for to-morrow. Yet sometimes he will understand that the proffered kindness is the Lord's method of supplying his necessities, that it will be fruit abounding to the benefit of the donor, and that there is a propriety in accepting it as a token of love: (*Note, Phil.* iv. 14—20:) but, at others, the gift will be looked on as a temptation; and he will perceive that the acceptance of it would degrade his character and office, dishonour God, and tend exceedingly to the injury of the giver. In this case he will decidedly refuse it. This is particularly to be adverted to in the case of the great, when they first turn their thoughts to religious subjects. From knowledge of the world, they are apt to suspect all their inferiors of mercenary designs, and naturally suppose that ministers are only carrying on a trade like other men; while the conduct of too many so called confirms them in this sentiment. There is but one way of counteracting this prejudice; and that is by evidencing a disinterested spirit, and not asking any thing, and in many cases refusing to accept favours from them, until they have attained a further establishment in the faith; and by always persevering in an indifference to every personal interest.—It is not adviseable violently to oppose every mistake which unites with men's first convictions, lest we should damp that earnestness which promises good fruit, when matured by experience, and duly regulated by the gradual teaching of the divine Spirit, attending suitable instruction. We cannot bring men forward faster, than the Lord prepares them to receive instruction: and where he works, he will in time lead them to renounce every secular interest, and bear any cross rather than sin against him.

V. 20—27.

No outward religious advantages ensure the renewing of the heart; and better servants are frequently found in ungodly families, than in the houses of the most eminent servants of God. 'Tis true, that the latter must, for the time, wear the hypocrite's cloke; yet under it, the covetous man, the thief, the liar, the traitor, may lurk concealed; but a fair occasion will betray the secret, and his profession will end in awful apostasy. (*Notes, Matt.* xiii. 20—22.) Such worldly professors deem themselves wiser in their selfishness, than those who shake their hands from unlawful gain: they have the name of God in their mouths, but they have not his glory at heart; nor do they care how many stumble and perish through their wickedness. They make their advantage of those who are under serious impressions: they can never want a plausible lie, when Satan is their prompter; and they speak and do whatever is suggested, "for filthy lucre's sake." (*Note, Tit.* i. 10—13.) Thus they add sin to sin with rapid progress, deceiving many, but known to the heart-searching God; and they are often detected, exposed, and solemnly warned by his servants. In this world they are sometimes branded with infamy, and made awful examples, to wipe off the disgrace which they have brought upon the gospel: and everlasting

AND [a] the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, [b] the place where we dwell with thee is [c] too strait for us.

2 Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, [d] and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

3 And one said, [e] Be content, I pray thee, and [f] go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

4 So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, [g] they cut down wood.

5 But as one was felling a beam, the [*] axe-head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, [h] Alas, master! [i] for it was borrowed.

6 And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he [k] cut down a stick, and cast *it* in thither, and the iron did swim.

7 Therefore said he, [l] Take *it* up to thee. And he [m] put out his hand, and took it.

8 ¶ Then [n] the king of Syria warred against Israel, and [o] took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place *shall be* my [†] camp.

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying [p] Beware that thou pass not such a place; for [q] thither the Syrians are come down.

10 And the king of Israel [r] sent to the place, which the man of God told him and [s] warned him of, and [t] saved himself there, not once nor twice.

11 Therefore [u] the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, [x] Will ye not shew me which of us *is* for the king of Israel?

12 And one of his servants said, [‡] None, my lord, O king: but [y] Elisha the prophet, that *is* in Israel [z] telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in [a] thy bedchamber.

13 And he said, Go, and [b] spy where he *is*, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, *he is* in [c] Dothan.

14 Therefore [d] sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a [§] great host: and

a See on ii. 3. iv. 1. 1 Kings xx. 35.
b iv. 38. 1 Sam. xix. 20.
c Josh. xvii. 14. xix. 47. Job xxxvi. 16. Is. xlix. 19, 20. liv. 2, 3.
d John xxi. 3. Acts xviii. 3. xx. 34, 35. 1 Cor. ix. 6. 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 6.
e v. 23. Judg. xix. 6. Job vi. 28.
f Judg. iv. 8.
g Deut. xix. 5. xxix. 11.
* Heb. *iron*. Ec. x. 10. Is. x. 34.
h 15. iii. 10. Rev. xviii. 10. 16. 19.
i iv. 7. Ex. xxii. 14, 15. Ps. xxxvii. 21.
k ii. 21. iv. 41. Ex. xv. 25. Mark vii. 33, 34. viii. 23—25. John ix. 6, 7.
l iv. 7. 36. Luke vii. 15. Acts ix. 41.
m Ex. iv. 4.
n 24. 1 Kings xx. 1. 34. xxii. 31.
o 1 Kings xx. 23. Job v. 12, 13. Prov. xx. 18. xxi. 30. Is. viii. 5—7. viii. 10.
† Or, *encamping*.
p iii. 17—19. 1 Kings xx. 13. 28.
q iv. 27. Am. iii. 7. Rev. i. 1.
r v. 14. Ex. ix. 20, 21. 1 Kings xx. 15. Prov. xxvii. 12. Matt. xxiv. 16—17.
s Ez. iii. 18—21. Matt. ii. 12. iii. 7. Heb. xi. 7.
t ii. 12. xiii. 14. Am. vii. 1—6. Acts xxvii. 24.
u 1 Sam. xxviii. 21. Job xviii. 7—11. Ps. xlviii. 5. Is. lvii. 20, 21. Matt. ii. 3.
x 1 Sam. xxii. 8.
‡ Heb. *No*.
y v. 3. 8. 13—15.
z *See on* 9, 10.—Is. xxix. 15. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. Dan. ii. 22, 23. 28—30. 47. iv. 9—18.
a Ec. x. 20.
b 1 Sam. xxiii. 22, 23. Ps. x. 8—10. xxxvii. 12—14. 32. Jer. xxxvi. 26. Matt. ii. 4—8. John xi. 47—53.
c Gen. xxxvii. 17.
d i. 9—13. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. xxiv. 2. Matt. xxvi. 47. 55. John xviii. 3—6.
§ Heb. *heavy*. xviii. 17. *marg*.

misery and contempt will be their portion if they die impenitent.—Alas! what a price do men pay for outward advantages, when they are connected with such consequences to themselves, and such misery is entailed upon their posterity! Let us beware of hypocrisy and covetousness, and dread above all things the curse of spiritual leprosy, remaining upon our souls, living and dying, and for ever. (*Rev.* xxii. 10—12.)

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—7. Probably, this event occurred either at Gilgal, or at Jericho, both of which were near Jordan.—Under Elisha's superintendence the schools of the prophets flourished, and doubtless true religion revived and spread in proportion: but it is not certain, whether the building intended was a place of assembly, where the prophets met for religious exercises with other pious Israelites; or whether they purposed to live together in it, with their families, as a collected body separate from others. When, however, they were straitened for room, they did not depend on others to prepare them a more convenient or spacious building: but they proposed to fill up the intervals of their time in manual labour, and prepare one for themselves: and probably they were accustomed to work in one way or other, that the people might not be burdened. (*Notes, Acts* xviii. 1—6. 1 *Cor.* iv. 9—13. 2 *Cor.* xi. 7—12. 2 *Thes.* iii. 6—9.) But they would not go to hew timber, for this purpose, without Elisha's permission; and they desired his company, to sanction their attempt, and to solace their toil by his edifying conversation; to which he willingly consented.—Perhaps they were not very skilful about their work, and some of their tools were borrowed; so that an axe-head falling into the water, proved a cause of anxiety to one of them; as it seems he was not well able to make it good, and the owner could not afford to lose it. In so small a matter the Lord was pleased to work a miracle, to compose the young prophet's mind, to put honour upon Elisha, to enable the company to proceed with their undertaking, and to encourage their faith and hope!—The stick cast into the water was the token of the Lord's operation; and it is useless to enquire, in what way he made the iron to swim. (*Note*, iv. 40, 41.)

V. 8—12. (*Marg. Ref.* o—r.) As the Israelites had repeatedly avoided the ambushments which the Syrians had formed against them; Ben-hadad suspected that he had a traitor in his privy-council, though he knew not on whom to fix the charge: and this greatly perplexed his mind. Many of the Syrians, it seems, were acquainted with the extraordinary powers given to Elisha by the God of Israel. Naaman's cure could not fail to increase his reputation, and good effects might be thus produced upon the minds of some individuals; though the enmity of the Syrian king against Israel still remained: and perhaps Naaman had been dismissed from his high station, as no longer sufficiently compliant to the king. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xx. xxii.)

V. 13, 14. It was wonderful, that Ben-hadad did not perceive, that the God of Israel could as easily disclose

they came by night, and compassed the city about.

15 And when the * servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots: and his servant said unto him, [e] Alas, my master! how shall we do?

16 And he answered, [f] Fear not, for [g] they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them.

17 And Elisha [h] prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, [i] open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* [k] full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

18 And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, [l] Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha.

19 And Elisha said unto them, This *is* not the way, neither *is* this the city: [†] follow me, and [m] I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.

20 And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, [n] open the eyes of these *men*, that they may see. And the LORD [o] opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, *they were* in the midst of Samaria.

21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, [p] My father, [q] shall I smite *them?* shall I smite *them?*

22 And he answered, Thou shalt not smite *them:* [r] wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with [s] thy sword and with thy bow? [t] Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.

23 And [u] he prepared great provision for them, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they

* Or, *minister.* *See on* iii. 11. v. 20. 27.—Ex. xxiv. 13. 1 Kings xix. 21. Matt. xx. 26—28. Acts xiii. 5.

e 5. 2 Chr. xx. 12. Ps. liii. 5. Matt. viii. 26.

f Ex. xiv. 13. Ps. iii. 6. xi. 1. xxvii. 3. cxviii. 11, 12. Is. viii. 12, 13. xli. 10—14. Mark xvi. 6. Acts xviii. 9, 10. Phil. i. 28.

g 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Ps. xlvi. 7, 11. lv. 18. Is. viii. 10. Matt. xxvi. 53. Rom. viii. 31. 1 John iv. 4.

h Ps. xci. 15. Jam. v. 16—18.

i 18—20. Ps. cxix. 18. Is. xlii. 7. Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. i. 18. Rev. iii. 7.

k ii. 11. Ps. xxxiv. 7. lxviii. 17. xci. 11. civ. 3. Ez. i. 13—16. Zech. i. 8. vi. 1—7. Matt. xxvi. 53. Heb. i. 14.

l Gen. xix. 11. Deut. xxviii. 28. Job v. 14. Zech. xii. 4. John ix. 39. xli. 40. Acts xiii. 11. Rom. xi. 7.

† Heb. *come ye after me.* Matt. xvi. 24. Mark viii. 34. Luke ix. 23.

m 2 Sam. xvi. 18, 19. Luke xxiv. 16.

n *See* on 17.—Luke xxiv. 31.

o Judg. xx. 40—42. Luke xvi. 26.

p ii. 12. v. 13. viii. 9. xiii. 14.

q 1 Sam. xxiv. 4. 19. xxvi. 8. Luke ix. 54—56. xxii. 49.

r Deut. xx. 11—16. 2 Chr. xxviii. 8—13.

s Gen. xlviii. 22. Josh. xxiv. 12. Ps. xliv. 6. Hos. i. 7. ii. 18.

t Prov. xxv. 21. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20, 21.

u 1 Sam. xxiv. 17, 18. 2 Chr. xxviii. 15. Prov. xxv. 21, 22. Matt. v. 47. Luke vi. 35. x. 29—37.

this design to his prophet, as the other plans which he had formed! (*Note, Matt.* ii. 3—8.) He had perhaps heard, that fire from heaven had consumed the *small* companies who attempted to apprehend Elijah; and therefore he sent a large army, as if this would ensure success. (*Notes,* i. 9—12.) But a small number would have sufficed to take an unarmed man: and no force could prevail against the prophet's omnipotent Defender. (*Note, Matt.* xxvi. 47—56.) The offence however was less heinous in Syrians than in Israelites; and therefore Ben-hadad's army was not punished, as Ahaziah's captains and soldiers had been.

V. 15—17. Elisha, by strong faith, perceived the invisible guard assigned him: but his servant, who had newly succeeded Gehazi, was weak in faith and needed encouragement; and the Lord was pleased to enable him, as if with his bodily eyes, to perceive hosts of angels, in the form of chariots and horses of fire encamped around the prophet, to protect him, and to fight against those who should offer him any violence. (*Notes,* ii. 11, 12.)

V. 18. It is probable, that the captains of the army avowed to the men of Dothan, their purpose in thus surrounding the place; and expected their concurrence in apprehending Elisha, as the condition of their own preservation.—But the prophet, secure of the divine protection, seems to have gone out to the Syrians, who, in answer to his prayer, were deprived for the time of the proper use of their eyes, so that they could not distinguish one object from another; and yet they were not sensible of their own incapacity! (*Note, Gen.* xix. 11.) Thus the miracle was reversed in respect of them, from that with which the prophet's servant had been favoured: he saw what was invisible to others; they could not see what all others could.

Blindness.] סַנְוֵרִים. Used only here and *Gen.* xix. 11.

V. 19, 20. The prophet intended to deceive the Syrians: and this might lawfully have been done, even if he had meant to treat them as enemies, in order to his own preservation; but he designed them no harm by the deception. He was no longer in Dothan, and they in reality had no business there: but he truly informed them, that if they would follow him, he would bring them to the man whom they sought: and accordingly, when they were so infatuated as to follow a stranger, and so bewildered as to enter Samaria, he made himself known to them; and the miraculous suspension of their eye-sight being removed, they saw themselves at the mercy of the king of Israel.

V. 21—23. Jehoram, when he became acquainted with the singular event, was eager to smite the Syrian troops; but he was very respectful to the prophet who had put them in his power, and would not act without his permission. When Elisha therefore had shewn him the impropriety of slaughtering prisoners of war, whom he had taken captive; much more that of smiting those whom God had led into that situation; he desisted from his purpose: nay, he obeyed the prophet's orders in liberally entertaining and then dismissing the whole army! Let them '" go to their '" master," and tell him what civility and kindness there ' is among the people of God.' *Bp. Patrick.* Yet this very man soon after determined to murder this same prophet! (*Notes,* 31. *Matt.* xiv. 3—11. *Mark* vi. 15—29.) The Syrians, however, no more attempted to apprehend Elisha: and the soldiers were perhaps so won by his clemency, or afraid of his power, that they ceased from molesting the land by depredations; until Ben-hadad had collected his whole force to besiege Samaria some time afterwards.

went to their master. [v] So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

24 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria [x] gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.

25 And there was [y] a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until [z] an ass's head was *sold* for fourscore *pieces* of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five *pieces* of silver.

26 And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, [a] Help, my lord, O king.

27 And he said, [*] If the LORD do not help thee, [b] whence shall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press?

28 And the king said unto her, [c] What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, [d] Give thy son that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow.

29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the [†] next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him; and [e] she hath hid her son.

30 And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that [f] he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh.

31 Then he said, [g] God do so and more also to me, [h] if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

32 But Elisha sat in his house, and [i] the elders sat with him; and *the king* sent a man from before him: but [k] ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, [l] See ye how this [m] son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: *is* not [n] the sound of his master's feet behind him?

33 And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, [o] this evil *is* of the LORD; what should I [p] wait for the LORD any longer?

V. 24. It seems that Ben-hadad met with little opposition, till he came to Samaria.

V. 25. If the pieces of silver here mentioned were shekels, above ten pounds sterling was, on this occasion, paid for the head of an unclean animal, not generally used in food, and affording very little sustenance; whilst about twelve shillings were given for about three pints of very mean pulse, called dove's dung; or, as some think, of the undigested corn taken from the crop, or craw, of that fowl. However this may be explained, the prices shew the extremity of the famine. It is sufficient to suppose, that each of these bargains was once actually made, in the urgency of hunger.

V. 26. *Help*, &c.] הוֹשִׁיעָה: "Save my lord, O king," 'Save me from perishing by hunger by interposing thine authority in my behalf.'

V. 27. (*Marg.*) This may be understood as the language of passion, or desperation: as if Jehoram had said, 'The Lord will not, and I cannot, help thee; but we must all perish together.'

V. 28, 29. The truth and awful justice of God upon the idolatrous Israelites were displayed in this most horrible transaction. The extremity of hunger, inducing rage and madness, and extinguishing humanity and natural affection, prepared the way for such actions, as at other times the persons themselves would have abhorred the thoughts of. But this was repeatedly foretold as the punishment of Israel's apostasy from God; and more instances of it occur in their history, than in the records perhaps of all other nations. (*Notes*, *Lev.* xxvi. 29. *Deut.* xxviii. 49—57. *Lam.* ii. 20—22. iv. 10. *Ez.* v. 10.)

V. 30. The king mourned his own miseries and those of the people, and he assumed the garment of a penitent: (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 27—29. *Is.* lviii. 3—7. *Joel* ii. 12—14:) but he did not renounce his idolatries; and he grew more desperate in his rebellion, through the extremities to which he was reduced.

V. 31. Either Elisha had denounced this judgment upon Jehoram for his sins; or Jehoram supposed that it was sent in answer to his prayers; or he thought the prophet could help him if he would; or he blamed him, for inducing him to dismiss the Syrian army, when it was in his power: or perhaps Elisha had counselled him in the name of the Lord to hold out the siege, and that he should be delivered. His rage however, against God, vented itself in menacing violence to his faithful servant with an oath, and imprecation on himself, if he did not inflict it.—'He 'swore he should not live till night.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xix. 2.)

V. 32, 33. Elisha lodged at Samaria at this time, probably in the school of the prophets, sharing the hardships of that city during the siege and famine; and the elders had resorted to him to intreat his prayers, or to desire his counsel.—The Lord revealed to him Jehoram's intentions: and Elisha called him, "the son of a murderer," as proving himself the genuine offspring of Ahab and Jezebel, who slew the Lord's prophets, and murdered Naboth. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 5, 6. xviii. 4. xxi. 7—16.) At his de-

CHAP. VII.

Elisha predicts great plenty in Samaria, and the death of an unbelieving lord, 1, 2. Four lepers venture into the Syrian camp, and bring word that it is entirely deserted, a terror from God having driven away the army, 3—11. Jehoram fears a stratagem, sends messengers to examine, and finds the report true, 12—15. The people spoil the Syrian camp; the predicted plenty takes place; and the unbelieving lord, having charge of the gate, is trodden to death, 16—20.

sire the messenger of Jehoram was shut out, till his master, who as Elisha knew would follow him, perhaps to countermand his order, was arrived. And when he was entered, and perhaps exhorted to hope for deliverance; he in a blasphemous manner answered, that the calamity was from the LORD, who would not deliver them; and that it was in vain to wait for him any longer. Probably he meant to infer, that he might as well put Elisha to death, and surrender to Ben-hadad without further delay. (*Notes*, 25. *Job* ii. 9—11. *Jer.* ii. 25. *Lam.* iii. 26—30.)—As the messenger was excluded till the king arrived, it is evident that the latter was the speaker of these words, and not his servant in his presence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

God has often increased his church, by the addition of faithful ministers and true believers, in times of great persecution: for the whole glory is secured to him, when the effect is produced without the aid, and notwithstanding the opposition, of human authority, by the preaching of his word, and the operation of the Holy Spirit. (*Note*, *Zech.* iv. 4—7.)—Religion indeed always appears to advantage under the cross; when poverty and affliction are endured with cheerful meekness and patience, and when hard labour and mean fare excite no complaints. When men, honoured by the Lord as instruments of much good to souls, willingly earn their living by working at some honest calling, rather than burden the people; and yet will not entangle themselves with the affairs of the world to acquire riches for themselves or families; their conduct evidently accords to the spirit of true religion, and seldom fails to attract the attention of numbers to persons, who act upon principles, which are contrary to the general propensities of human nature.—Respect to seniors or superiors becomes those especially, who teach others to "render "unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God "the things which are God's;" and contentment with poor accommodations, those who inculcate mortification to the things of time and sense.—There is that pleasantness in the converse of the eminent servants of God, which can make men forget the pain and weariness of labour: and when condescension to the meanest unites with usefulness to the greatest, and with great eminence in the church of God, it confers a peculiar lustre on a man's character.—A pious and generous mind is more disquieted by occasioning loss to others, than by suffering it himself; and peculiar care should be taken of things borrowed.—Our heavenly Father cares for his people in their most minute concerns, and sympathizes with them in their fears and sorrows: (*Note*, *Matt.* x. 29—31:) and he peculiarly regards those persons, who are conscientiously afraid of dishonouring religion, through unavoidable poverty, and being unable to render to all their dues.

V. 8—23.

The Lord knows, and can easily defeat, the secret machinations of his enemies. And the profession of being his worshippers will sometimes for a season engage his external protection; in order to the confusion of his avowed enemies, and for the sake of that remnant of true believers with whom they are connected. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xxxii. 7—14. *Deut.* xxxii. 26, 27. *Jer.* xiv. 7—9. *Ez.* xx. 7—9.)—Even the wicked are sometimes willing to be counselled by the servants of God in their temporal concerns, and they experience the advantage of this conduct; but they will not take warning "to flee from the wrath to come," or be persuaded to renounce their favourite sins! Wave this subject, do not trouble their consciences or interfere in those things, in which they choose to indulge themselves, and you may obtain their confidence; nay, they will give up their inclinations in other respects by way of compromise.—As prophets were not without honour save in their own country; so numbers profess to honour those that have obtained a good report in the word of God, who would treat them with scorn or enmity, if they could again revisit the earth. For distance of time or place breaks the force of their reproofs; and they can suppose that other sinners, and not themselves, are intended: but when near, they direct the word to the conscience, with "Thou art the "man," and except this produce repentance, it must exasperate. Such men, however, prove the insincerity of their professed esteem, by living in habitual neglect of the truths and precepts, which were delivered by the persons, whom they would be thought to admire. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xiii. 54—58. xxiii. 29—33.)—The obstinate rebellion and blindness of fallen man often induce him to strive and expect to prevail against those, whom he cannot deny to be the people of God: but as no outward miracles can extirpate the malignity of the heart, so nothing can injure those whom the Lord protects. Were our eyes opened to behold the world of spirits, we should perceive more formidable preparations against us, than those which alarmed the prophet's servant; even legions of malicious, powerful, and sagacious spirits combined for our destruction: but we should also see an innumerable company of holy angels encamped around us for our defence; and the almighty God himself our Friend and Protector. Strong faith will supply the want of sight: it realizes both the danger and the security, and with a clear idea of the force of the enemy confidently answers, "Fear not, for they that be "with us, are more than they, that be with them." May God give us this faith, and especially strengthen it in the time of danger, and in the hour of death! But if we are "strong, we should bear the infirmities of the weak," and both encourage and pray for them.—Increasing experience of the Lord's power and love, and those glimpses of heavenly things with which his people are favoured, gradually embolden them to walk by faith, and not by sight: nor is the power of prayer less, than it was in those ages of miracles, though the Lord answers it in a different way.—It is a mercy to be kept from gross crimes even by ignorance and blindness; and we may pray, that our enemies may

THEN [a] Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD, Thus saith the LORD, [b] To-morrow about this time *shall* [c] a measure of fine flour *be sold* for a shekel, and two measures [d] of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.

2 Then [*] a lord, on whose hand the king leaned, answered the man of God, and said, Behold, [e] *if* the LORD would make [f] windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, [g] thou shalt see *it* with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

3 And there were [h] four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, [i] Why sit we here until we die?

4 If we say, [k] We will enter into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and [l] let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: [m] if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, [n] we shall but die.

5 And they rose up [o] in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, [p] behold, *there was* no man there.

6 For [q] the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, *even* the noise of a great host: and they said

a *See on* vi. 33.—xx. 16. 1 Kings xxii. 19. Is. i. 10. Ez. xxxvii. 4.
b 18, 19. Ex. viii. 23. ix. 5, 6. xiv. 13. xvi. 12. Josh. iii. 5. 1 Sam. xi. 9. Ps. xlvi. 5.
c vi. 25. Rev. vi. 6.
d iv. 42. John vi. 9.
* Or, *a lord which belonged to the king, leaning on his hand.* v. 18.
e Gen. xviii. 12—14. Num. xi. 21—23. Ps. lxxviii. 19—21. 41.
f Gen. vii. 11. Mal. iii. 10.
g 17—20. Deut. iii. 27. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Is. vii. 9. Rom. iii. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Heb. iii. 17—19.
h *See on* v. 1.—viii. 4. Lev. xiii. 46. Num. v. 2—4. xii. 14.
i 4. Jer. viii. 14. xxvii. 13.
k Jer. xiv. 18.
l 1 Chr. xii. 19. Jer. xxxvii. 13, 14.
m Esth. iv. 16. Jer. viii. 14. Jon. iii. 9. Luke xv. 17—19.
n 2 Sam. xiv. 14. Heb. ix. 27.
o 1 Sam. xxx. 17. Ez. xii. 6, 7. 12.
p Lev. xxvii. 8 36. Deut. xxviii. 7. xxxii. 25. 30.
q iii. 23. xix. 7. 2 Sam. v. 24. Job xv. 21. Ps. xiv. 5. Jer. xx. 3, 4. Ez. x. 5. Rev. vi. 15, 16. ix. 9.

be so bewildered and confounded, as to fail of accomplishing their malicious purposes. The gospel itself indeed often *occasions* the blindness and obduracy of obstinate unbelievers to increase: (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* ii. 14—17:) yet we must pray for them, and persevere in our endeavours to win them over to be friends to us and to the Lord. We should also watch for opportunities to shew our friendly disposition towards them; as well as to convince them, that they will be ruined by their own iniquities, if they persist in them.

V. 24—33.

The regard which wicked men pay to the servants of God, when they seem to favour them, is frequently turned into bitter enmity under their troubles.—In extreme distress, if they recollect that their affliction is from the Lord, that rage against him, which vents itself in blasphemies, dictates also cruelty against his people. They blame any one as the cause of their calamities, rather than condemn themselves and renounce their sins. If rending their clothes, without a broken and contrite heart; and if wearing sackcloth, without being "renewed in the spirit "of their mind," would avail, they would not refuse these external tokens of humiliation: but, while their own impenitence alone retards the deliverance, they excuse their proceeding to still more desperate measures, by avowing, that it is in vain to "wait for the LORD any longer."—Alas! what miseries has sin entailed upon mankind! Little do we know what extremities we may be called to endure in this world: what then will be the everlasting wrath of God against his enemies, in the world to come? But if we are reconciled to him, he will help us when all human help fails; in the time of famine we shall be satisfied, and in peril we shall be safe: whilst all the curses of God's book will fall upon the head of presumptuous transgressors. Let us then "seek first the kingdom of God:" let us be thankful for our daily bread, and not contract habits of self-indulgence, nor set our affections on earthly objects: and may the whole word of God, being truly believed, combine to increase in us reverent fear and holy hope, that we may be "stedfast and unmoveable, always "abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our "labour is not in vain in the Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. This chapter is a continuation of the subject of the preceding: and immediately as Jehoram had spoken the profane and desperate words before considered, Elisha, in his presence and before the whole company, gave the merciful assurance contained in this verse. The measure here spoken of is supposed to have contained about a peck, or two gallons; and the prices specified, no doubt, were those of plentiful times: but that corn should be sold so cheap in Samaria, on the morrow, was impossible to any power, but that of God. Jehoram however, notwithstanding his rage and desperation, was induced to wait one day longer, to make trial of the prophet's words. (*Notes*, vi. 25. 31—33.)

V. 2. This lord was one of the king's most intimate friends, who waited on his person. It is probable that he was an idolatrous despiser of JEHOVAH and his prophet; and perhaps he wanted to persuade Jehoram, that Elisha amused him with the promise of an impossibility, to preserve himself from immediate death.

Thou shalt see, &c.] 'A just punishment of his unbe-'lief. And such will be the portion of those, that believe 'not the promise of eternal life.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3. While the weightier matters of the law were generally neglected, and idolatry prevailed, the prescribed rule about the exclusion of lepers seems to have been rigorously observed. (*Notes, Lev.* xiii. 45, 46. *Num.* v. 1—4.) These men resided in tents *without the wall;* but probably they were admitted *within the gate*, at the times when the Syrians made their assaults. Gehazi is by some supposed to have been one of them, by which means he became acquainted with the king. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, viii. 4—6.)

V. 6, 7. The infatuation, which seized the minds of the whole Syrian army, was equal to the illusion put upon their senses. Probably, by the ministration of angels, noises were made resembling those of a very large army with numerous chariots and horsemen marching speedily,

one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us [r] the kings of the Hittites, and [s] the kings of the Egyptians to come upon us.

7 Wherefore [t] they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents and [u] their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it *was*, [x] and fled for their life.

8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and [y] hid *it*; and came again and entered into another tent, and carried thence *also*, and went and hid *it*.

9 Then [z] they said one to another, We do not well; [a] this day *is* a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning-light, [*] some [b] mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

10 So they came and called unto [c] the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, *there was* [d] no man there, neither voice of man; but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they *were*.

11 And he called the porters; and they told *it* to the king's house within.

12 ¶ And the king arose in the night, and said [e] unto his servants, [f] I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know [g] that we *be* hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to [h] hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.

13 And [i] one of his servants answered and said, Let *some* take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left [†] in the city, (behold, they *are* as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, *I say*, [k] they *are* even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed:) and let us send and see.

14 They took therefore two chariot-horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way *was* full of garments and [l] vessels, which the Syrians [m] had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned and told the king.

16 And the people went out, and [n] spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, [o] according to the word of the LORD.

17 And the king appointed [p] the lord on whose hand he leaned, to have the charge of the gate: and [q] the people trode upon him in the gate, and he

r 1 Kings x. 29.
s 2 Chr. xii. 2, 3. Is. xxxvi. 1. xxxvii. 9.
t Job xviii. 11. Ps. xlviii. 4—6. lxviii. 12. Prov. xxviii. 1. Jer. xlviii. 8, 9.
u Ps. xx. 7, 8. xxxiii. 17. Am. ii. 14—16.
x Num. xxxv. 11, 12. Prov. vi. 5. Is. ii. 20, 21. Matt. xxiv. 16—18. Heb. vi. 18.
y v. 24. Josh. vii. 21. Jer. xli. 8. Matt. xliii. 44. xxv. 18.
z 2. Hag. i. 4, 5.
a 6. Is. xli. 27. lii. 7. Nah. i. 15. Luke ii. 10. Phil. iv. 4.
* Heb. *we shall find punishment.*
b v. 26, 27. Num. xxxii. 23. Prov. xxiv. 16.
c 11. 2 Sam. xviii. 26. Ps. cxxvii. 1. Mark xiii. 34, 35.
d *See on* 6, 7.
e vi. 8. Gen. xx. 8. xli. 38. 1 Kings xx. 7. 23.
f *See on* i.—v. 7.
g vi. 25—29.
h Josh. viii. 4—9. Judg. xx. 29—37.
i *See on* v. 13.
† Heb. *in it.*
k 4. vi. 33. Jer. xiv. 18. Lam. iv. 9.
l Esth. i. 7. Is. xxii. 24.
m Job ii. 4. Is. ii. 20. x. 3. xxxix. 7. Ez. xviii. 31. Matt. xvi. 26. xxiv. 16—18. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Heb. xii. 1.
n 1 Sam. xvii. 53. 2 Chr. xiv. 12—15. xx. 25. Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ps. lxviii. 12. Is. xxxiii. 1. 4. 23.
o Num. xxiii. 19. Is. xliv. 26. Matt. xxiv. 35.
p *See on* 2.
q ix. 33. Judg. xx. 43. Is. xxv. 10. Mic. vii. 10. Heb. x. 29.

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and ready directly to fall upon them at once, while they were unprepared for battle. But the excessive terror must have been caused immediately by sepernatural influence on their minds. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xix. 7. *Ex.* xv. 14—16. *Deut.* ii. 24, 25. 1 *Sam.* xiv. 11—15.) It is not known who the kings of the Hittites were, or where they reigned. (*Note*, *Judg.* i. 22—26, *v.* 26.) Indeed the whole of the supposition was improbable; and in their trepidation the Syrians left even their horses, which might have accelerated their flight!

V. 8, 9. Having satisfied their hunger, and secured as well as they could a rich booty, they began to reflect upon their conduct. They were conscious of having not acted properly, in respect of the distressed inhabitants of the city; and were afraid, lest some evil should come upon them, if they further delayed to make known the good tidings to those concerned.—Some mischief would befall them: either some judgment from God; or some punishment from the magistrates, for prolonging the miseries of the people. (9, *marg.*)

V. 12. If Jehoram had firmly expected that Elisha's words would be verified, he would have concluded that this event was the effect of a miraculous interposition in his favour; though he might properly have taken every prudent precaution against a surprise. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 1.) But he seems to have had little expectation of that kind, notwithstanding all the miraculous interpositions of God, by means of the prophet, in his behalf.

V. 13, 14. This person strenuously urged in favour of his counsel, that these men and their horses would be no more exposed, than those who remained in the city. Many had been already consumed, and all the rest must die with hunger in a few days, if no relief were afforded: and they might as well be cut off in examining the real state of the Syrian camp, and discovering what had become of the besiegers, as perish tamely and timidly in the city.—It seems, only two horsemen were sent; perhaps no more horses being found fit for the service; or the king would venture no more out of the city.

V. 15. *Notes*, *Is.* ii. 19—21. *Phil.* iii. 8—11.

V. 16—20. The people being extremely hungry, and vehemently eager for food, thrust down this nobleman,

died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.

r See on 1, 2. 18 And it came to pass [r] as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria:

19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, *if* the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

20 And [s] so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

s Num. xx. 12. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Job xx. 22. Is. vii. 9. Jer. xvii. 5, 6. Heb. iii. 18, 19.

whilst he attempted, perhaps in a harsh manner, to restrain them from rushing out to plunder the Syrian camp: or, as some think, to regulate the market, which was held at the gate and supplied from the camp. Thus he was trodden to death; and the truth and justice of God were clearly seen in that event. (*Notes*, 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

In extreme distress unexpected relief is often preparing: and, whatever unbelievers may imagine, it is not in vain to wait for the Lord, how long soever he seems to delay his coming.—No temporal deliverances and mercies will eventually profit sinners, except they are led to repentance; and in that case, "where sin hath abounded, grace "will much more abound."—We are all prone to judge of God's promises by human probabilities, and to limit his power of performance by our capacity of discerning how it can be done; and whatever increases pride and self-confidence proportionably augments this propensity. Hence the rich, the noble, the wise, and the learned of the world, have generally been the most backward to implicitly crediting the sure testimony of God, and expecting promised mercies in the way of his appointment, and in single dependence on his power, truth, and love, without regarding those apparent impossibilities which lie in the way. But all those, who persist in despising either his promised blessings, or this method of obtaining them, will see the felicity of believers without partaking of it. For, though he will pardon the infirmities of his people's faith, while they pray, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine un-"belief;" yet he will not spare those, who harden themselves and others in rebellion, through their infidel objections and enmity against the truth, however they may enjoy the confidence of earthly princes, or the admiration of mankind.—Men reason justly in their secular concerns: the least probability of preserving life is preferred to certain death, and the lowest condition is considered as better than perishing by hunger. Yet, in the concerns of their souls, they will not be so convinced, even by demonstration, as to bestow pains and put themselves to inconveniences, to escape the wrath to come and obtain eternal life. But the awakened sinner fears an evil infinitely worse than death; and under the greatest discouragements, even when tempted to despair, he learns to argue, 'If I go on in sin, or sit down in sloth, or run into worldly dissipation, or have recourse to superstitions, or attempt to establish my own righteousness, I must perish. The mercy of God in Jesus Christ is my only refuge. If I cast myself at his feet and wait his time, who knows but he may save me? And if at last he spurns me, I can but be lost. All else is comparatively worthless: if then I must perish, I will perish under the means of grace, and supplicating his mercy and salvation.' (*Esth.* iv. 16.) In like manner the believer, exposed to the terrors of persecution, reasons with himself: 'If I am faithful to the Lord, I can but die, and he will give me the crown of life: but if I deny Christ through dread of death, he will refuse to acknowledge me another day: and I "fear him who is able to destroy body "and soul in hell," more than those "who can only kill "the body." ' Thus believers venture themselves into the Saviour's hands, and cleave to him with purpose of heart; whilst others neglect or forsake him.—The Lord can effect his designs by various methods: a terror from him can drive men from their purpose, as effectually as the destroying sword of vengeance; (*Note*, xix. 35;) and we absolutely depend upon him for the due exercise of our senses and faculties, as well as for the continuance of our lives, and the salvation of our souls.—While some, when life is at stake, readily relinquish all which they before held dear; others, when wearing away by incurable or loathsome disease, are as rapacious of gain, as if their lives were secured to them with every other requisite for enjoyment! (*Note*, v. 26, 27.)

V. 9—20.

Natural humanity, and fear of punishment, are powerful checks on the selfishness of the ungodly, and tend to preserve some order and regularity in the world. Those however, who have found "the unsearchable riches of Christ," will not delay to report the good tidings to others, that they may partake of that blessedness, which is sufficient for all: and from love to him they will gladly communicate their temporal good things to their brethren.—True faith consists with prudent precautions: but unbelief suggests endless and unreasonable suspicions, and puts away those blessings, which are brought nigh to the soul, by the invitations and promises of God. The believer, on the other hand, makes trial of them, and experience confirms his faith: and a change, immensely more felicitating than that which is here recorded, takes place in his state, prospects, comforts, and character. But every word of God, concerning judgment as well as mercy, will speedily be accomplished; and earthly honours will accelerate the ruin of the ungodly. May God help us seriously to enquire, whether we are now exposed to his awful threatenings, or interested in his exceedingly great and precious promises; that so we may profit by the warning, or by the encouragement, resulting from that knowledge of our own state and character, compared with the warnings, and promises of the holy Scriptures.

CHAP. VIII.

The Shunammite, by Elisha's advice, to avoid a famine of seven years, goes to sojourn in Philistia, 1, 2. On her return, she applies to the king, who is conversing with Gehazi on Elisha's miracles; and he restores her land, 3—6. Elisha goes to Damascus: Hazael is sent by Ben-hadad to enquire of him concerning his sickness: he predicts Hazael's cruelty to Israel, as destined to be king of Syria, 7—13. Hazael murders Ben-hadad and succeeds him, 14, 15. Jehoram reigns wickedly in Judah, 16—19. Edom and Libnah revolt, 20—22. Jehoram is succeeded by Ahaziah, who reigns wickedly, 23—27. He assists the king of Israel against Syria, and when wounded visits him at Jezreel, 28, 29.

THEN spake Elisha unto the woman, [a] whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and [b] sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for [c] the LORD hath [d] called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land [e] seven years.

2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went [f] with her household, and sojourned in [g] the land of the Philistines seven years.

3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and [h] she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

4 And the king talked with [i] Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, [k] Tell me, I pray thee, [l] all the great things that Elisha hath done.

5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how [m] he had restored a dead body to life, that, [n] behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, [o] My lord, O king, this *is* the woman, and this *is* her son, whom Elisha restored to life.

6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain [*] officer, saying, [p] Restore all that *was* her's, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

7 ¶ And Elisha came to [q] Damascus: and [r] Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, [s] The man of God [t] is come hither.

8 And the king said unto Hazael, [u] Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and [x] enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

a *See on* iv. 31—35.
b Gen. xii. 10. xxvi. 1. xlvii. 4. Ruth i. 1.
c Gen. xli. 25—28. 32. Lev. xxvi. 19, 20. 26. Deut. xxviii. 22—24. 38—40. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 2. Ps. cv. 16. cvii. 34. Hag. i. 11. Luke xxi. 11. 22. Acts xi. 28.
d Jer. xxv. 29.
e Gen. xli. 27. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. xxiv. 13. Luke iv. 25.
f 1 Tim. v. 8.
g Judg. iii. 3. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1—3.
B.C. 885.
h 6. iv. 13. vi. 26. 2 Sam. xiv. 4. Ps. lxxxii. 3, 4. Jer. xxii. 16. Luke xviii. 3—5.
i v. 20—27. vii. 3. 10.
k Luke ix. 9. xxiii. 8. Acts xxiv. 24.
l ii. 14. 20—22. 24. iii. 14—16. iv. 3—6. 16, 17. v. 14. 27. vi. 6. 9—12. 17—20. 32. vii. 1. 16—20.
m iv. 35.
n Ruth ii. 3. Esth. v. 14. vi. 11, 12. Prov. xvi. 9. Ec. ix. 11. Matt. x. 29, 30. Acts viii. 27, &c. Rom. viii. 31.
o vi. 12. 26. 1 Sam. xxvi. 17. Ps. cxlv. 1.
* Or, *eunuch*. ix. 32. Gen. xxxvii. 36. 1 Chr. xxviii. 1. *margins*.
p Deut. xxii. 2. Judg. xi. 13. 2 Sam. ix. 7. Prov. xvi. 7. xxi. 1.
q Gen. xiv. 15. 1 Kings xi. 24. Is. vii. 8.
r vi. 24. 1 Kings xv. 18. xx. 1. 34. xxii. 31.
s i. 9, 10. ii 15. vi. 12.—*See* on Deut. xxxiii. 1.
t 1 Kings xiii. 1. Judg. xvi. 2. Acts xvii. 6.
u *See on* v. 5.—1 Sam. ix. 7. 1 Kings xiv. 3.
x i. 2. iii. 11—13. 1 Kings xiv. 1—4. Luke xiii. 23. Acts xvi. 30.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. This famine seems to have been sent in the latter part of Jehoram's reign, as a punishment of the pertinacious idolatry of both king and people, notwithstanding the miracles which they had witnessed, and the mercies which they had experienced. (*Am.* vii. 4.) It continued twice as long as that in the days of Ahab, but was not so extreme. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xvii. 1.)—Elisha was warned of its approach, and counselled his benefactress, now, as it appears, left a widow, to remove till it was over. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xii. 10. xxvi. 1—5. *Ruth* i. 1—5.) There was a measure of plenty in the land of the Philistines, whilst Israel was visited with famine: but either they could spare none to sell to their neighbours, or their old enmity made them unwilling to do it. They did not, however, molest such as went to sojourn among them.—Had not Judah also felt the effects of the famine, it is likely that this pious woman would have gone thither to sojourn.

V. 3. As this pious woman firmly believed the words of Elisha, predicting the famine, and acted accordingly; so, when the seven years assigned for its continuance were ended, she returned into her own land, in confidence that the famine would then terminate.

To cry, &c.] Either the lands of the Shunammite had been seized, as forfeited to the crown by her emigration; or some of her neighbours or relations had violently seized upon them; or those, to whom she had left the management of her affairs, would neither restore her estate, nor come to account concerning the profits of it. She had therefore at this time occasion to apply to the king, though not formerly; (*Note*, iv. 13;) and it was commendable in Jehoram, that he was accessible to such a claimant.

V. 4—6. (*Notes*, v. 20—27.) It was not unlawful to speak to a leper, provided it was done without touching him; and Jehoram, from curiosity, was willing to converse, concerning Elisha's miracles, with so mean a person as Gehazi was; who likewise bore an infamous character, and was covered with a loathsome disease! yet he did not court the prophet's acquaintance, because he disliked his counsels and admonitions, and dreaded his warnings and rebukes. The Lord, however, thus prepared his mind to do this pious woman justice; and his providence is especially to be noted in the singular coincidence of apparently casual events, from which most important consequences frequently follow.

V. 7, 8. The prophet doubtless was divinely directed to go to Damascus. Some suppose that he went to counsel and encourage Naaman; and others, that he retired thither during the famine. Some indeed think that he went to anoint Hazael; but it is probable, that Elijah had performed that service, though Hazael, being young and destitute of power to seize on the kingdom, seems not to have much regarded the transaction. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*,

9 So [y] Hazael went to meet him, and took a present [*] with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, [z] Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit [b] the LORD hath shewed me that [c] he shall surely die.

11 And he settled his countenance [†] stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God [d] wept.

12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know [f] the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt [g] dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

13 And Hazael said, But what, *is* thy servant [h] a dog, that [i] he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, [k] The LORD hath shewed me that thou *shalt be* king over Syria.

14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, [l] He told me *that* thou shouldest surely recover.

15 And [m] it came to pass [n] on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped *it* in water, and spread *it* on his face, [o] so that he died: and [p] Hazael reigned in his stead.

16 ¶ And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat *being* then king of Judah, [q] Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah [‡] began to reign.

17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

y *See on* 1 Kings xix. 15.
* Heb. *in his hand.* v. 5.
z vi. 21. xiii. 14. xvi. 7. 1 Sam. xxv. 8. Philem. 16.
b 13. Gen. xli. 39. Jer. xxxviii. 21. Ez. xi. 25. Am. iii. 7. vii. 1. 4. 7. viii. 1. Zech. i. 20. Rev. xxii. 1.
c i. 4. 16. Gen. ii. 17. Ez. xviii. 13.
† Heb. *and set* it.
d Gen. xiv. 2. Ps. cxix. 136. Jer. iv. 19. ix. 1. 18. xiii. 17. xiv. 17. Luke xix. 41. John xi. 35. Acts xx. 19. 31. Rom. ix. 2. Phil. iii. 18.
e *See on* iv. 28. 1 Kings xviii. 13.
f x. 32, 33. xii. 17. xiii. 3. 7. Am. i. 3, 4.
g xv. 16. Ps. cxxxvii. 9. Is. xiii. 16. 18. Hos. x. 14. xiii. 16. Am. i. 13. Nah. iii. 10.
h 1 Sam. xvii. 43. 2 Sam. ix. 8 Ps. xxii. 16. 20. Is. lvi. 10, 11. Matt. vii. 6. Phil. iii. 2. Rev. xxii. 15.
i Jer. xvii. 9. Matt. xxvi. 33—35.
k *See on* 10.—1 Kings xix. 15. Mic. ii. 1.
l 10. v. 25. Matt. xxvi. 16.
m 13. 1 Sam. xvi. 12, 13. xxiv. 4—7. 13. xxvi. 9—11. 1 Kings xi. 26—37.
n Ps. xxxvi. 4. Mic. ii. 1.
o ix. 24. xv. 10—14. 25. 30. 1 Kings xv. 28. xvi. 10, 18. Is. xxxiii. 1.
p 13. 1 Kings xix. 15.
q i. 17. 1 Kings xxii. 50. 2 Chr. xxi. 1—20.
‡ Heb. *reigned.*

1 *Kings* xix. 15—17.) Ben-hadad, however, was no longer disposed to injure Elisha. The report of the prophet's miracles had excited respect and veneration for him, and perhaps his sickness had softened his mind; so that he welcomed him to his capital, and, according to the custom of the day, sent his chief minister to enquire of him concerning his recovery. (*Notes*, i. 2. 1 *Kings* xiv. 1—4.) It would have been far more rational to request the instruction and prayers of "the man of God."

V. 9. We may infer from the silence of Scripture, that the prophet accepted of this royal present, which must have been of very great value, as the provision which the Lord assigned him in a foreign country, and to enable him to assist the poor Israelites, and the sons of the prophets in their poverty and distresses. (*Note*, v. 15, 16.)

V. 10. Ben-hadad's disease was not of itself mortal, though his life was near its end from another cause. But the prophet either did not know, or did not think it proper to inform Hazael, what that cause would be.—The Hebrew *text* however is, "Thou shalt not surely recover," or *live*; "for the LORD," &c. though ancient expositors, both Jews and Christians, adopting the reading of the *margin*, render it as it stands in our version: and indeed this appears to be the true reading; as the prophet's answer was probably intended to be obscure and ambiguous.

V. 11. The prophet fixed his eyes on Hazael so stedfastly, and for so long a time, that Hazael was confounded; and Elisha himself, in the foresight of Hazael's wickedness, and of the miseries of Israel, burst into tears. (*Note*, *Luke* xix. 41—44.)

V. 12, 13. Hazael felt at that time no inclination to the brutal ferocity and cruelty of which Elisha spoke; and he wondered that the prophet should suppose him capable of tearing and devouring, like some fierce and greedy dog, rather than a rational creature. But Elisha answered, "The Lord hath shewed me, that thou shalt be king over "Syria:" Or, "The Lord hath made me to see thee king "over Syria." And when advanced to the throne, being engaged in war with Israel, and exasperated by their resistance, he would be tempted to cruelties, of which at present he had no thought. (*Note*, *Jer.* xvii. 9, 10.) Some indeed think Hazael only meant, that he was too inconsiderable a person for such *great* exploits: but his high rank under Ben-hadad would have enabled him to perform them, had his passions been sufficiently excited; and he was evidently startled at the mention of the cruelties, which the prophet predicted would be perpetrated by him. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Am.* i. 3—5.)

V. 14, 15. Hazael misreported Elisha's answer, having doubtless already formed the intention of murdering Ben-hadad, and seeking an opportunity of effecting his purpose. By the method that he employed of murdering him, he prevented any alarm, or any marks of violence appearing on the body.—Elisha's intimation might give Satan an *occasion* of suggesting this villainy to Hazael; but it was not the *cause* of his crime, and formed no *excuse* for it. Had he been of David's disposition, he would have waited in the path of duty, till the Lord had performed his word, in that manner which pleased him. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 4—7. 1 *Kings* xi. 37. xii. 2, 3. 26—29.) Thus he soon manifested the rapacity and cruelty of the dog, of which he desired to be thought incapable. (*Notes*, 12, 13. *Is.* lvi. 9—12. *Mic.* iii. 5—7.)—It is supposed, that Ben-hadad had no son; that Hazael was in great favour with the people, and with the army especially; and that, for a time at least, he escaped the suspicion of having murdered Ben-hadad.

V. 16, 17. Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, began to reign with his father before the death of Ahab, so that Ahaziah the son of Ahab died in the second year of his

18 And he walked [r] in the way of the kings of Israel, as did [s] the house of Ahab; for [t] the daughter of Ahab was [u] his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

19 Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah [x] for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him alway a * light, *and* to his children.

20 In his days [y] Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and [z] made a king over themselves.

21 So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him; and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about and the captains of the chariots: and the people fled into their tents.

22 Yet [a] Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then [b] Libnah revolted at the same time.

23 And [c] the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

24 And Joram [d] slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and [e] Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

25 ¶ In the [f] twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.

26 [g] Two and twenty years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned [h] one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [i] Athaliah, the † daughter of Omri king of Israel.

27 And [k] he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as *did* the house of Ahab; for he *was* [l] the son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

28 And [m] he went with Joram the son of Ahab to the war against [n] Hazael king of Syria in [o] Ramoth-gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram.

29 And king [p] Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds ‡ which the Syrians had given him at [q] Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And [q] Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was ‖ sick.

r iii 2, 3. 1 Kings xxii. 52, 53.
s ix. 7, 8. xxi. 3. 13. 2 Chr. xxi. 13. Mic. vi. 16.
t 26. 1 Kings xxi. 25. 2 Chr. xviii. 1. xix. 2. xxi. 6. xxii. 1—4.
u Gen. vi. 1—5. Deut. vii. 3, 4. —*See on* 1 Kings xi. 1—5. Neh. xiii. 25, 26.
x xix. 34. 2 Sam. vii. 12. 16. 1 Kings xi. 36. xv. 4, 5. 2 Chr. xxi. 7. Is. vii. 14. xxxvii. 35 Jer. xxxiii. 25, 26. Luke i. 32, 33.
* Heb. *candle*, or, *lamp*.—*See on* 1 Kings xi. 36.
y 22. iii. 9. 2 Chr. xxi. 8 10.
z 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Kings xxii. 47.
a *See on* Gen. xxvii. 40.
b xix. 8. Josh. xxi. 13. 2 Chr xxi. 10.
c xv. 6. 36.—*See on* 1 Kings xi. 41. xiv. 29. xv. 23.—2 Chr. xxi. 11—20.
d *See on* 1 Kings ii. 10. xi. 43. xiv. 20. 31.
e 1 Chr. iii. 11. 2 Chr. xxi. 17. xxv. 23. *Jehoahaz*. xxii. 6. *Azariah*.
f *See on* 16, 17.—ix. 29. 2 Chr. xxi. 20.
g 2 Chr. xxii. 2.
h ix. 21—27. 2 Chr. xxii. 5—8.
i xi. 1. 13—16.
† Or, *grand-daughter*. 18.
k *See on* 18.
l 18. 2 Chr. xxii. 3. Ec. vii. 26. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17.
m iii. 7. 1 Kings xxii. 4. 2 Chr. xviii. 2, 3. 31. xix. 2. xxii. 5.
n 12, 13. 1 Kings xix. 17.
o Josh. xxi. 38. 1 Kings iv. 13. xxii. 3.
p ix. 15.
‡ Heb. *wherewith the Syrians had wounded*.
§ Called *Ramoth*, 28.
q ix. 16. 2 Chr. xxii. 6, 7.
‖ Heb. *wounded*. 1 Kings xxii. 34.

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reign, or in the eighteenth of Jehoshaphat. About five years after he seems to have been more solemnly admitted to the exercise of the royal authority, within two years of his father's death. This took place when Jehoram was thirty-two years old, and from that time he reigned eight years; though he reigned only five or six, as sole king after the death of his father. (*Note*, i. 17.)

V. 18. *The daughter*, &c.] Perhaps Jehoshaphat hoped by thus marrying his son to Ahab's daughter, to cement a peace between the two kingdoms, and to bring back the Israelites to the worship of God at Jerusalem: but it was an unhallowed measure, and produced a contrary effect, in introducing idolatry into Judah, and most ruinous consequences to Jehoshaphat's posterity. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 2. 2 *Chr.* xix. 2. xxi. 4. xxii. 5.) This affinity gave occasion to the same names in both families. Each had a Jehoram and an Ahaziah; but they all took after the house of Ahab.

V. 19. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi. 12, 13. 34—36, *v.* 36.

V. 20—24. (*Notes*, iii. 8, 9. 1 *Kings* xxii. 47.) Notwithstanding Jehoram's decisive victory over the Edomites, he could not re-establish his authority over them. Perhaps he was hindered by the revolt of Libnah; (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxi. 8—11;) and by fears of further insurrections in his own kingdom, where he was become extremely odious. Thus the prophecy of Isaac was fulfilled, after Edom had been subject to Israel about a hundred and fifty years: nor did the Jews again acquire the dominion over Edom, till long after the Babylonish captivity. (*Marg. Ref.* y—a. *Note*, *Gen.* xxvii. 39, 40.)—Jehoram was buried in Jerusalem, but not in the sepulchres of the kings. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxi. 12—20.)

V. 26. Perhaps Omri adopted and educated Athaliah, who was his grand-daughter, and the daughter of Ahab.

V. 28, 29. (*Notes*, ix. 21—28.) Ahaziah was Jehoram's youngest son; his other sons having all been slain before his death. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxii. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Temporal deliverances are only respites, and, "Sin no "more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," is a warning of universal application. (*Note*, *John* v. 10—14.)—When the Lord calls for judgments; famines, pestilences, wars, tempests, and earthquakes, obey his word: and if he contends he will overcome; for he will prolong the affliction, and make it more and more severe, until the sinner be either humbled or destroyed. (*Note*, *Lev.* xxvi. 24.) When he "rendereth a fruitful land barren for the wickedness of "them that dwell therein," he takes care of the remnant of his people, and abundantly recompenses their kindness to his servants for his sake; and they will also gladly embrace opportunities of requiting their benefactors, especially by their counsels and prayers: but open enemies sometimes escape better, than hypocrites or apostates.—

CHAP. IX.

A young prophet, by Elisha's orders, goes to Ramoth-gilead; anoints Jehu as king over Israel, and directs him to extirpate Ahab's family, 1—10. Jehu acquaints the captains, is proclaimed king, and marches in haste to Jezreel against Joram, 11—16. Joram sends messengers to Jehu, who detains them, 17—20. He and Ahaziah meet Jehu; who kills Joram, and casts him into the field of Naboth, 21—26. Ahaziah is slain at Gur and buried at Jerusalem, 27—29. Jezebel, by Jehu's orders, is thrown out of the window, and trampled under foot, 30—33. She is eaten by dogs, as Elijah had predicted, 34—37.

Where the moral law of God is not violated, a *real* necessity will justify many deviations from the *letter* of ritual appointments: but believers will not choose to reside longer among ignorant and ungodly people than is needful, even when they behave kindly to them; but gladly return to the ordinances of God, and the communion of the saints. (*Notes, Ruth* i. 4—10.)—We know not what changes await us: we may soon be deceived by those who have hitherto been faithful to us, and need the help of those on whom we have not heretofore had any dependence.—The love of worldly riches induces men to various methods of fraud and oppression, and breaks through the most powerful obligations, or the strongest relative ties. Hence the benefit of magistracy, to preserve equity and order among mankind. Believers may, on important occasions, avail themselves of their privileges as members of the community; provided they are not actuated by covetousness or resentment, do not manifest a contentious spirit, and make no appeal in a doubtful cause, or in matters of no great importance: (*Note, Matt.* v. 38—42:) and rulers should award justice without respect of persons, and compel the injurious to restitution.—But the Lord himself will plead the cause of the defenceless and the oppressed, of the fatherless and the widow: he often effects his purpose by influencing the hearts of princes in their favour; and the most casual or trivial incident, which conduces to it, may prove an occasion of exciting praise and gratitude for his providential goodness.—The gratification of curiosity is more pleasing to the carnal mind, than the mortification of worldly lusts: and hypocrites, apostates, or profligates, on some occasions, will be pleased with conversation on religious topicks, provided they have no reference to their own conscience, character, or conduct. (*Notes, John* iv. 16—20. *P. O.* 16—26.) Thus they countenance each other in ungodliness, or buoy up presumptuous hopes: whilst they cannot endure the instructions, and will not imitate the example, of those teachers whom they most profess to admire.

V. 7—15.

The Lord can procure his people a welcome, and spread them a table, even amidst their enemies; who, on some occasions, and especially in affliction, may be inclined to shew them great kindness and respect. Yet few, even in that case, derive real benefit from their instructions, and disposition to do them good: but some honour redounds to God, and outward advantages accrue to his servants; who may without scruple receive them, as from him, when they are not required to flatter, or in any other way to act inconsistently with their profession.—Those who love God and man, must often weep upon a survey of the wickedness and misery of mankind: and a particular foresight of the state of the church, and of the world, would augment their sorrow. But little are men, when not exposed to temptation, aware of the desperate wickedness of their own hearts! They do not conceive themselves capable of those enormities, to which at present they feel no inducement; and it is deemed an insult upon them to suppose they are. But when the powerful attraction of great imaginary advantages approaches the carnal mind, the latent depravity begins to move; and they will surely come into contact, unless hindered by external obstructions, or by the power of God upon the heart. Then, the greedy dog, the ravening wolf, the subtle fox, the poisonous serpent, or the filthy swine, form feeble emblems of human depravity: the persons, who before were most inoffensive, become guilty of far greater rapacity, treachery, or cruelty, than the worst of these animals; and in their cooler moments doubtless often reflect with horror and astonishment at their awful progress. Those who, as mortified limbs, are continually cut off from the body politick, once no more thought of such criminality and condemnation, than any reader of these observations: and we are any of us capable, if left to ourselves, of the worst crimes perpetrated by the vilest pests and scourges of the world! This should remind us, "not to be high-minded but to fear," and to trust only in the Lord to preserve us from the deceitfulness of our own hearts. As the desire of greatness is a dangerous temptation, which has induced many to perpetrate the basest crimes; so power, however obtained, generally alters men's manners for the worse: and their inclinations to vice commonly increase, in proportion as they are able to commit it, without controul, and with impunity. We ought therefore to be content and thankful in more obscure situations; and those, who are called to this dangerous pre-eminence, have need of double watchfulness and fervency in prayer.—When iniquity is conceived in the heart, means will be devised for its perpetration: and flattering language often clokes the most malignant purposes: for sinners in general are satisfied with concealing their crimes from man, regardless of the all-seeing eye of God.—It is, in every case, an awful cruelty to flatter those with the hope of life, whom we suppose to be near dissolution: because they ought to be preparing for that important change, and to be counselled and warned so to employ their few remaining days or hours.

V. 16—29.

When pious men choose wives for themselves, or take any measures in the marriage of their children, they should remember that their remote posterity are concerned, and that an improper choice may entail misery and ruin upon them.—Indulged children seldom prove wise or good men; and it is not often expedient to advance young people, needlessly and prematurely, to authority. Inferiors and dependents are often employed to chastise our rebellion against God, by their ill behaviour to us. He will not, however, break his promise or forsake his cause: but, whilst wicked men, from generation to generation, perish in their sins, the Son of David, the Light of his church, and of the world, ever lives to protect, bless, and com-

AND Elisha the prophet called one of [a] the children of the prophets, and said unto him, [b] Gird up thy loins, and take this [c] box of oil in thine hand, and go to [d] Ramoth-gilead:

2 And when thou comest thither, look out there [e] Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him rise up from [f] among his brethren, and carry him to an [*] inner chamber:

3 Then take the box of oil, and [g] pour *it* on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, [h] I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, [i] and flee, and tarry not.

4 So the young man, *even* the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.

5 And when he came, behold, the captains of the host *were* sitting; and he said, [j] I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain.

6 And [k] he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [l] I have anointed thee king [m] over the people of the LORD, *even* over Israel.

7 And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that [n] I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, [o] at the hand of Jezebel.

8 For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and [p] I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and [q] him that is shut up and left in Israel:

9 And I will make the house of Ahab [r] like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like [s] the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah:

10 And [t] the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and *there shall be* none to bury *her*. And [u] he opened the door, and fled.

[a] iv. 1. vi. 1—3.—*See on* 1 Kings xx. 35.
[b] iv. 29. 1 Kings xviii. 46. Jer. i. 17. Luke xii. 35—37. 1 Pet. i. 13.
[c] 1 Sam. x. 1. xvi. 1. 1 Kings i. 39.
[d] viii. 28, 29. 1 Kings xxii. 4. 20.
[e] 14. 1 Kings xix. 16, 17.
[f] 5. 11.
[*] Heb. *chamber in a chamber.* 1 Kings xx. 30. xxii. 25. *margins.*
[g] Ex. xxix. 7. Lev. viii. 12. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 1 Kings xix. 16.
[h] viii. 13. 1 Sam. ix. 16. xv. 1. 17. xvi. 12. Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. Prov. viii. 15, 16 Jer. xxvii. 5—7. Dan. ii. 21. iv. 35. v. 18. John xix. 10, 11.
[i] 1 Sam. xvi. 2. Matt. ii. 13. x. 16.
[j] Judg. iii. 19.
[k] Acts xxiii. 18, 19.
[l] *See on* 3.—1 Kings i. 34. 2 Chr. xxii. 7. Ps. ii. 6. *marg.* Is. xlv. 1.
[m] 1 Kings iii. 8. x. 9. xiv. 7. xvi. 2.
[n] Deut. xxxii. 35. 43. Ps. xciv. 1—7. Matt. xxiii. 35. Luke xviii. 7, 8. Rom. xii. 19. xiii. 4. Heb. x. 30. Rev. vi. 9, 10. xviii. 20. xix. 2.
[o] 33—37. 1 Kings xviii. 4. xxi. 13. 25.
[p] *See on* 1 Kings xiv. 10, 11. xxi. 21, 22.
[q] xiv. 26. Deut. xxxii. 36.
[r] 1 Kings xiv. 10, 11. xv. 29. xxi. 22.
[s] 1 Kings xvi. 3, 4. 11, 12.
[t] 35, 36. 1 Kings xxi. 23. Jer. xxii. 19.
[u] 3. Judg. iii. 26.

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fort his people. May all the changes, troubles, and wickedness of the world, make us more earnest in securing an interest in his great salvation!

NOTES

CHAP. IX. V. 1. Elijah, many years before, had been commissioned to anoint Jehu, as a king of a new family, immediately appointed by God to reign over Israel, and to execute vengeance on the family and adherents of Ahab. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xix. 15—17.) But, a respite having been granted that prince, when he externally humbled himself before God, it seems, the anointing of Jehu was deferred likewise: (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 27—29:) so that this service now devolved on Elisha, as Elijah's successor and representative. But it required secrecy, and it was not proper he should perform it in person: as one of "the sons of "the prophets," who was little known, might have a far better opportunity of escaping, if suspected by Jehoram's friends.—Elisha lived above forty years after this: (*Note*, xiii. 14:) and, probably, was not incapacitated by age or infirmities, for the labour and activity required on this occasion; but was for other reasons induced, or directed, to send a deputy. (*Marg. Ref.*)—When the ancients used great expedition, they girded up the skirts of their long upper garments with a girdle round their loins. (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* i. 13—16.)

V. 2, 3. Jehoram having retired from the army, (viii. 29,) Jehu seems to have been left first in command, having been long employed by Ahab's family. The directions given this young prophet were explicit; especially as to the secrecy to be observed, and the measures to be adopted for his own safety. (*Marg. Ref.*) The service was indeed peculiarly perilous; and Samuel had used caution, in a measure much less offensive. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 1, 2.)

V. 5—10. Jehu was engaged in converse or consultation with the other captains, when thus addressed by a person, it is probable, of mean appearance: yet when the young prophet said, "I have an errand" (or a word) "to "thee, O captain," he readily went aside with him to learn his business. And immediately the prophet anointed him, explained the meaning of that transaction, and gave him an express commission from God. In all this, no doubt he exactly adhered to his instructions. (*Marg. Ref.* n—s.)—Israel, though generally idolatrous, was still "the people "of the LORD." They were called by his name, and had a remnant of his worshippers among them: and Jehu was thus warned to use his authority, in obedience to God, and to promote true religion. The family and adherents of Ahab were criminals condemned by the supreme Judge; Jehu was appointed to execute the sentence; the kingdom was his recompense for the service: and, as far as he acted according to the instructions given him, he needed not fear contracting guilt, or regard any reproach or opposition to which he might be exposed. The murder of the prophets and worshippers of God was more insisted upon, in this indictment, than even the worship of Baal. Jehoram had been spared many years, but he continued impenitent; though not so wicked as Ahab, who was punished in his posterity. Jezebel had retained her authority, and persisted in idolatry, and in her enmity to JEHOVAH and his servants; though less spoken of in the reigns of her sons, than in that of her husband. Long space had been given her, but she had not repented; and her measure of iniquity was now full, and her awful doom most expressly de-

11 Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and *one* said unto him, [x] *Is* all well? wherefore came this [y] mad *fellow* to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication.

12 And they said, *It is* false; tell us now. And he said, [z] Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel.

13 Then they hasted, [a] and took every man his garment, and put *it* under him on the top of the stairs, and [b] blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu [*] is king.

14 So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, [c] conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had [d] kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria.

15 But king [†] Joram was [e] returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians [‡] had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, If it be your minds, *then* let [§] none go forth *nor* escape out of the city, to go to tell *it* in Jezreel.

16 So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. [f] And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.

17 And there stood [g] a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, [h] Take an horseman, and send to

x 17. 19. 22. iv. 26. v. 21.
y Is. lix. 15. *marg.* Jer. xxix. 26. Hos. ix. 7. Mark iii. 21. John x. 20. Acts xvii. 18. xxvi. 24. 1 Cor. iv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 13.
z *See on* 6—10
a Matt. xxi. 7, 8. Mark xi. 7, 8.
b 2 Sam. xv. 10. 1 Kings i. 34. 39. Ps. xlvii. 5—7. xcviii. 6.
* Heb. *reigneth.*
c 31. viii. 12—15. x. 9. xv. 30. 1 Kings xv. 27. xvi. 7. 9. 16.
d viii. 28. 1 Kings xxii. 3.
† Heb. *Jehoram.*
e viii. 29. 2 Chr. xxii. 6.
‡ Heb. *smote.*
§ Heb. *no escape go, &c.* 1 Sam. xxvii. 9—11.
f viii. 29. 2 Chr. xxii. 6, 7.
g 2 Sam. xiii. 34. xviii. 24. Is. xxi. 6—9. 11, 12. lvi. 10. lxii. 6. Ez. xxxiii. 2—9. Acts xx. 26—31.
h vii. 14.

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nounced. (*Marg. Ref.*—35, 36. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 23. *Rev.* ii. 20—23.)

V. 11. *This mad fellow.*] It is probable, that there were some peculiarities in the young prophet's manner and address, which made the captains conclude that he was one of the "sons of the prophets, and speak of him in this language; and some reference might be had to those vehement actions, which the prophets sometimes used, when influenced by the Spirit of prophecy: (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xix. 19—24:) but it seems rather to have resulted from profane contempt of religion, as it may be supposed they were generally idolaters. Indeed, without excepting him who "spake as never man spake," those, who have faithfully delivered the Lord's message to sinners, have in all ages been treated as madmen. (*Marg. Ref.* y.) They are so indifferent about those objects, which attract the senses, and which man naturally desires and pursues; and so engaged about those things which are invisible, and therefore generally neglected as if unreal; their judgment, conversation, maxims, and conduct are so contrary to those of other men; and they venture and endure so much, in pursuit of interests and objects of which others have no conception; that worldly men naturally conclude them to be mad, when they deem them honestly in earnest. (*Notes*, *Mark* iii. 20, 21. 2 *Cor.* v. 13—15.) The charge however is often brought in *self-defence:* for, admitting the principles and practice of the devoted servants of God to be reasonable, wise, and necessary to happiness, the inference is undeniable; that the ambitious, the sensual, the covetous, the dissipated, the worldly, and the ungodly of every description, are fools and madmen to all intents and purposes.

Ye know, &c.] Perhaps Jehu meant, that the captains knew the man to be a prophet; and must suppose that he came to admonish and instruct him: or he might intend to evade the question, as if the prophet's errand had nothing peculiar in it: but they would not be thus satisfied, knowing that something more was communicated to him. This is the common interpretation.—It may, however, be questioned, whether Jehu did not suspect, that the young prophet acted in concert with the captains; and that they were previously acquainted with the man and his communication.

V. 12, 13. When the captains urged Jehu further, he declared the business of the young prophet, with a frankness and boldness, which seem to have arisen from a divine energy on his mind; for, if the captains had not coincided with him, the discovery might have proved fatal to him. Some kind of faith in the word of God, spoken by the prophet, seems to have animated him to this hazardous undertaking, of which it does not appear that he had had any previous intention: and the minds of his companions also were surprisingly disposed to concur with him, by making him a kind of throne, and proclaiming him king with sound of trumpets. It is probable, that this was done on the top of some edifice, from which the people were generally informed of such publick transactions, as were proper to be communicated to them. Thus the conspiracy was openly avowed. While Jehoram had rendered himself odious by his crimes and oppressions to the nation in general; it may be supposed, that he was also unpopular in the army, through his severity and cruelty.

V. 14. It is evident that Ramoth-gilead was at this time in the hands of the Israelites (15): but it is not certain, whether they had just taken it; or whether Hazael had raised the siege of it, having attempted in vain to retake it.—Jehoram's absence from the army proved of fatal consequence to him: he "escaped the sword of Hazael, but "Jehu slew him." (1 *Kings* xix. 17.)

V. 15—17. (viii. 28, 29.) Jezreel lay at a considerable distance from Ramoth-gilead, with the river Jordan between. Yet Jehu concerted his plan with such prudence, and executed it with such dispatch; his adherents came so cordially into his interests, and so faithfully kept his counsel; and the people in the neighbourhood were either so ignorant about his intentions, or so regardless of them; that Jehoram received no tidings of his march, till Jehu's distant approach was perceived by the watchman!

meet them, and let him say, [i] *Is it* peace?

18 So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu said, [k] What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.

19 Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.

20 And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the [*] driving *is* like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; [l] for he driveth [†] furiously.

21 And Joram said, [‡] Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And [m] Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and [§] met him in [n] the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

22 And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, [o] *Is it* peace, Jehu? And he answered, [p] What peace, so long as [q] the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts *are* so many?

23 And Joram turned his hands and fled, and said to Ahaziah, [r] *There is* treachery, O Ahaziah.

24 And Jehu [‖] drew a bow with his full strength, and [s] smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he [*] sunk down in his chariot.

25 Then said *Jehu* to Bidkar his captain, Take up, *and* cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, [t] the LORD laid this burden upon him;

26 Surely I have seen yesterday the [†] blood of Naboth, and the blood [u] of his sons, saith the LORD; and [x] I will requite thee in this [‡] plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take *and* cast him into the plat *of ground*, according to the word of the LORD.

i 19. 1 Sam. xvi. 4. 2 Kings ii. 13. Luke x. 5, 6.

k 19. 22. Is. xlviii. 22. lix 8. Jer. xvi. 5. Rom. iii. 17.

* Or, *marching.* Hab. i. 6. iii. 12.

l x. 16. Ec ix. 10. Is. liv. 16. Dan. xi. 44.

† Heb. *in madness.*

‡ Heb. *bind.* 1 Kings xx. 14. *marg.* Mic. i. 13.

m 2 Chr. xxii. 7.

§ Heb. *found.* Num. xx. 14. *marg.*

n 25. 1 Kings xxi. 1—7. 15. 18, 19.

o *See on* 17.

p *See on* 18.—Is. lvii. 19—21.

q 1 Kings xvi. 30—33. xviii. 4. xix. 1, 2. xxi. 8—10. 25. Nah. iii. 4. Rev. ii. 20. xvii. 4, 5. xviii. 3. 23.

r xi. 14. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13.

‖ Heb. *filled his hand with a bow.*

s 1 Kings xxii. 34. Job xx. 23—26. Ps. l. 22. Prov. xxi. 30. Ec. viii. 12, 13. 1 Thes. v. 3.

* Heb. *bowed.*

t 1 Kings xxi. 19. 24—29. Is. xiii. 1. Jer. xxiii. 33—38. Nah. i. 1. Mal. i. 1. Matt. xi. 30.

† Heb. *bloods.*

u Deut. xxiv. 16. 2 Chr. xxiv. 25. xxv. 4.

x Ex. xx. 5. Deut. v. 9. Ez. xviii. 19.

‡ Or, *portion.*

But the matter was of the Lord, and could not fail of success.

I see a company. (17) *A troop*, or *army*, as the word שְׁפִיָּה signifies.

V. 18, 19. Perhaps Jehoram feared, lest the Syrians had obtained the victory over his troops, and driven them away from Ramoth: but Jehu, by compelling his messengers to turn behind him, prevented his obtaining any information, and increased his perplexity.

V. 20. *Furiously.*] Some have rendered this, *He driveth slowly.* But Jehu was a vehement man, yet keen and sagacious, a fit instrument for his peculiar work. His approach might be seen at a great distance from a watch-tower, as he came with an armed force; and it is most probable, that he travelled with as much celerity as he could.—The original word is exactly rendered in the margin, *in madness;* being from the same root as that above translated, *mad fellow* (11).

V. 21. Jehoram had no sufficient force to oppose Jehu's army, and he seems to have acted rashly in going out to meet him. But he still dreamed of peace, and was impatient to know, whether Jehu returned defeated by the Syrians, or triumphant over them. Thus Jehu's design was facilitated, and perhaps bloodshed prevented: and thus, according to the purpose of God, Jehoram was slain in the portion of Naboth; probably near the place, where he and his sons had been put to death. (*Notes*, 25, 26. 1 *Kings* xxi. 17—19.)

V. 22. Idolatry is in scripture called *whoredom;* and, when committed by the professed people of God, *adultery,* to denote the Lord's abhorrence of it. Jezebel's idolatries had been manifold and long continued; and, as some think, attended by prostitution, according to the shameless practices of the Gentiles in their worship: of Jezebel's personal character in this respect nothing further is recorded. (*Notes, Rev.* ii. 20—23. xiv. 8. xvii. 1, 2.) The words, *witchcrafts,* may allude to the fascinating artifices that harlots use to allure men to wickedness; by which her various methods of seducing the Israelites to idolatry seem to be intended. For this purpose she doubtless employed promises, presents, caresses, and flatteries; and on the other hand, frowns, threats, and persecutions; by which great multitudes were induced to conform to her religion, and join in her spiritual whoredom. As Jehu had been long unsupected, in the court of Ahab and his sons, he probably had never before in any way protested against the worship of Baal.—Jehoram was answerable for Jezebel's crimes, because he countenanced and imitated them, instead of using his authority to repress them. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xv. 10—13.)

V. 23, 24. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 1 *Kings* xxii. 32—35.

V. 25, 26. In the vineyard of murdered Naboth, of which Jehoram seems to have kept possession, his body was left unburied, to be devoured by dogs, or beasts of prey: and the dogs, in some sense, licked the blood of Ahab, as flowing from the wounds of his son. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xxi. 17—19.)—The words of the prophets were called *burdens,* as predicting a heavy burden of misery to the guilty party, which he could neither endure nor remove. (*Marg. Ref.* t.—*Note, Jer.* xxiii. 33—40.)—It is pro-

27 But when [y] Ahaziah the king of Judah saw *this*, he fled by the way of the [z] garden-house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. *And they did so* at the going up to Gur, which *is* by [a] Ibleam. And he fled to [b] Megiddo, and died there.

28 And [c] his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

29 And [d] in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

30 ¶ And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, [e] Jezebel heard *of it*, and she [*] painted her face, and [f] tired her head, and looked out at a window.

31 And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, *Had* [g] Zimri [h] peace, who slew his master?

32 And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, [i] Who *is* on my side? who? And there looked out to him two *or* three [†] eunuchs.

33 And he said, [k] Throw her down. So they threw her down: and *some* of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; [l] and he trode her under foot.

34 And when he was come in, [m] he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now [n] this cursed *woman*, and bury her: for [o] she *is* a king's daughter.

35 And they went to bury her: [p] but they found no more of her than the scull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.

36 Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, [q] This *is* the word of the LORD, which he spake [‡] by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel:

37 And [r] the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; *so* that they shall not say, This *is* Jezebel.

y viii. 29. Num. xvi. 26. 2 Chr. xxii. 7—9. Prov. xiii. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 17.
z 1 Kings xxi. 2.
a Josh. xvii. 11. Judg. i. 27.
b xxiii. 29, 30. Judg. i. 27. v. 19. 1 Kings iv. 12.
c xii. 21. xiv. 19, 20. xxiii. 30. 2 Chr. xxv. 28. xxxv. 24.
d viii. 16. 24, 25 2 Chr. xxii. 1, 2.
e 1 Kings xix. 1, 2.
* Heb. *put her eyes in painting.* Jer. iv. 30. Ez. xxiii. 40.
f Is. iii. 18—24. Ez. xxiv. 17. 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. iii. 3.
g 1 Kings xvi. 9—19.
h *See on* 18—22.—
i Ex. xxxii. 26. 1 Chr. xii. 18. 2 Chr. xi. 12. Ps. cxviii. 6. cxxiv. 1, 2.

† Or, *chamberlains.* Esth. i. 10. ii. 15. 21. Acts xii. 20.
k *See on* 1 Kings xxi. 11.
l 26. vii. 20. Is. xxv. 10. Lam. i. 15. Mic. vii. 10. Mal. iv. 3. Matt. v. 13. Heb. x. 29.
m 1 Kings xviii. 41. Esth. iii. 15. Am. vi. 4.
n 1 Kings xxi. 25. Prov. x. 7. Is. lxv. 15. Matt. xxv. 41.
o 1 Kings xvi. 31.
p Job xxxi. 3. Acts xii. 23.
q *See on* 1 Kings xxi. 23.
‡ Heb. *by the hand of.* xiv. 25. Lev. viii. 36. 2 Sam. xii. 25.
r Ps. lxxxiii. 10. Ec. vi. 3. Is. xiv. 18—20. Jer. viii. 2. xvi. 4. xxii. 19. xxxvi. 30. Ez. xxxii. 23—30.

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bable, that Jehu had seldom reflected on Elisha's words during the intervening years, till these events brought the substance of them fresh to his recollection.

Rode together. (25) Ahab's 'guard were wont to ride 'in pairs, two and two; and Jehu and Bidkar rode at that 'time together, and heard Elijah's words.' *Bp. Patrick.*

The blood of his sons. (26) This evidently implies that Naboth's sons were put to death along with him: for to suppose, that the words only mean that they were deprived of their estate, and so impoverished, and as it were starved, is altogether unreasonable. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 8—14.)

V. 27, 28. Ahaziah was Ahab's grandson by Athaliah; and being also an idolater, he was within Jehu's commission. So that, being found with Jehoram, he shared his punishment; though, as son to pious Jehoshaphat, he was allowed an honourable burial. The circumstances elsewhere recorded concerning his death, render it probable, that he was not slain, till Jehu had inflicted vengeance on Jezebel at Jezreel. (*Notes*, 30—37. 2 *Chr.* xxii. 7—9.)

Garden-house. (27) It seems, that Ahab, notwithstanding Elijah's awful message to him, and his external humiliation, proceeded with his plan of forming Naboth's vineyard, or part of it, into a garden of herbs; and this house is supposed to have been built on it, for the accommodation of those who kept it. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 1, 2. 27—29.)—*Died there.*] Ahaziah was taken at Megiddo, and brought to Jehu, who slew him, probably at Jezreel. But he died with the others of the house of Ahab, which is supposed to be here meant.

V. 29. Jehoram began to reign over Judah, in the fifth year of Jehoram king of Israel; it is probable, in the very beginning of it: and he died, and was succeeded by Ahaziah, in the eleventh or twelfth year of Jehoram; that is, the close of the eleventh, or beginning of the twelfth. This space is called *eight years*, as comprizing six whole years, and a portion of two others, computed according to the reigns of the kings of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 30—37. Jezebel had no way of escaping or resisting Jehu: she therefore aimed to out-brave and intimidate him. Instead of assuming the habit of a mourner, or a suppliant, she arrayed herself in all the magnificence of royalty, and stationed herself in a conspicuous place to wait his arrival. She used the method, customary in the east, of giving herself a majestick appearance, by a kind of paint which dilates the eye-brows, and makes the eyes look large and bright. And when Jehu approached the place, she accosted him by saying, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" *Zimri* had destroyed the house of Baasha, and had soon after fallen before Omri the father of Ahab: (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xvi. 8—19:) but Zimri had had no commission for what he did; and Jehu was expressly ordered to take vengeance on the house of Ahab. He was not therefore to be thus intimidated: for finding upon enquiry, that her chamberlains were ready to join him; (being either mercenary men who were willing to purchase his favour, or being weary of Jezebel's imperious and haughty disposition;) he ordered her to be thrown from the window, and thus she was dashed to pieces, and trodden under foot by the horses. 'See how suddenly courtiers change with the fortune of 'their master.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Afterwards, when he thought of burying her, in honour of her royal extraction, he found himself disappointed; for her mangled body, (having probably been plundered of its costly attire,) was entirely torn in pieces and devoured by dogs. This reminded him of the word of the Lord by Elijah, which he had before forgotten: and he observed that her carcase was to become as dung upon the face of the earth.—This was a

CHAP. X.

Jehu, by letters to the elders, causes Ahab's seventy sons to be slain at Samaria, and their heads to be brought to Jezreel, 1—7. He shews this to be a fulfilment of Elijah's prophecy, and destroys all Ahab's kindred in Jezreel, 8—11. In his way to Samaria he slays forty-two of Ahaziah's brethren, 12—14. Attended by Jehonadab, he slays all that remained to Ahab in Samaria, 15—17. He assembles all the worshippers of Baal by stratagem; puts them to death, and breaks down Baal's images and temple, 18—28. He follows the sins of Jeroboam; yet the kingdom to the fourth generation is promised him, for destroying the house of Ahab, 29—31. Hazael smites Israel, 32, 33. Jehu dies, and Jehoahaz succeeds him, 34—36.

dreadful and most ignominious end, worthy of one who had been such a curse to Israel and Judah, but had brought the heaviest curses upon herself; and who was a specimen, and in some respects a type, of all ringleaders in idolatry, and tempters to that crime. Yet "this cursed woman," the daughter of a king, was also the wife of a king, the mother of two kings, the mother-in-law of a king, and the grandmother of a king, all in her own life! So vain are all earthly honours and distinctions!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The long-suffering of God enhances the condemnation of those, who are not led by it to repentance. (*Notes, Rom.* ii. 4—6. ix. 22, 23.)—In his appointed time he will raise up and qualify suitable instruments for performing his purpose, whether of vengeance or of mercy.—The faithful servants of God must stand prepared for arduous and perilous undertakings: and obedience to his commandments must have the precedency before all other duties. But, as the written word is at present our only rule of duty, it seldom happens, that we are required to act, even in *apparent* violation of our relative obligations to princes, parents, masters, or other superiors; except in professing those truths, and attending on those ordinances, which they may disapprove, discountenance, or prohibit; or in keeping aloof from those superstitions, or worldly places and practices, which they would enjoin.—Yet if, after all endeavours "to render honour to whom honour is due," we should be reproached or ill-treated for our conscientious obedience to God, we must bear it with meekness and patience: (*Notes, Acts* iv. 13—22, *v.* 19. 23—28. v. 29—31. 41, 42:) and when in danger of persecution, we are allowed to flee from it. They, who are employed as ministers, will be the most exposed in these respects: for the message of the Lord, meeting sinners in the midst of their worldly pursuits, singles them out, by an application to their hearts and consciences, as if they were addressed by name: (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xii. 7:) and while some are thus separated from their companions, and, by the unction of the Holy Spirit, prepared for the service of God; others are marked out, in the midst of their prosperity, as in danger of eternal misery. Whilst, however, we conscientiously adhere to our instructions, we shall be accepted, and preserved as long as is really good for us.

V. 11—29.

Every man should well consider, to what work the Lord calls him, and in what manner and for what ends he ought to do it. His *special* commission justifies the severest executions of his enemies: but our *general* instructions to do good, and to bless, and to overcome evil with good, point out to us more delightful services, in which we should thankfully abound from day to day. Yet the vengeance of God will fall with peculiar weight upon the head of those that oppress and persecute his people and ministers; who may deem themselves highly favoured, if they are only reviled, and reproached as fools and madmen. Satisfied with the testimony of their conscience, and the Lord's gracious acceptance, they may rejoice and be exceedingly glad, at being thus ranked with prophets, apostles, and the Saviour himself: and instead of resenting the opprobrious terms, as an intolerable affront, may glory in them as a most honourable distinction. (*Notes, Matt.* v. 10—12. 1 *Pet.* iv. 12—16.) They should, however, be extremely careful to avoid all ridiculous and unreasonble words and actions, that they may give no just occasion to such malignant and injurious charges; which, when unmerited, cannot possibly injure them, except they make them angry, contentious, discontented, or reluctant to their duty.—The Lord often secretly disposes men to concur in his designs, in a manner contrary to their former conduct, and to all human probabilities: and then such events, as would otherwise have been impracticable, are speedily and easily accomplished: and, to ask advice, is often the readiest way of obtaining concurrence and assistance. Prudence, united with vigour and dispatch, promises success in the most arduous designs; and a disposition to "drive furiously," may sometimes fit a person for peculiar services, which would not so well suit the temper of more sedate and amiable persons: yet in general it is no commendation of a man's character, or qualification for the most desirable kinds of usefulness.—While sudden destruction is rapidly approaching, sinners are still saying, Peace, peace: but what peace can there be to the impenitent workers of iniquity, and to those who have tempted others to join them in rebellion against God?—Notorious sinners entail judgment on their posterity unto the third and fourth generation, especially when these walk in the steps of their progenitors.—The circumstances of temporal judgment are sometimes remarkably calculated to call to remembrance the crimes for which they are inflicted: so that the most superficial observers must perceive the justice of God in them, and acknowledge that the Scriptures are fulfilled. How will it then be in "the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render "unto every one according to his works?" And if we would escape the destruction of the ungodly, we must avoid all intimate acquaintance with them; for "a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

V. 30—37.

Some haughty transgressors have so long prospered in their crimes, and domineered over all around them, that they suppose they can out-brave all opposition, and defy even the justice of God himself. Their hearts grow more hardened and insolent, when they are evidently upon the brink of destruction: and an unhumbled spirit, in alarm-

AND Ahab had [a] seventy sons [b] in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto [c] the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to [*] them that brought up Ahab's *children*, saying,

2 Now [d] as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons *are* with you, and *there are* with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;

3 [e] Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set *him* on his father's throne, and [f] fight for your master's house.

4 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, [g] Behold, two kings stood not before him: [h] how then shall we stand?

5 And he that *was* over the house, and he that *was* over the city, the elders also, and the bringers up *of the children*, sent to Jehu, saying, [i] We *are* thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou *that which is* good in thine eyes.

6 Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye *be* [†] mine, and *if* ye will hearken unto my voice, [k] take ye the heads of the men [l] your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. Now the king's sons *being* seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the city, which brought them up.

7 And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and [m] slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him *them* to Jezreel.

a Judg. viii. 30. x. 4. xii. 14.
b v. 3. 1 Kings xiii. 32. xvi. 28. 2 Chr. xxii. 9.
c *See on* Deut. xvi. 18.—1 Kings xxi. 8—14.
* Heb. *nourishers.*
d *See on* v. 6.
e Deut. xvii. 14, 15. 1 Sam. x. 24. xi. 15. 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9. 1 Kings i. 24, 25. xii. 20.
f 2 Sam. ii. 12—17. 1 Kings xii. 21. John xviii. 36.
g ix. 24. 27.
h Is. xxvii. 4. Jer. xlix. 19. Nah. i. 6. Luke xiv. 31.
i xviii. 14. Josh. ix. 11. 24, 25. 1 Kings xx. 4. Jer. xxvii. 7, 8. 17. John xii. 26.
† Heb. *for me.*—*See on* ix. 32.—Matt. xii. 30. Luke ix. 50.
k Num. xxv. 4.—*See on* 1 Kings xxi. 8—11.
l Deut. v. 9. Josh. vii. 24, 25. Job xxi. 19. Is. xiv. 21, 22. Rev. ii. 20—23.
m 9. xi. 1. 1 Kings xxi. 21. 2 Chr. xxi. 4. Matt. xiv. 8—11.

ing and humiliating circumstances, is a distinguishing mark of those, who "are appointed unto wrath."—They who carefully adorn their persons "by painting the face," "tiring the hair, and putting on of apparel," whilst their souls are polluted with the guilt and defilement of innumerable, unrepented, unpardoned, unmortified iniquities, should sometimes turn aside to view themselves in *this mirror*, and to contemplate the conduct and fate of Jezebel: especially those who use these arts to seduce others from the ways of truth and righteousness. Such persons, however noble, wealthy, beautiful, or successful, are emphatically *accursed;* under the curse of God themselves, and the cursed instruments of bringing others into the same condemnation.—Persons of royal extraction or authority, naturally annex the idea of *sacred* to their distinctions; yet they often pay no regard to the *sacred* service and honour of the King of kings: but how can they expect the conscientious obedience of their *subjects*, whilst they are in a state of actual rebellion against their *Sovereign;* and attempting to corrupt the morals and principles of the people? Indeed traitors are justly execrated, and seldom prosper: but the Lord often uses them as the instruments of his righteous vengeance against ungodly princes.—Court-favourites are commonly a fickle, time-serving people. For the sake of emolument, they are very assiduous and lavish in their flatteries: but when a revolution takes place, they often betray, or even murder, the same unhappy persons, to secure themselves, or to obtain still greater preferment! This is especially to be feared by those, who render themselves odious through insolence and wickedness; and who are only served out of slavish fear or mercenary hope.—Let proud tyrants and oppressors study this chapter with fear and trembling: the loftiest will be brought low, and every one of them, in his turn, must give an account unto God, with whom "is no respect of "persons." The anguish of Jezebel's death, and the disgrace of her mangled limbs, faintly shadow forth the misery and contempt, which at and after death will be the portion of those, who have been "the terror of the "mighty in the land of the living;" whose very memory shall rot in infamy. This the believer will foresee and expect; and at length all the world shall witness it with astonishment. May we flee from that "wrath which is "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" and seek to secure an interest in those precious promises, that will assuredly be performed in due season!

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—7. These seventy persons were Ahab's descendants by several wives, probably including the sons of Jehoram. They resided at Samaria, as a more secure situation than Jezreel: or, as some think, they fled thither from Jezreel, when Jehoram was slain: attended by the rulers or elders of Jezreel, who might be supposed most attached to the interests of the family; and by those who had superintended their education. Doubtless, many of the elders were the same persons, who had put Naboth and his sons to death in obedience to Jezebel; and, their consciences and principles having been debauched by such services, they were equally ready to murder the family of Ahab at Jehu's command. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 8—14.) Jehu seems to have been aware of their base disposition; and he wrote letters to them, that by killing the young princes by their hands, he might avoid odium, and prevent further bloodshed, and forward the completion of his purpose: for as Samaria was strongly fortified, and defended by a much more powerful garrison than Jezreel; it might have stood out against him for a long time, and at last have been reduced with great difficulty, if the princes had courageously defended it. He was indeed commissioned to destroy all the house of Ahab, and he was not at all scrupulous about the means of doing it: otherwise he would have hesitated at employing men to serve him, with such base treachery and murder. But regardless of this, he, by an intimidating challenge, assured them, that if

8 And [n] there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps, at the entering in of the gate, [o] until the morning.

9 And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, [p] Ye *be* righteous: behold, [q] I conspired against my master and slew him; but who slew all these?

10 Know now, that there shall [r] fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for [s] the LORD hath done *that* which he spake [*] by his servant Elijah.

11 So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his [†] kinsfolks, and [t] his priests, until [u] he left him none remaining.

12 ¶ And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria. *And* as he *was* at the [‡] shearing house in the way,

13 Jehu [§] met with [x] the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who *are* ye? And they answered, We *are* the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to [‖] salute the children of the king, and the children of the queen.

14 And he said, [y] Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, *even* two and forty men; [z] neither left he any of them.

15 ¶ And when he was departed thence, he [*] lighted on [a] Jehonadab the son of [b] Rechab *coming* to meet him: and he [†] saluted him, and said to him, [c] Is thine heart right, as my heart *is* with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, [d] give *me* thine hand. And he gave *him* his hand; and [e] he took him up to him into the chariot.

16 And he said, [f] Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot.

n 2 Sam. xi. 18—21. 1 Kings xxi. 14. Mark vi. 28.
o Deut. xxi. 23.
p 1 Sam. xii. 3. Is. v. 3.
q See on ix. 14—24.—Hos. i. 4.
r 1 Sam. iii. 19. xv. 29. Jer. xliv. 28, 29. Zech. i. 6. Mark xiii. 31.
s See on ix. 7—10. 1 Kings xxi. 21—24. 29.
* Heb. *by the hand of.* ix. 36. *marg.*
† Or, *acquaintance.*
t xxiii. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 19. 40. xxii. 6. Rev. xix. 20. xx. 10.
u Josh. x. 30. xi. 8. 1 Kings xiv. 10. xv. 29. xvi. 11. xxi. 22. Job xviii. 19. Ps. cix. 13. Is. xiv. 21, 22.
‡ Heb. *house of shepherds binding sheep.*
§ Heb. *found.* x viii. 24. 29. ix. 21—27. 2 Chr. xxi. 17. xxii. 1—10.
‖ Heb. *the peace of.*
y 6. 10, 11. 1 King xx. 18.
z viii. 18. xi. 1. 2 Chr. xxii. 10.
* Heb. *found.* 13. ix. 21. *margins.*
a Jer. xxxv. 6. 8. 14—19. *Jonadab.*
b 1 Chr. ii. 55.
† Heb. *blessed.*—*See* on Gen. xxxi. 55. xlvii. 7. 10.
c 1 Chr. xii. 17, 18. John xxi. 15—17. Gal. iv 12.
d Ezra x. 19. Ez. xvii. 18. Gal. ii. 9.
e Acts viii. 31.
f 31. ix. 7—9. Num. xxiii. 4. xxiv. 13—16. 1 Kings xix. 10. 14. 17. Prov. xxvii. 2. Matt. vi. 2. Rom. x. 2.

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they attempted to protect their royal charge, the matter must be decided by the sword. He knew their strength, and he would have them to be aware of his resolution. As, however, they did not fear the vengeance and power of God, but the courage and success of Jehu, whom they despaired of resisting, they unreservedly submitted to him. Nor did they, when they received his second letter, so much as beg that others might be appointed to slay the young princes; but, as it seems, without reluctancy, at the first word, beheaded them all. Doubtless they had brought them up delicately, repeatedly avowed their attachment to them, and bestowed many flattering encomiums upon them. (*Note*, ix. 30—37.) They probably expected a reward from Jehu; but they seem to have been slain among the other adherents of Ahab's family (17).—Most of these princes must have been grown men, though some might be minors or children.

V. 8—10. The heads of Ahab's sons, having been laid in a place of publick concourse, would occasion much amazement and many enquiries; which gave Jehu an opportunity of addressing the multitude on the subject. He meant to abate the odium of his own conduct towards the family of Ahab, by contrasting it with the atrocious treachery and cruelty of these professed friends, who had been so entirely confided in by Ahab and his family. At the same time he reminded them, that the whole was a performance of the word of the Lord by Elijah, which would receive a still more exact completion: instead, therefore, of condemning the persons employed in this bloody work, they ought to adore the truth and justice of God, and submit to his will. Thus he likewise avowed his purpose of going on with what he had begun: but, as the commission given him by the prophet was not publicly known, he did not mention it. (*Notes*, ix. 5—1 25, 26. 1 *Kings* xxi. 17—26. *Hos.* i. 4, 5.)

V. 11. *Priests.*] These seem to have been the priests, or prophets, of Baal and other idols, who had eaten at Jezebel's table, and who presided over all the others. As they were strongly attached to Ahab's family, Jehu may be supposed to have put them to death from reasons of state, rather than from zeal against idolatry

V. 13, 14. All the sons of Jehoram, the father of Ahaziah, had been slain by the Philistines, during the life of Jehoram; (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxi. 16—20. xxii. 1;) but these persons seem to have been the sons of Ahaziah's brethren, or his nephews. They belonged however to the family of Ahab, and fell within Jehu's commission. (*Marg. Ref.* x.) They supposed Jehoram and Jezebel to be still living in prosperity, and were going in a company to see them: and thus they met their doom, and were slain by Jehu.

V. 15, 16. (*Notes, Jer.* xxxv.) Jehonadab was eminent for his cordial attachment to the worship of JEHOVAH, and for a life of strict piety, and deadness to the world. Having therefore heard that Jehu was executing the predicted vengeance upon the house of Ahab, he seems to have entertained hopes of a thorough reformation, and was desirous of giving his cordial support to so good a work: and he went to meet Jehu, who, with apparent piety, pronounced a blessing upon him; enquiring whether he met his sincere affection with reciprocal cordiality. (*Marg. Ref.*) Indeed some think, that Jehonadab first *blessed* Jehu, as Jacob had blessed Pharaoh; and that then Jehu addressed him. (*Note, Gen.* xlvii. 7.) Being, however, satisfied with Jehonadab's answer, he took him up into his

17 And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, [g] till he had destroyed him, [h] according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake to Elijah.

18 And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, [i] Ahab served Baal a little; *but* [k] Jehu shall serve him much.

19 Now therefore call unto me [l] all the prophets of Baal, [m] all his servants, and [n] all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. [o] But Jehu did *it* in subtlety, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.

20 And Jehu said, [*] Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed *it*.

21 And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. [p] And they came into [q] the house of Baal; and the house of Baal [r] was [†] full from one end to another.

22 And he said unto him that *was* over the vestry, Bring forth [s] vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.

23 And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only.

24 And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, [t] *If* any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, *he that letteth him go*, his life *shall be* for the life of him.

25 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu said to the guard, and to the captains, [u] Go in, *and* slay them; [v] let none come forth. And they smote them with the [‡] edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast *them* out, and went to the city of the house of Baal.

g *See on* 11. ix. 8.—Ps. cix. 8, 9. Mal. iv. 1.
h *See on* 10. ix. 25, 26. 1 Kings xxi. 21.
i iii. 2. 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32. xviii. 19. 22. 40.
k Job xiii. 7. Rom. iii. 8. Phil. iv. 8.
l iii. 13. 1 Kings xxii. 6.
m 21.
n 11.
o *See on* 18.—2 Cor. iv. 2. xi. 3. 13—15. xii. 16—18. 1 Thes. ii. 3.
* Heb. *Sanctify.* 1 Kings xviii. 19, 20. xxi. 12. Joel i. 14
p Joel iii. 2. 11—14. Rev. xvi. 16.
q 1 Kings xvi. 32.
r Judg. xvi. 27.
† Or, so *full* that they stood *mouth to mouth.*
s Ex. xxviii. 2. Matt. xxii. 11. 12.
t 1 Kings xx. 30—42.
u Ez. ix. 5, 6.
v Deut. xiii. 8—11. Ez. xxii. 21, 22. Rev. xvi. 6, 7.
‡ Heb. *mouth.*

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chariot; secretly elated, as it seems, with the concurrence of so pious a person, and expecting by his influence to acquire the full confidence of the people. But, had he intended effectually to reform religion, he would doubtless have sent for Elisha, to counsel him and concur with him; and his neglect, in that particular, was no favourable indication of his designs. He seems to have ostentatiously boasted of his "zeal for the LORD," and wanted to have it noticed: (*Notes, Num.* xxiv. 16. *Prov.* xxvii. 2:) but in reality he was influenced by carnal policy, united with a temporary conviction, and not by genuine, pious zeal.

V. 17. The rulers and elders of Samaria readily allowed Jehu and his company to enter the city, and surrendered all its strong holds and forces up to him: but as no exception is mentioned, when, it is said, "He slew all that "remained unto Ahab in Samaria;" it is generally and probably concluded, that he slew the traiterous rulers and elders also. Many love the treachery, who despise or detest the traitors; and none, when their purpose is answered, afterwards trust them. (*Note, Matt.* xxvii. 3—5.)

V. 18—20. The kings of Israel, who had seized the throne by conspiring against their predecessors, had commonly imitated or exceeded their idolatry; and this gave plausibility to Jehu's stratagem: but it was a measure which cannot be justified or at all excused. It would have been sufficient, if he had destroyed the temples and images of Baal, and put to death the known abettors and ringleaders of his worship, and every one who should afterwards attempt to revive it. But to draw them into a snare, by a direct falsehood, and to tempt them to commit idolatry, that he might slay them in the very act, was "to do "evil, that good might come;" and resembled the abhorred maxim of those who maintain, that faith is not to be kept with hereticks. (*Notes, Josh.* ix. 19, 20. 2 *Sam.* xiii. 22—29. *Rom.* iii. 5—8.)

V. 21. Numbers doubtless had been drawn in to bow the knee to Baal, in order to obtain the favour, or escape the displeasure of their rulers, who did not cordially approve of that idolatry, though indifferent about the worship of JEHOVAH. And these would keep away till Jehu's intentions were more manifest: but the *zealous* idolaters were judicially infatuated, and attended. Their number must have been small, compared with the state of things in the first days of Elijah: but Jehoram was not so zealous for the worship of Baal, as Ahab had been; and the incessant labours of Elisha, and the sons of the prophets, must have produced very great effects.—Some expositors, however, think that by the *servants* of Baal, (as in the original,) his worshippers in general are not meant, but the persons who ministered to the prophets and priests of Baal, as the Levites and Nethinims did to the sons of Aaron.

V. 22. *Vestments.*] The prophets, priests, and servants of Baal wore distinguishing garments, in which they were accustomed to perform their religious services. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Zeph.* i. 4.)

V. 23. *None of,* &c.] This was spoken in a dissembled zeal to preserve the purity of the worship of Baal: but had not the idolaters been judicially infatuated, they must have suspected some design concealed under such a precaution.

V. 24, 25. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xx. 41, 42.)—Perhaps, all

B. C. 884.

26 And they brought forth the [w] images out of the house of Baal, [x] and burned them.

27 And they [y] brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it [z] a draught-house unto this day.

28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

29 ¶ Howbeit *from* [a] the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who [b] made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, *to wit,* [c] the golden calves that *were* [d] in Beth-el, and that *were* in Dan.

30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, [e] Because thou hast done well in executing *that which is* right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of Ahab [f] according to all that *was* in mine heart, [g] thy children of the fourth *generation* shall sit on the throne of Israel.

31 But Jehu [†] took [h] no heed to [i] walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: *for* [k] he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

32 ¶ In those days the LORD began to [‡] cut Israel short: and [m] Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;

33 From Jordan [§] eastward, all [n] the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which *is* by the river Arnon, [‖] even Gilead and Bashan.

34 Now [o] the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

35 And Jehu [p] slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And [q] Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.

36 And [*] the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria, *was* twenty and eight years.

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[w] Heb. *statues.* 1 Kings xiv. 23. *marg.*
[x] xix. 18. 2 Sam. v. 21.
[y] xviii. 4. xxiii. 7—14. Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. vii. 5. 25. 1 Kings xvi. 32. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—7.
[z] Ezra vi. 11. Dan. ii. 5. iii. 29.
[a] xiii. 2. 11. xiv. 24. xv. 9. 18. 24. 28. xvii. 22. 1 Kings xii. 28—30. xiii. 33, 34. xiv. 16.
[b] Gen. xx. 9. Ex. xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 24. Mark vi. 24—26. 1 Cor. viii. 9—13. Gal. ii. 12, 13.
[c] Ex. xxxii. 4. Hos. viii. 5, 6. x. 5. xiii. 2.
[d] 1 Kings xii. 29.
[e] 1 Kings xxi. 29. Ez. xxix. 18—20. Hos. i. 4.
[f] Sam. xv. 18—24. 1 Kings xx. 42. xxi. 22.
[g] 35. xiii. 10. xiv. 23. xv. 8. 12.
[†] Heb. *observed not.*
[h] Deut. iv. 15. 23. 1 Kings ii. 4. Ps. xxxix. 1. cxix. 9. Prov. iv. 23. Heb. ii. 1. xii. 15.
[i] Deut. v. 33. x. 12, 13. 2 Chr. vi. 16. Neh. x. 29. Ps. lxxviii. 10. Ez. xxxvi. 27. Dan. ix. 10.
[k] *See on* 29. iii. 3. —1 Kings xiv. 16.
B. C. 860.
[‡] Heb. *cut off the ends of.*
[m] viii. 12. xiii. 22. 1 Kings xix. 17.
[§] Heb. *toward the rising of the sun.*
[n] Num. xxxii. 33—42. Deut. iii. 12—17. Josh. xiii. 9—12.
[‖] Or, *even to Gilead, &c.* Am. i. 3, 4.
[o] xii. 19. xiii. 8.—*See on* 1 Kings xi. 41. xiv. 19. 29.
[p] *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings i. 21. ii. 10. xiv. 20. 31.
[q] xiii. 1. 7, 8.
B. C. 856.
[*] Heb. *the days were.*

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the servants of Baal were not collected, nor all others separated, till the sacrifices were placed upon the altar; and therefore they were permitted to go through with their worship.—We may suppose that Jehonadab so much approved the substance of Jehu's service, that he was willing to allow for the informality with which it was performed: otherwise he certainly could not approve of his dissimulation, or his attendance on an idolatrous sacrifice with apparent satisfaction. When the captains and men, employed by Jehu, had slain all the priests and servants of Baal, within the precincts of the temple, (which a small company of armed men might readily do, some watching at the gates to intercept those who attempted to escape, and others entering sword in hand among a defenceless confined company;) and had made themselves sure that they were all dead, by casting out their bodies; they hastened to "the "city of the house of Baal" to complete Jehu's design. For it seems that the buildings around the temple of Baal and the courts of the temple, which had been erected for the accommodation of his priests and their attendants, were so numerous, as to form a kind of city by themselves.

V. 26, 27. *Marg. Ref.—A draught-house.* (27) The citizens thenceforth made a practice of carrying all the filth and rubbish of Samaria to that place, in contempt and abhorrence of the idolatry, which had been there committed. (*Marg. Ref.* z.)

V. 28. After this, the worship of Baal does not appear to have ever been restored in the kingdom of Israel, though other idolatry abounded.

V. 29—31. Had Jehu acted from genuine zeal for the honour of God, in destroying the worship of Baal, he would also have put down the worship of the golden calves; that idolatry being as expressly forbidden by the *second,* as the other was by the *first* commandment. But that was a politick and profitable sin, and it appeared dangerous to attempt any thing against it. In his general conduct also "he took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD ... with "all his heart," so that his religious zeal was partial, politick, and selfish. The Lord, however, sent a prophet to assure him, that he had done right, in executing vengeance on Ahab's family, as well as in destroying the worship of Baal; and to promise him a suitable recompence. Accordingly, his family sat on the throne of Israel longer than any other family did, either before or after; as the fourth generation reached to above one hundred years from the time when Jehu ascended the throne. (*Notes,* xv. 8. 12.) Yet, in other respects these very actions of Jehu were deemed deserving of punishment. (*Note, Hos.* i. 4, 5.) The repetition used concerning Jeroboam, "who made "Israel to sin," emphatically shews the extreme criminality of his conduct in the sight of God, as thus opening the way, and setting the example, for all the idolatries of Israel, till that kingdom was subverted. He was, in some respects, answerable for the whole.

V. 32—36. Hazael *smote* that region, which lay east of Jordan: but he did not desolate it: this was afterwards done by the kings of Assyria. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* v. 25, 26.) At this time he committed those barbarities which Elisha had predicted, and we may suppose that the miseries of Israel were very great. (*Notes,* viii. 12, 13. *Am.* i. 3—5.) But from the period, when Jehu ceased to do the work assigned him by God, his actions and might are no further noticed in sacred Scripture, and the account of his reign is very compendious. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

How soon are the most flourishing families and kingdoms desolated, when God arises to execute his judgments!—Such as bequeath his blessing to their children in

CHAP. XI.

Athaliah murders the seed royal of Judah: but Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, is preserved by Jehosheba in the temple, 1—3. Jehoiada the high priest, in the seventh year, having taken proper measures, anoints and crowns him, 4—12. Athaliah, pressing into the temple, is seized and slain, 13—16. Jehoiada makes a covenant between the LORD, the king, and the people; and destroys the worship of Baal, 17, 18. Joash reigns in peace, and the people rejoice, 19—21.

answer to their prayers, and as a gracious recompence of their faith and charity, provide in a far better manner for them, than those who leave estates to their descendants, burdened with the indignation of the Lord, for their injustice, oppression, and impiety.—The selfishness of the human heart gives peculiar energy to those temptations, which powerfully assail their hopes and fears as to this life. Where this principle has the ascendancy, men may be induced to such treachery and cruelty, as before they never thought of: and those, who influence their inferiors to practise iniquity *for* them, need not to be surprised if they commit similar crimes *against* them. But nothing, except faith, fear of God, love to his name, and the hope of eternal life, can give a decided victory over all temptations; and enable us to obey the Lord, and venture all consequences in his service.—Those who have done things really, or apparently evil, are often disposed to draw in others to act in a manner more evidently and grossly iniquitous; and then to conclude, that they shall be acquitted by righteous judges, not being themselves so atrociously criminal. Yet the law of God, and not any conduct of man, is the rule by which our actions are to be judged: and, though tempters generally prove accusers, a moiety of the guilt of every crime perpetrated at their instance, properly belongs to them.—We readily perceive the propriety of submitting where we are unable to withstand, and of taking warning by the examples of those who have in vain opposed the will of earthly princes; at least we are naturally disposed at any price to pacify their displeasure. But are not sinners sensible that they cannot stand against the indignation of the Almighty? And yet they persist in rebellion against him, and will not take proper measures, or make proper submissions to avert his wrath and recover his favour!—If we call ourselves the servants of earthly potentates, they expect that our obedience to their mandates should evince the sincerity of our professions: and if we are the Lord's, we must shew that we are devoted to him by doing his will; and he never did, nor can, command any thing unjust or unreasonable.—In the most awful transactions however, even though attended by the basest villanies, the truth and justice of God ought to be acknowledged; nay, true faith assures us of them, even when to us imperceptible: for no word of God can fall to the ground, but all will be performed; and then his glory will be conspicuous to the whole world.—We should dread and abhor the man who had murdered our parents or children, the wife of our bosom, or our beloved friends; and who had aimed a dagger at our hearts, and having repeatedly wounded us, still avowed his purpose of assassinating us. But when we look back upon our deceased relatives, or forward to our own dissolution: when we reflect on the sufferings which we or ours endure or fear, or on those miseries which render the earth like one great hospital, slaughter-house, and burying ground; when we consider the innumerable millions of human bodies, which have been consigned to the tomb, and are reverted to the dust; and the immense multitudes daily following: yea, when our believing thoughts make excursions into the invisible world, and survey the miseries of fallen angels, and departed souls consigned to the place of torment: or when we look forward to the resurrection and the final judgment, and view the innumerable millions of the wicked, appalled with horror and despair, attending to the awful sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, pre-"pared for the devil, and his angels:" in short, when the aggregate of all the misery in the whole creation, through eternal ages, has been considered, and the question occurs, "Who slew all these?" the answer will be, SIN! TRANSGRESSION OF GOD'S LAW has made all this havock, and introduced all this misery into his most perfect creation; and, worse than all this, SIN has crucified the LORD OF GLORY. Shall we then lodge this viper in our bosom, and madly seek for happiness from the cause of all possible misery? Rather we should abhor and dread it with that complete detestation, which would render its distant approach more formidable to us than any temporal pain or affliction imaginable.

V. 15—36.

Men of eminent godliness should countenance every work of publick reformation; and wise men will value their presence and assistance. But they are frequently too hasty in their concurrence, and too sanguine in their expectations, when those in exalted stations stand forth as the professed friends of religion: and thus they are drawn in, to sanction those wrong measures which they are unable to prevent, to the discredit of the common cause.—Hypocrites and self-deceivers are often ready to say to eminently pious persons, "Come and see our zeal for the "LORD;" when they are only aiming, by the assistance of a party, to establish their own authority and reputation, or other secular interests. And when men's professions are very strong, their progress very rapid, and their zeal tarnished with ostentation, or leavened with subtlety and a fickle or fierce demeanor; they may justly be suspected, and need to be watched and admonished by those, who would avoid subsequent painful reflections. Vehemence and severity indeed were in some measure consistent with the awful executions, which a righteous God commanded in these ancient times: yet the manner, in which his orders were performed, might indicate a very improper spirit. Zeal, however, in the cause of God, is worthless, except it be tempered with humility, meekness, kindness, and a peaceable frame of mind: as, furious contentions and bitter recriminations cannot adorn the gospel, or meet the divine acceptance; for neither the wrath nor the falsehood of man can "work the righteousness of God." (*Notes, Luke* ix. 51—56. *Jam.* iii. 13—18.)—Hypocrites betray themselves by their earnestness about one part of religion, and their indifference about others: and generally profitable or plausible sins are spared, while those, which would injure them with their party are cast off. Yet the

AND when [a] Athaliah [b] the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose, [c] and destroyed all the [*] seed royal.

2 But [d] Jehosheba, the daughter of king [e] Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took [f] Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons *which were* slain; and [g] they hid him, *even* him and his nurse, [h] in the bed-chamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

3 And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years. [i] And Athaliah did reign over the land.

4 And [k] the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the [l] rulers over hundreds, with [m] the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD, and [n] made a covenant with them, and [o] took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.

[a] 2 Chr. xxii. 10. xxiv. 7.
[b] viii. 26. ix. 27.
[c] Matt. ii. 13. 16. xxi. 38, 39.
[*] Heb. *seed of the kingdom.* xxv 25. *marg.* Jer. xli. 1.
[d] 2 Chr. xxii. 11. *Jehoshabeath.*
[e] viii. 16. *Jehoram.*
[f] xii. 1, 2. *Jehoash.*
[g] viii. 19. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. vii. 6, 7. xxxvii. 35. lxv. 8, 9. Jer. xxxiii. 17. 21. 26.
[h] *See on* 1 Kings vi. 5, 6. 8. 10. Jer. xxxv. 2. Ez. xl. 45.
[i] 2 Chr. xxii. 12. Ps. xii. 8. Mal. iii. 15.
B. C. 878.
[k] 2 Chr. xxiii. 1, 9. 1 Chr. ix. 13.
[l] 17. xxiii. 3. Josh. xxiv. 25 1 Sam. xviii. 3 xxiii. 18. 2 Chr. xv. 12. xxix. 10 xxxiv. 31, 32. Neh. ix. 38.
[m] Acts v. 24. 26.
[n] Gen. l. 25. 1 Kings xviii. 10. Neh. v. 12. x. 29.

church, and the world, may reap advantage from their partial obedience: and God will not remain as it were indebted to them; but will recompense their external services with external rewards, and at the same time visit their sins with deserved punishments. Much more then will he recompense the upright services of his believing people, who may be encouraged by this consideration to abound in his work.—The servants of Satan are often open enough in avowing what master they serve; it is therefore shameful and deplorable, when the servants of the Lord are unwilling that men should know that they are employed by him.—If the wicked could so separate the people of God from their company, as to let none remain in it, we might be sure that destruction was preparing for them: but what blessed ordinances should we have, if no servants of sin and Satan crept in among the worshippers of the LORD! Generally, if not always, we must say, "Ye are clean, but not all." Nay, many are useful to the souls of others, who themselves prove apostates and cast-aways. The Lord grant that this may not be the case with the writer, or any of the readers, of these observations!

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. (*Notes*, ix. 27, 28. x. 13, 14.) It is probable that Athaliah was left in authority, when Ahaziah went to visit Jehoram: and, being informed that he was slain, she proceeded to destroy "all the seed royal," or the *seed of the kingdom;* that is, all who could claim the kingdom, as descended from David's royal race. This seems to include all the males whom Athaliah knew to belong to that family, especially in the line of Solomon and Rehoboam, without excepting even her own grandchildren by Ahaziah. Some think, an impious revenge actuated her; and that, as God had ordered the family of Ahab, (whose daughter she was,) to be destroyed; so she was determined to extirpate that family which he especially favoured. But it is more certain that she was influenced by ambition, and desired to reign without a competitor; and to be able to defend herself against Jehu, by whom she must think herself marked for destruction. By this concurrence of events, Jehoshaphat's alliance with the house of Ahab proved almost the total ruin of his family; and of the house of David, from whence the Messiah was to descend! To appearance, and in Athaliah's intention, it was exterminated; and indeed that branch, which descended from Jehoshaphat, was so interwoven with Ahab's devoted family, that without a favourable construction of the sentence, none of them could have been spared: for Jehoshaphat's other sons had been slain by Jehoram, as soon as he had got possession of the throne, so that all who survived were the descendants of Ahab, as well as of Jehoshaphat. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxi. 4.) But by an act of grace, as it were, Joash, being both a branch of the house of David, and of that of Ahab, was considered as belonging to the former family, and snatched as "a brand from the "burning." (*Notes*, iii. 7. 1 *Kings* xxii. 1—4.)—Some think that he was left for dead among the other victims of Athaliah's ambition; but being taken away, he revived and was recovered: or else he was removed when they were slaying the others, and either was not sought for, or could not be found. Jehosheba, though the daughter of Jehoram, (whether by Athaliah, or some other wife is not certain,) had been married some time before to Jehoiada the high priest; God thus preparing for the protection of Joash, before the danger became apparent.—Jehosheba concealed Joash in some of the chambers set apart for the use of the priests, within the precincts of the temple, where he remained in safety; Athaliah not suspecting that any male branch of the family survived.

V. 3. It seems that the degenerate race of Judah did not oppose the usurpation of this vile woman! We are informed of nothing respecting Athaliah's conduct, during her continuance in authority, but that she supported the worship of Baal, as a genuine daughter of Jezebel.

V. 4. Jehoiada, as high priest, and as having the lawful heir to the crown under his care, was fully authorized to act on this occasion. Indeed Jehosheba herself had a far better right to the throne, than Athaliah.—All the persons, whom Jehoiada first employed, seem to have been Levites; though others, by their means, were afterwards brought to concur. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxiii. 1, 2.) For the Levites were numbered, and arranged in companies under their several heads, called *captains*, or *leaders;* and they attended upon the service of the temple, in rotation, by weekly courses. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxiii. 2—6. xxv. 1— xxvi. 6—12, *v.* 6.) These were first informed by Jehoiada that the king's son was in the temple, and that he intended to place him on the throne: and he proposed to make a solemn agreement with them before God, to which they readily acceded, and bound themselves by oath to fidelity. Perhaps Athaliah's government had grown intolerably oppressive; or Jehoiada perceived that its continuance threatened the destruction of religion: therefore the priests, and the chief of the Levites, as most immediately engaged for the support of that cause, went among their brethren, to prepare their minds to attempt a deliverance.

5 And he commanded them, saying, This *is* the thing that ye shall do: a third part of you [p] that enter in on the sabbath, shall even be keepers of [q] the watch of the king's house;

6 And a third part *shall be* at [r] the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, [*] that it be not broken down.

7 And two [†] parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath, even they shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king.

8 And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and [t] he that cometh within the ranges, let him be slain: and be ye with the king as he goeth out, and as he cometh in.

9 And [u] the captains over the hundreds did according to all *things* that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.

10 And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give [x] king David's spears and shields, that *were* in the temple of the LORD.

11 And the guard stood, [y] every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right [‡] corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, *along* [z] by the altar and the temple.

12 And [a] he brought forth the king's son, and [b] put the crown upon him, and *gave him* [c] the testimony: and they made him king, and [d] anointed him; and they [e] clapped their hands, [f] and said, [§] God save the king!

13 ¶ And [g] when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard, *and* of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD.

14 And when she looked, behold, the king stood by [h] a pillar, as the manner *was*, and [i] the princes and the

p 1 Chr. ix. 25. xxiii. 3—6. 32. xxiv. 3—6. Luke i. 8, 9.
q 19. xvi. 18. 1 Kings x. 5. Jer. xxvi. 10. Ez. xliv. 2, 3. xlvi. 2, 3.
r 1 Chr. xxvi. 13—19. 2 Chr. xxiii. 4, 5.
* Or, *from breaking up.*
† Or, *companies.* Heb. *hands.*
s *See on* 5. 2 Chr. xxiii. 6.
t 15. Ex. xxi. 14. 1 Kings ii. 28—31. 2 Chr. xxiii. 7.
u *See on* 4. 2 Chr. xxiii. 8.
x 1 Sam. xxi. 9. 2 Sam. viii. 7. 1 Chr. xxvi. 26, 27. 2 Chr. v. 1. xxiii. 9, 10.
y ‡ Heb. *shoulder.*
z Ex. xl. 6. 2 Chr. vi. 12. Ez. viii. 16. Joel ii. 17. Matt. xxiii. 35. Luke xi. 51.
a 2. 4. 2 Chr. xxiii. 11.
b 2 Sam. xii. 30. 1 Chr. xx. 2. Ps. xxi. 3. lxxxix. 39. cxxxii. 18. Matt. xxvii. 29. Heb. ii. 9. Rev. xix. 12.
c Ex. xxv. 16. xxxi. 18. Deut. xvii. 18—20. Ps. lxxviii. 5. Is. viii. 16. 20.
d ix. 3. 1 Sam. x. 1. xvi. 13. 2 Sam. ii. 4. v. 3. 1 Kings i. 39. 1 Chr. xxix. 22. Acts iv. 27. 2 Cor. i. 21. Heb. i. 9.
e Ps. xlvii. 1. xcviii. 8. Is. lv. 12.
f 1 Kings i. 34. Ps. lxxii. 15—17. Dan. iii. 9. vi. 21. Matt. xxi. 9.
§ Heb. *Let the king live.* 1 Sam. x. 24. 2 Sam. xvi. 16. *margins.*
g 2 Chr. xxiii. 12—15.
h xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 31.
i 10, 11. *See on* Num. x. 1—10.

V. 5—9. The Levites attended in their courses every week; one company coming in at the beginning of the sabbath, and another going out at the close of it. But Jehoiada employed both companies on this occasion; such only excepted, as were necessary to perform the ordinary services.—By "the king's house" some understand the chamber in which Joash resided; others the royal palace, from which there was an entrance into the court of the temple. This was guarded by one division of those who came in on the sabbath to prevent a surprise; another was set to guard "the gate of *Sur*," or, *the foundation;* and another to protect the temple and courts from injury; or, as the original may mean, *to guard the breach*, which had been made in the temple, or its out-buildings. (2 *Chr.* xxiv. 7.) Others, of those Levites who went out on the sabbath, were stationed to guard the king himself, with orders to slay any one who attempted to come within their ranks. Two-thirds are mentioned of these Levites; as some of them might have urgent calls to return to their families. These arrangements no doubt were supposed suitable, and sufficient to secure the temple from being polluted by the guards or favourers of Athaliah, whilst Jehoiada and his sons were engaged in crowning and anointing Joash. (*Notes*, 12. 2 *Chr.* xxiii. 11.)—By employing the Levites almost exclusively, all suspicion was precluded: and, as the throne belonged to the family of David, not only by hereditary succession, but by the *special appointment of God;* and as these rights, and all the interests of the kingdom of Judah, and even the worship of God, were basely trampled upon by a murderous and idolatrous woman, of the devoted house of Ahab; they were fully justified in these decided measures against her. Perhaps they were likewise assured of the concurrence of the people, when matters were ripe for their interposition.

V. 10. It is probable, that these were arms, which David had taken from his conquered enemies, and dedicated to the Lord, by way of ascribing the honour of his success to him. (*Marg. Ref.* x.) This tends to confirm the interpretation before given, concerning these captains: namely, that they were not military officers, as some suppose; but the leaders of the several courses and companies of the Levites, who did not usually wear the weapons of war. (*Note*, 4.)

V. 12. Coronation is not before this expressly mentioned, in the appointment of any king, either in Judah or Israel; but it seems to have been customary: for the crown, as one of the insignia of royalty, is repeatedly mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.* b.) No doubt, "the testimony" signifies the *book of the law;* and Joash was instructed by this significant action, that he received his authority from God, and was accountable to him for it, according to the rule of his word. (*Note*, *Ex.* xxxi. 18.) He was also anointed, in token of his divine appointment to the kingdom; as Athaliah's usurpation had interrupted the succession. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 *Kings* i. 38, 39, *v.* 39. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 21—25.) When this had been done, not only the priests and Levites, but the people who had witnessed the transaction, shouted for joy and clapped their hands, and wished their king life and prosperity. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, *Matt.* xxi. 8—11.)

V. 13—16. Athaliah, after the manner of her mother Jezebel, instead of fleeing with feminine timidity, when she heard the noise and suspected the occasion; went directly into the temple, unattended by a guard, as if she could by

trumpeters by the king; and [k] all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, [l] Treason, treason!

15 But Jehoiada the priest commanded the [m] captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges; and him that [n] followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, [o] Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD.

16 And they laid hands on her: and she went by the way [p] by the which the horses came into the king's house: and [q] there was she slain.

17 ¶ And Jehoiada [r] made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people; [s] between the king also and the people.

18 And all the people of the land [t] went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images [u] brake they in pieces thoroughly, and [x] slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars: and the priest [y] appointed [*] officers over the house of the LORD.

19 And he [z] took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came [a] by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house: and [b] he sat on the throne of the kings.

20 And all the people of the land [c] rejoiced, and the city was in quiet; and they [d] slew Athaliah with the sword *beside* the king's house.

21 [e] Seven years old *was* Joash when he began to reign.

her presence overawe and confound the conspirators: but by this rashness she rushed upon her death. (*Note*, ix. 30—37.)—The people, it seems, were assembled, perhaps to celebrate some of their solemn feasts; and they, with their princes or magistrates, cordially united with Jehoiada, and the priests and Levites. When Athaliah saw Joash stand in the place appropriated to the king's use, she was aware of what had taken place; and expressed her abhorrence of the supposed treason by word and deed, in hopes of inducing the people to take her part. But her conduct had been so odious and unnatural, that none favoured her; and at the word of Jehoiada she suffered the punishment due to her complicated crimes. Doubtless, Jehoiada acted in all this business, by the direction and according to the will of God.—It is probable that the Levites executed the sentence; and great care was taken not to pollute with blood the court of the temple.

V. 17—20. Jehoiada embraced this opportunity of engaging the young king and the people, in the most solemn manner, to renew their national covenant with the Lord, that they would worship and serve him alone; as well as perform their reciprocal duties to each other in the fear of God. As the protector and near relation of Joash, he was authorized to act for him, and the whole compact was deliberately ratified, as in the presence of God. (*Notes*, xxiii. 3. *Deut.* xxix. 10—15. *Josh.* xxiv. 25. 2 *Chr.* xv. 12—15. *Neh.* x. 1.) When this was concluded, they proceeded to destroy the worship of Baal, which Athaliah had established in Judah; breaking down the idolatrous temple and images, and slaying the priest of Baal at his altars; without imitating or emulating Jehu's subtlety in detecting his worshippers. (*Note*, x. 18—20.) The people were greatly rejoiced at this happy revolution, and matters were soon brought to a quiet settlement. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxiii.) Nothing is recorded of the burial of Athaliah; but in every respect she was treated with neglect and abhorrence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

When the thirst of dominion predominates, it extinguishes both common humanity and natural affection, and steels the hearts of parents, yea of *mothers*, against their own children or descendants. Nor can the most humane conceive how they should act, if brought within the magnetick influence of powerful temptations, through opening prospects of gratifying ambition and the thirst after power and dignity, united with fear, envy, resentment, or other vehement passions. We should therefore repress the first emotions of this aspiring temper, and pray without ceasing to be kept out of the way of temptation. And we may also learn to be thankful to God, for restraining others and ourselves, from acting forth all the desperate wickedness of the human heart, which otherwise would produce effects unspeakably horrid.—What fatal consequences flow from matrimonial connexions, or intimate acquaintance, with atrocious sinners! The mischiefs, which may thus be entailed upon children and remote posterity, cannot be ascertained; and may extend even to the ruin of the interests of true religion, in those places where before it flourished. These reflections should add energy to the Lord's prohibition of these incongruous alliances. Yet, he mixes his severest judgments, upon his professed people and offending servants, with mercy: in the midst of opposition he provides for the performance of his promises: and the extremities, to which his cause may be reduced, are permitted, to illustrate the glory of his power and truth, in preserving and recovering it.—The most successful villany will be short-lived: and, though in that little time dreadful havock may be made in society, and irreligion or false religion may *apparently* be established upon the ruins of true godliness; yet, the cause of God cannot be kept down, but, like the fabled Phœnix, it will revive from its ashes with renewed youth and vigour.—One pious man may, on

CHAP. XII.

Jehoash reigns well so long as Jehoiada lives, 1—3. He gives orders that the temple should be repaired; yet the priests neglect the service; but he devises a plan for defraying the expense, and completes the work, 4—16. He gives the consecrated treasures to Hazael, to divert him from assaulting Jerusalem, 17, 18. He is slain by his servants, and succeeded by his son Amaziah, 19—21.

a-kx. 27. xi. 1, 3, 4. 21. 2 Chr. xxiv. 1.
b xi. 2. 1 Chr. iii. 11. *Joash.*

1 IN [a] the seventh year of Jehu, [b] Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

c xiv. 3. 2 Chr. xxiv. 2. 17—22. xxv. 2. xxvi. 4.

2 And [c] Jehoash did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD all his days, wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

d xiv. 4. xviii 4. 1 Kings xv. 14. xxii. 43. 2 Chr. xxxi. 1.
e xxii. 4. 2 Chr. xxix. 4—11. xxxv. 2.
f 18. 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr. xviii. 11. 2 Chr. xv. 18. xxxi. 12.
* Or, *holy things.* Heb. *holinesses.* Lev. v. 15, 16. xxvii. 12—27. 31.
g Ex. xxx. 12—16. 2 Chr. xxiv. 9, 10.
† Heb. *of the souls of his estimation.* Lev. xxvii. 2—8.
h Ex. xxv. 1, 2. xxxv. 5. 22. 29. xxxvi. 3. 1 Chr. xxix. 3—9. 17. Ezra i. 6. ii. 69. vii. 16. viii 25—28. Luke xxi. —4.
‡ Heb. *ascendeth upon the heart of a man.*
i 2 Chr. xxiv. 5.
k 12. xxii. 5, 6. 1 Kings xi. 27. 2 Chr. xxiv. 7. Is. lviii. 12.

3 But [d] the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

4 ¶ And Jehoash [e] said to the priests, All [f] the money of the [*] dedicated things that is brought into the house of the LORD, *even* [g] the money of every one that passeth *the account*, the money [†] that every man is set at, [h] *and* all the money that [‡] cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the LORD,

5 Let [i] the priests take *it* to them, every man of his acquaintance; and [k] let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.

some emergencies, become an instrument of most extensive good: especially when regard to the glory and worship of God, is united with prudent contrivance and well concerted measures.—In urgent cases, general rules of external propriety may be dispensed with: and ministers ought always to lead the way in opposing the prevalence of wickedness, and in promoting equity, and submission to lawful governors, as well as in promoting true religion.—To what peculiar dangers are those in exalted stations exposed, through the ambition, treachery, and cruelty of men! We may therefore be thankful to be placed with our families in an obscure situation, beneath envy or jealousy.—Princes should be reminded, when entrusted with authority, of their accountableness to God for the use of it: and every opportunity should be embraced to enforce a conscientious regard to his word.

V. 13—21.

Evil will hunt out the wicked to destroy them; and they are often hardened and infatuated to rush upon their own destruction.—The most abandoned, on some occasions, express abhorrence at the supposed crimes of others, especially when committed against themselves: but it is neither treason, nor cruelty, to execute vengeance upon usurpers and parricides, and to restore the authority to its rightful possessor.—As "one sinner destroyeth much good;" so the removal of one ringleader in iniquity may prepare the way for great reformation.—It is our duty to engage ourselves and each other, and all those over whom we have acquired influence, in as firm and solemn a manner as possible, to be the Lord's people: and when we begin with a due regard to religion, relative duties will be the better understood and performed. Yet they should be plainly declared and enforced, without the exception of those which subsist between the prince and people.—The rectifying of scandalous abuses, and the punishment of notorious criminals, form an introduction to the revival of true godliness. External regularity will afterwards more easily be re-established; and the effectual blessing of God may be expected. The way for a people to be joyful and at peace, is to engage cordially in the service of God; for "the voice of joy and thanksgiving, is in the dwellings of "the righteous:" but "there is no peace, saith my God, "to the wicked."

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 2, 3. Jehoiada acquired such influence over Joash, or Jehoash, by his services and counsels, in his younger years, as retained him in good behaviour, so long as he lived to give him advice. But the latter part of his life, after Jehoiada's death, was extremely wicked; and all the good, of his best days, was of that kind which springs from transient convictions, and external influence, or that which hypocrites do to be seen of men. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxiv. 17—26.) His reign, however, should by no means be numbered with those of the worst kings of Judah: for he repressed idolatry, and maintained the worship at the temple; though he did not abolish the irregular worship of God in the high places; which indeed was never done till the days of Hezekiah. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* xviii. 4. 22.) Jehoiada lived and retained his influence, during two-thirds at least of the years that Joash reigned.

V. 4, 5. The temple had been suffered to go to decay, during the reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah, and the usurpation of Athaliah: and her sons, doubtless encouraged by her, had impiously broken down some part of the buildings, to adorn the house of Baal with the most costly materials of the temple; as well as spoiled its consecrated treasures to enrich those of their idols. (2 *Chr.* xxiv. 7.) But Jehoash, having had his life preserved in the precincts of the temple, seems to have had a strong desire of seeing it restored to its ancient splendour: whilst Jehoiada perhaps was more intent to promote the *internal* part of true religion.—The money, which Jehoash ordered the priests to collect from the people, seems to have arisen from the sale of such firstlings as were not fit for sacrifice; from the half shekel apiece levied of all the people; from the redemption of things dedicated; from the redemption of those who were vowed to the Lord by a singular vow; and from voluntary contributions. (*Marg. Ref.* g, h.—*Notes, Ex.* xiii. 11—16. xxx. 11—16. *Lev.* xxvii. 2—27.)—As some of these were the dues of the priests, whose incomes

B. C. 856.
* Heb. *twentieth year and third year.*
l 1 Sam. ii. 29, 30. 2 Chr. xxix. 34. Is. lvi. 10—12. Mal. i. 10. Phil. ii. 21. 1 Pet. v. 2.
m 2 Chr. xxiv. 5, 6.
n 2. xi. 4. 2 Chr. xxiii. 1. xxiv. 16.
o 1 Chr. xxi. 3.

6 But it was *so, that* in the * three and twentieth year of king Jehoash l the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.

7 Then m king Jehoash called for n Jehoiada the priest, and the *other* priests, and said unto them, o Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no *more* money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.

8 And the priests consented to receive no *more* money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house.

p 2 Chr. xxiv. 8. Mark xii. 41.
q 2 Chr. xxiv. 10.
r xxii. 4. xxiii. 4. xxv. 18. 1 Chr. xv. 18. 24. Jer. xxxv. 4. lii. 24.
† Heb. *threshold.* Ps. lxxxiv. 10. *marg.*

9 But Jehoiada the priest p took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it q beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and r the priest that kept the † door put therein all the money *that was* brought into the house of the LORD.

10 And it was *so*, when they saw that *there was* much money in the chest, that s the king's ‡ scribe and the high priest came up, and they ‖ put up in bags, and told the money *that was* found in the house of the LORD.

s xix. 2. xxii. 3. 12. 2 Sam. viii. 17. xx. 25.
‡ Or, *secretary.*
‖ Heb. *bound up.* v. 23.

11 And they t gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they ‖ laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD;

t xxii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. xxiv. 11, 12. xxxiv. 9—11.
‖ Heb. *brought it forth.*

12 And to u masons and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that * was laid out, for the house to repair *it*.

u 1 Kings v. 17, 18. Ezra iii. 7. v. 8. Luke xxi. 5.
* Heb. *went forth.*

13 Howbeit x there were not made for the house of the LORD y bowls of silver, snuffers, basons, z trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money *that was* brought into the house of the LORD:

x 2 Chr. xxiv. 14.
y *See on* Num. vii. 13, 14. 1 Kings vii. 48—50. Ezra i. 9—11.
z *See on* Num. x. 2.

14 But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD.

15 Moreover a they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: b for they dealt faithfully.

a xxii. 7.
b 2 Chr. xxxiv. 12. Neh. vii. 2. Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xvi. 1. 10, 11. 1 Cor. iv. 2. 3 John 5.

16 The c trespass-money and sin-money was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests'.

c Lev. v. 15—18. vii. 7. Num. v. 8—10. xviii. 8. Hos. iv. 8.
d *See on* viii. 12—15.

17 ¶ Then d Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought e against Gath, and

e 1 Sam. xxvii. 2. 1 Kings ii. 39, 40. 1 Chr. viii. 13. xviii. 1.

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must have been greatly diminished by the defection of the ten tribes; that circumstance might render them more disaffected to the business, and negligent in it.

V. 6—12. Jehoash's orders must have been very long neglected; for nothing was done effectually, till the twenty-third year of his reign, or the thirtieth of his life. It is probable, that the priests appropriated considerable sums to their own use, which they received for the repair of the temple; till the people lost all confidence in them, and would give them no more money on that account. Jehoiada himself appears to have been remiss in this affair; but his great age would necessarily render him less capable of active services. (*Note, 2 Chr.* xxiv. 15, 16.) The priests, however, readily consented to the alteration proposed by Jehoash; and a proclamation having been made for the collection of a half shekel from each male above twenty years of age; (*2 Chr.* xxiv. 6. 9. *Note, Ex.* xxx. 11—16;) and a chest so placed, that the money might be either put in by those that brought it, or by the priests in their presence; large sums were soon collected, and applied by Jehoiada and the king's secretary to the repairs of the temple. (*Marg. Ref.*)—As the chest is said in Chronicles, to have been "set without at the gate," and that the "princes "and people cast" the money into it; it has been thought, that the chest was at first placed in the inner court; so that the money still generally passed through the hands of the priests: but that not being satisfactory, it was removed to a situation, where all had ready access to it. (*2 Chr.* xxiv. 8. 10.)

V. 13—15. It seems that orders were given to the workmen, that the repairs of the temple should first be completed, before any vessels were made; though it is probable that these were much wanted: but when the workmen had set the temple "in its state," they punctually brought the surplus of the money to the king and Jehoiada, without requiring to be called to an account; and then such vessels were made, as had been taken away by Athaliah and her sons. (*2 Chr.* xxiv. 7. 14.) The conduct of these workmen was highly commendable; and formed a contrast to that of the remissness and selfishness of the priests and Levites as above noticed.—*Silver.* (13) *Notes, Ex.* xxv. 23—30. *Num.* vii. 13, 14.

V. 16. (*Marg. Ref.* c.) Besides the money paid as amends to the priests for trespasses committed in holy things; it is thought that persons, living at a distance, sent money to them to purchase trespass-offerings and sin-offerings, and sacrifice them in their name. And, as they commonly sent more than the sacrifice cost, the surplus became a perquisite, under the name of trespass-money and sin-money. (*Hos.* iv. 8.)

V. 17, 18. Probably, the expedition of Hazael, here intended, is the same as that of the Syrians, which is recorded in Chronicles: (*2 Chr.* xxiv. 23, 24:) and, if so, the success of it, and the calamities brought on Judah by

took it: and Hazael set his face [g] to go up to Jerusalem.

18 And Jehoash king of Judah [h] took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold *that was* found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and in the king's house, and sent *it* to Hazael king of Syria: and he [*] went away from Jerusalem.

19 And [i] the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20 And [k] his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash, in [†] the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.

21 For [l] Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of [m] Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and [n] Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

f Jer. xlii. 15. Luke ix. 51. 53.
g 2 Chr. xxiv. 23, 24.
h xviii. 15, 16. 1 Kings xv. 18. 2 Chr. xvi. 2.
* Heb. *went up.*
i viii. 23.—*See on* 1 Kings xi. 41. xiv. 19. 29.
k xiv. 5. 2 Chr. xxiv. 24, 25. xxv. 27. xxxiii. 24.
† Or, *Beth-millo.* Judg. ix. 6. 2 Sam. v. 9. 1 Kings xi. 27.
l 2 Chr. xxiv. 26. *Savad.*
m 2 Chr. xxiv. 26. *Shimrith.*
n 2 Chr. xxiv. 27.

CHAP. XIII.

Jehoahaz reigns wickedly over Israel, 1, 2. Israel is oppressed by Hazael, but relieved in answer to Jehoahaz's prayer, 3—7. Jehoahaz dies, and is succeeded by his son Joash, 8, 9; who reigns wickedly, dies, and is succeeded by his son Jeroboam, 10—13. An account of a visit paid by Joash to Elisha on his death-bed, who by a sign assured him of three victories over the Syrians, 14—19. Elisha dies; the Moabites invade the land; and a dead man is raised to life, on touching his bones, 20, 21. Hazael, who had oppressed Israel, dies, and Joash gains three victories over his son Ben-hadad, 22—25.

B. C. 856.

IN the [*] three and twentieth year of Joash, the son of Ahaziah, king of

* Heb. *twentieth year, and third year.* viii. 26. x. 36. xi. 4. 21.

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it, were far greater, than this short account seems to describe them. It took place, however, after Jehoash's apostasy; and he made no scruple of spoiling the temple of the remains of its treasures, to purchase Hazael's departure. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxiv. 17—22.)

V. 20, 21. The Syrians left Jehoash "in great dis-"eases:" and his servants, (probably some relations or friends of Jehoiada, who deeply resented the murder of his son Zechariah,) took that opportunity of slaying him.—Joash was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings; 'because he had forsaken God, 'and slain one of his prophets.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxiv. 25—27.) Millo seems to have been a general name of publick buildings for convening the people; and this Millo in the way to Silla, was a distinct place from Millo in the city of David. (*Marg.—Note, 2 Sam.* v. 9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Wise and pious instructors and counsellors are a singular benefit to young persons, especially when called to fill up important stations: and it is a happy case, when they acquire a proper influence, and make an unexceptionable use of it. Indeed, restraining men from outward crimes, and inducing them to external good actions, does not imply conversion of the heart to the love of God, and delight in his holy service: yet it prevents much mischief, and occasions extensive benefit to the community; and often precedes, and is made the means of, men's internal renovation.—A too favourable regard to *customary* violations of the divine law, and the fear of *consequences in making innovations*, often influence pious men to let slip the favourable opportunity of effecting still greater good: and, mere formalists have frequently exceeded true and eminent believers, in their active earnestness about the externals of religion: for, in old age especially, they are apt to yield to the love of ease and peace, or to discouragement through reiterated disappointments, and so to become remiss.—The building or repairing of convenient places for divine worship falls peculiarly within the sphere of princes and nobles; and, if done from a proper principle, it is a good work which will not lose its reward: yet many abound in such useful services, whose "hearts are not right in the "sight of God."—Too often have *nominal* ministers been convicted of seeking their own interests, rather than those of religion. As a body, they must be suspected; and therefore should carefully avoid the appearance of this evil, lest they lose the confidence of the people, and become useless and contemptible. (*Notes, Mal.* i. 9—11. ii. 4—9.) It is most grievous, that the disinterested fidelity and punctuality of tradesmen and mechanicks should shame the mercenary conduct of priests: or that the activity and zeal of laymen should expose the lukewarmness and indifference of the clergy! These things are not the fault of the ministerial office, but of human nature, which that office will not change. The collective body is placed in a conspicuous station, and their faults are not easily concealed: and, as more is expected from them than from others, they meet with less allowance, and indeed their misconduct admits of less excuse. It is therefore most for their own credit and comfort, and for the honour of their profession, to stand aloof from those concerns in which large sums of money are employed. (*P. O. John* xii. 1—8. 2 *Cor.* viii. 16—24.) At least all works of piety and charity should be so managed, that those who contribute to them, may be assured their money is honestly and prudently expended: and they deserve commendation, who are faithful in such matters.—May the Lord preserve us from the disgraceful and wretched doom of the hypocrite and apostate! May our "hearts be sound in his statutes;" and may our "path shine more and more unto the perfect day!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. Joash king of Judah began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu; (xii. 1;) but it was

Judah, [a] Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* seventeen years.

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [b] and [*] followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

3 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, [c] and he delivered them into the hand of [d] Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of [e] Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all *their* days.

4 And [f] Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and [g] the LORD hearkened unto him: for [h] he saw the oppression of Israel, [i] because the king of Syria oppressed them.

5 (And the LORD gave Israel [k] a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as [†] beforetime.

6 Nevertheless they [l] departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, *but* [‡] walked therein: [m] and there [§] remained the grove also in Samaria.)

7 Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz, but [n] fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen: for [o] the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them [p] like the dust by threshing.

8 Now [q] the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

9 And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they [r] buried him in Samaria: and [s] Joash his son [‖] reigned in his stead.

10 In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah, [*] began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years.

11 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD; [t] he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin; *but* he walked therein.

12 And [u] the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and [x] his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

13 And Joash [y] slept with his fathers; and [z] Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash [a] was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

14 ¶ Now Elisha was [b] fallen sick of his sickness whereof [c] he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, [d] O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

[a] x. 35.
[b] 11. *See on* x. 29. 1 Kings xii. 26—33. xiv. 16.
[*] Heb. *walked after.* Hos. v. 11.
B. C. 849.
[c] Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut. iv. 24—27. xxvii. 25. Judg. ii. 14. iii. 8. x. 7—14. Is. x. 5, 6. Heb. xii. 29.
[d] 22.—*See on* viii. 12, 13. 1 Kings xix. 17.
[e] 24, 25.
[f] Num. xxi. 7. Judg. vi. 6, 7. x. 10. Ps. lxxviii. 34. Is. xxvi. 16. Jer. ii. 27.
[g] Gen. xxi. 17. Ex. iii. 7. Judg. x. 15, 16. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. 19. Ps. l. 15. cvi. 43, 44. Jer. xxxiii. 3.
[h] Gen. xxxi. 42. Ex. iii. 9. Is. lxiii. 9.
[i] 22. xiv. 26.
[k] 25. xiv. 25, 27. Neh. ix. 27. Is. xix. 20. Ob. 21. Luke ii. 11.
[†] Heb. *yesterday and third day.* Ex. iv. 10. Deut. xix. 4. 1 Sam. xix. 7. 1 Chr. xi. 2. *margins.*
[l] *See on* 2. x. 29.—xvii. 20—23. Deut. xxxii. 15—18.
[‡] Heb. *he walked.* 1 Kings xv. 3. xvi. 26.
[m] xvii. 16. xviii. 4. xxiii. 4. Deut. vii. 5. 1 Kings xvi. 33.
[§] Heb. *stood.*
[n] 1 Sam. xiii. 6, 7. 15. 19—23. 1 Kings xx. 15. 27. Is. xxxvi. 8.
[o] viii. 12. x. 32.
[p] Ps. xviii. 42. Is. xli. 2. 15, 16. Joel iii. 14. *marg.* Am. i. 3.
[q] x. 34, 35. *See on* 1 Kings xi. 41. xiv. 19, 20. 29. 31.
[r] 13. x. 35. 1 Kings xiv. 13.
[s] 10. xiv. 8. *Jehoash.*
[‖] Alone.
B. C. 841.
[*] In concert with his father.
[t] *See on* 2. 6. iii. 3. x. 29.
[u] 14—25.
[x] xiv. 8—16. 2 Chr. xxv. 17—24.
B. C. 825.
[y] *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings i. 21. ii. 10. xiv. 31.
[z] xiv. 28, 29.
[a] *See on* 9.
[b] xx. 1. Gen. xlviii. 1. John xi. 3. Phil. ii. 26, 27.
[c] Ps. xii. 1. Is. lvii. 1. Zech. i. 5. Acts xiii. 36.
[d] ii. 12. vi. 21. Prov. xi. 11. Ez. xiv. 14. xxii. 30. Mark vi. 20.

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probably in the beginning of the year; and if Jehu reigned a little above twenty-eight years, Joash might have entered on his twenty-third year, when Jehu died and was succeeded by Jehoahaz.

V. 3. *All* their *days.*] Or, "all *his* days;" for there is nothing answering to *their* in the original; and Joash the son of Jehoahaz delivered Israel from Ben-hadad. (22—25.)

V. 4, 5. Jehoahaz, while he deprecated the wrath of God, and intreated the removal of his heavy judgments, seems not to have attempted any reformation. If, however, this took place towards the conclusion of his life, his faith and repentance might not have time to produce their genuine fruits: and this is probable; for the deliverance, in answer to his prayer, was not granted till the reign of his son Joash, the "saviour" or deliverer, here spoken of; as it appears from the subsequent narration.—Yet some think Joash began to deliver Israel during the life of his father. (22—25.)

V. 6. Either the grove, which Ahab had dedicated to Baal, was still used in idolatry, or another was prepared for that purpose. (1 *Kings* xv. 13. xvi. 33. *Notes*, xvii. 16. *Deut.* xvi. 21.)

V. 7, 8. Jehoahaz seems to have defended himself valiantly against Hazael, though without success: this might provoke the cruelty, which Elisha had foretold; and it eventually increased the miseries of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, viii. 12, 13. x. 32—36. 1 *Sam.* xiii. 13—15.)

V. 10. The seventeen years of Jehoahaz reach to the thirty-ninth or fortieth year of Joash king of Judah; but Jehoash of Israel began to reign in the *thirty-seventh* year of Joash of Judah: Jehoash must therefore have reigned some time along with his father.

V. 12. *Notes*, 14—19. xiv. 8—14. 2 *Chr.* xxv. 17—24.

V. 14. If Elisha was called to follow Elijah, no more than seven years before the death of Ahab; and if he died as soon as Joash mounted the throne, he prophesied at least sixty-six years! but many think that this took place towards the close of the reign of Joash. From the beginning of the reign of Jehu to Elisha's sickness and death, (that is, at least, for more than forty-five years,) his name is never once mentioned; but without doubt he was very

15 And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.

16 And he said to the king of Israel, * Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand *upon it:* and [c] Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

17 And he said, [f] Open the window eastward. And he opened *it.* Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, [g] The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in [h] Aphek, till thou have consumed *them.*

18 And he said, Take the arrows. And he took *them.* And he said unto the king of Israel, [i] Smite upon the ground. And [k] he smote thrice, and stayed.

19 And [l] the man of God [m] was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it:* whereas [n] now thou shalt smite Syria *but* thrice.

20 ¶ And Elisha died, and they [o] buried him. And [p] the bands of [q] the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

21 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men;* and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha; and when the man [†] was let down, and [r] touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 ¶ But [s] Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

23 And [t] the LORD was gracious unto

* Heb. *Make thine hand to ride.*

c iv. 34. Gen. xlix. 24. Ps. cxliv. 1.

f v. 10—14. John ii. 5—8. xi. 39—41.

g Ex. iv. 2. 17. Judg. vii. 9—20. 2 Sam. v. 24. 1 Cor. i. 18.

h 1 Sam. iv. 1. 1 Kings xx. 26. 30.

i Is. xx. 2—4. Ez. iv. 1—10. v. 1—4. xii. 1—7.

k iv. 6. Ex. xvii. 11.

l i. 9—15. iv. 16. 40. vi. 9.

m Lev. x. 16. Num. xvi. 15. Mark iii. 5. x. 14.

n 25. Mark vi. 5.

o 2 Chr. xxiv. 16. Acts viii. 2.

p v. 2. vi. 23. xxiv. 2.

q iii. 5. 24—27. Judg. iii. 12. vi. 3—6.

† Heb. *went down.*

r iv. 35. Is. xxvi. 19. Ez. xxxvii. 1—10. Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. John v. 25. 28, 29. xi. 44. Acts v. 15. xix. 12. Rev. xi. 11.

s *See on* 3—7. viii. 12.—Ps. cvi. 40—42.

t xiv. 27. Ex. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 6, 7. Judg. x. 16. Neh. ix. 31. Ps. lxxxvi. 15. Is. xxx. 18, 19. Jer. xii. 15. Lam. iii. 32. Mic. vii. 18, 19.

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usefully employed, especially in superintending the schools of the prophets. There is ground to conclude, that great numbers were converted to God by his labours; though the bulk of the nation conformed to the idolatry established by authority. (*Note,* x. 21.) Neither Jehu nor Jehoahaz paid any attention to the prophet: yet they were not persecutors, and probably they respected his character. Being, however, employed in state-affairs, and determined to maintain the idolatry of the golden calves, they were not disposed to hearken to his admonitions: and he expressed his disapprobation of their conduct by keeping at a distance. (*Notes, Eph.* v. 8—14. *2 Thes.* iii. 6—9.) But when Joash heard that he was apparently near death, at a time when Israel was brought very low by iniquity, he seems to have considered the dispensation as a divine rebuke; and, under the prevalency of present convictions, he visited and lamented over him, in the very words which Elisha had used when Elijah was removed; (*Note,* ii. 12;) acknowledging him to be the chief defence of Israel, whose death would more expose them to ruin, than all Hazael's successes. Yet we read of nothing, in the character or conduct of Joash, to warrant a conclusion, that this was more than a transient impression upon his mind, which soon wore off without producing any abiding good effect.

V. 15—19. In this prophetical transaction, the use of the "bow and arrows" denoted that Joash was to be the instrument of Israel's deliverance, by military valour and enterprize: the prophet's directing the king in shooting, and laying his hands upon his, implied that he was to follow the direction of the prophet, and that God would give him success. The arrow shot eastward, marked the situation of the place where the deliverance was to be wrought, and intimated that the eastern coasts of the land of Israel would be rescued from the king of Syria; (*Note,* x. 32—36;) though his dominions, which lay chiefly to the north of Canaan, would not be taken from him: and the smiting of the arrows upon the ground was significant of the use that Joash would make of his first victory, by which his enemies were cast down to the ground before him; whether he would effectually crush their power, or imitate the impolitick lenity of Ahab. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xx. 31—43.) Probably Joash was not informed that his victories would equal the times, which he smote with the arrows: and perhaps considering the action as trivial and unmeaning, he smote but thrice, which displeased the prophet, and, as it were, limited the king's successes. His conduct expressed the state of his mind, as not firmly believing the words of the prophet, or not duly valuing the promised deliverance (25).

In Aphek. (17) Aphek was near to Philistia to the west of Samaria: (*Marg. Ref.* h:) but a decisive victory over Hazael and the Syrians, in that place, made way for Joash's rescuing the regions towards the east out of their hands.

V. 20, 21. 'They laid the body by Elisha's, for fear, 'if they proceeded to the sepulchre prepared for this man, 'they should fall into the hand of the Moabites.... God re-'stored him, in an instant, to perfect health: for he stood 'upon his feet; and, it is likely, walked home with those 'who brought him to be buried.' *Bp. Patrick.*—This extraordinary miracle, wrought by the touch of the dead body of Elisha, (which by the ritual law could only render a man unclean,) declared that he was as much beloved as Elijah, though he had not been translated; and that the Lord was his God, after death as well as before; and thus intimated both the immortality of the soul, and the final resurrection of the body. It might also intimate, that many mercies were reserved for Israel, in answer to Elisha's prayers, and in consequence of his labours for them in his life-time. (*Notes, Luke* xx. 27—38, *v.* 36. *Acts* v. 12—16. xix. 8—12.)

V. 23. The reason here assigned, for the deliverance granted to Israel, seems to imply that there was nothing either in Joash, or his subjects, (except their miseries,) to induce the Lord thus to favour them. (*Marg. Ref.* t—y.)

them, and had compassion on them,
u Ex. ii. 24, 25. I Kings viii. 28. x Gen. xiii. 16, 17. xvii. 7, 8. Ex. iii. 6, 7. xxxii. 13, 14. Lev. xxvi. 42. Deut. xxxii. 36. Ps. cv. 8. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55. 72, 73. y xvii. 18. xxiv. 20. Ps. li. 11. Matt. xxv. 41. 2 Thes. i. 9. B. C. 839. * Heb. *face.* z Ps. cxxv. 3. Luke xviii. 7, 8. B. C. 836. † Heb. *returned and took.*
and [u] had respect unto them, [x] because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, [y] neither cast he them from his [*] presence as yet.

24 So [z] Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead.

25 And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz [†] took again, out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. [a] Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

a 18, 19.

CHAP. XIV.

Amaziah reigns well, yet not like David, 1—4. He justly punishes his father's murderers, 5, 6. He gains a victory over Edom, 7. He rashly challenges Jehoash king of Israel, and, obstinately persisting, is vanquished and taken prisoner by him; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and the treasures of the temple spoiled, 8—14. Jehoash dies, and is succeeded by Jeroboam, 15, 16. Amaziah is slain by conspirators, 17—20. His son Azariah is made king, and builds Elath, 21, 22. Jeroboam's wicked reign, 23, 24. He restores the coast of Israel, 25—27. He dies and is succeeded by his son Zachariah, 28, 29.

IN the second year of [a] Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, [b] reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah.

a 15. xiii. 10. b 1 Chr. iii. 12. 2 Chr. xxv. 1.

The deliverance was granted, not from regard to the covenant ratified at mount Sinai, which had been grossly violated; but out of respect to the covenant ratified with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, long before the entrance of the Mosaick law. (*Notes, Lev.* xxvi. 41—45.) Nor was the success of Joash any thing more, than a respite *for the present* from the judgments which impended over them. (*Notes,* 4, 5. *Judg.* x. 15, 16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

"The LORD is slow to anger and of great mercy;" yet he will by no means acquit obstinate transgressors; and his just anger is the cause of all human misery. When deep affliction excites a cry for deliverance, he will hearken; for he is gracious and compassionate, and delights in mercy, and can speedily give a deliverance out of every trouble. But if he answer the mere cry of distress for temporal relief, much more will he regard the prayer of faith for spiritual blessings: and, as he so long remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and spared the posterity for the sake of their pious ancestors, notwithstanding their manifold provocations; much more will he remember Jesus and the covenant which he mediated, and for his sake pardon the abundant transgressions of all, who by true faith stand in a spiritual relation to him. All other privileges and distinctions can only avail to retard the deserved vengeance: the Lord may not destroy sinners, or cast them from his presence "as yet;" but without being "partakers of Christ" the Saviour, they must at length perish.—The true believer, though chastened for his transgression, shall not be left to perish for ever: but, being "delivered from the hand of his enemies, he shall "serve God without fear, in righteousness and holiness, "before him all his days."—Wicked men prosper in their schemes, till the Lord's purposes respecting them are accomplished; and then they are removed, or ruined, without any difficulty.—There is such excellency in true and eminent godliness, that it often excites the esteem and respect of those, who cleave to their sins. Persons even of this character, while under convictions, will feel and acknowledge, that the servants of God are their best friends, and the most valuable part of society. But this language of conscience is soon silenced by the clamorous voice of their passions.—Some parts of the lives of eminent believers are more conspicuous than others; but in the general tenour of them, they aim to glorify God and do good to man. Yet the most devoted will be ashamed, that they have not been more earnest; and the most useful must regret, that the world has received so little benefit from them. Indeed, reflection on the prevalence of wickedness and misery, on every side, with the prospect of still more dreadful judgments upon all the workers of iniquity, must fill the heart of every pious and benevolent man with deep concern.—Yet the good seed, which faithful ministers sow in their life-time, may spring up after their death; and they may often take encouragement from the prospect of their prayers being answered after they are removed: yet their removal is frequently the signal for calamities to break forth; as the recall of an ambassador precedes a declaration of war. However, living or dying, the true people of God are blessed, and blessings to others: and those who, like the Saviour, pass through death and the grave to glory, are not less favoured, than if they were immediately received up to heaven in the body.—But the death and burial of Jesus alone has efficacy to disarm the king of terrors of his power to hurt, and to sanctify the tomb, as a safe repository for the believer's body, till the general resurrection. Through him all blessings come from a reconciled God to believing sinners: if we use his appointed means in the obedience of faith, and be not straitened in our desires and expectations of help from him, through unbelief, we shall not be straitened in him, but shall be "able to do all things through Christ who "strengtheneth us." Then shall we beat down our enemies, and trample them as the mire in the streets, till our deliverance be complete, and our rejoicing in the Lord abundant. May he give us strong faith, that our hearts may be established and comforted; and that we may greatly glorify his name, and be serviceable to his people on earth, in our way to the heavenly inheritance!

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. Joash king of Israel began to reign about four years before Amaziah king of Judah: but he is supposed to have reigned part of the time with his father Jehoahaz; and Amaziah succeeded to the throne of

2 He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

c xii. 2.—*See on* 1 Kings xi. 4. xv. 3.—2 Chr. xxv. 2, 3

3 And [c] he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like

d 2 Chr. xxiv. 2. 17, 18. xxv. 14—16. Jer. xvi. 19. Zech. i. 4—6. 1 Pet. i. 18.

David his father: [d] he did according to all things as Joash his father did.

e *See on* xii. 3. xv. 4. 35.

4 Howbeit [e] the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places.

5 And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand,

f Gen. ix. 6. Ex. xxi. 12—14. Num. xxxv. 33.

g xii. 20, 21. 2 Chr. xxv. 3, 4.

[f] that he slew [g] his servants which had slain the king his father.

6 But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded,

h Deut. xxiv. 16. Ez. xviii. 4. 20.

saying, [h] The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

7 He [i] slew of Edom in [j] the valley of salt ten thousand, and took * Selah by war, and called the name of it [k] Joktheel unto this day.

i viii. 20—22. 2 Chr. xxv. 11, 12.

j 2 Sam. viii. 13. 1 Chr. xviii. 12. Ps. lx. *title.*

* Or, *the rock.*

k Josh. xv. 38.

8 ¶ Then [l] Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, [m] Come, let us look one another in the face.

l 2 Chr. xxv. 17—24.

m 11. 2 Sam. ii. 14—17. Prov. xxiii. 10. xvii. 14. xviii. 6. xx. 18. xxv. 8.

9 And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, [n] The thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

n Judg. ix. 8—15. 2 Sam. xii. 1—4. 1 Kings iv. 33. Ez. xx. 49.

10 Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and [o] thine heart hath lifted thee up: [p] glory *of this*, and tarry at [†] home; for [q] why shouldest thou meddle to *thy* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?

o Deut. viii. 14. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16. xxxii. 25. Prov. xvi. 18. Ez. xxviii. 2. 5. 17. Dan. v. 20—23. Hab. ii. 4. Jam. iv. 6.

p Ex. viii. 9. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Jam. i. 9.

† Heb. *thy house.*

q 2 Chr. xxxv. 21. Prov. xvii. 14. xx. 3. xxvi. 17. Luke xiv. 31, 32.

Judah in the second year after the death of Jehoahaz king of Israel. Yet, as Amaziah survived Joash only fifteen years (17), either the sixteen years of Joash's reign must be reckoned from his father's death; (*Note*, xiii. 10;) or, as some think, Amaziah's reign is computed from the time that his father Joash became incapable of managing publick affairs. (*2 Chr.* xxiv. 23—27.)

V. 3, 4. Amaziah, like his father Joash, began apparently well, and ended very ill. He supported and regularly attended the worship of JEHOVAH; yet not with the fervent piety of David: neither did he destroy the high places; where, probably, priests and Levites officiated in sacrificing and burning incense. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, xii. 2, 3.)

V. 5, 6. Amaziah did not at first venture to punish the conspirators, who had slain his father: and it seems they continued at court as if they had done no wrong, and feared no danger; having only avenged the death of Jehoiada's son on Jehoash, without attempting to injure Amaziah, or deprive him of the kingdom. (*Note*, xii. 20, 21.) But when he found himself sufficiently established in authority, he very properly punished them: but in doing this he strictly adhered to the command of God, in not punishing their children with them. (*Note, Deut.* xxiv. 16.)—These references to the very words of the law, as they now stand in the books of Moses, should not be unnoticed. Undoubtedly these books were extant, and well known, when this history was written.

V. 7. The name which Amaziah gave to Selah, signifies *Obedience to God;* in which it is probable, he referred to his obedience to the word of God by the prophet in dismissing the auxiliaries of Israel, and considered his victory as the reward of it: but his behaviour, in the whole transaction, and afterwards, very little agreed with this name. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxv. 5—16.) *Valley of salt.*] *Marg. Ref.* i.

V. 8. The peace between Judah and Israel had continued from the time of Asa, during above a hundred years: and, though the affinity formed by Jehoshaphat with the house of Ahab had been of fatal consequence to the royal family of Judah; yet, on the whole, peace had been far more conducive to the welfare of both nations, than the ruinous wars which preceded and ensued. Perhaps Amaziah bore resentment against the family of Jehu, for the slaughter of his relations: he had also received injurious treatment from the Israelites, whom he had engaged in his service, and sent back, having been forbidden to employ them. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxv. 6—10. 13.) Perhaps he hoped to reduce Israel again under the dominion of the family of David. But, if he had not been actuated by a vain ambition, he would have made his complaints, and demanded satisfaction, and not have sent this foolish challenge. In effect, he informed Joash, that he scorned to attack him at a disadvantage: but wished him to bring forth all his forces, and make a fair trial of their military skill and valour in a pitched battle. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* ii. 14—16. *2 Chr.* xxv. 17—24. *Prov.* xiii. 10. xvii. 14. xx. 18. xxv. 8—10.)

V. 9, 10. Joash rebuked Amaziah's pride, with an arrogance equally unreasonable. The thistle, a useless weed, which may by chance wound the foot of the incautious passenger, was made the emblem of the kingdom of Judah, and of the ancient and honourable house of David; while the house of Jehu was represented as a stately cedar! The thistle 'having drawn blood on some poor traveller, 'and sorely afflicted him (as Amaziah had done the Edom-'ites) grew very proud, and would be no longer one of the 'shrubs, but equal to the most goodly trees.' *Bp. Patrick.* Joash intimated, that if Amaziah, upon his casual success against the Edomites, had presumed to solicit an alliance with him, he would have considered his proposals in the

11 But [r] Amaziah would not hear: therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at [s] Beth-shemesh, which *belongeth* to Judah.

12 And Judah was [*] put to the worse before Israel, and [t] they fled every man to their tents.

13 And Jehoash king of Israel [u] took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, from [x] the gate of Ephraim unto [y] the corner-gate, four hundred cubits.

14 And he took [z] all the gold and silver, and all the vessels *that were* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, [a] and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

15 ¶ Now [b] the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

16 And [c] Jehoash slept with his fathers, and [d] was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and [e] Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

17 ¶ And [f] Amaziah the son of Jehoash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years.

18 And [g] the rest of the acts of Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

19 Now [h] they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled to [i] Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.

20 And they brought him on horses, and [k] he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

21 And all the people of Judah took [l] Azariah, (which *was* sixteen years old,) and [m] made him king instead of his father Amaziah.

22 He built [n] Elath, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

23 ¶ In [o] the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, B. C. 825.

r 2 Chr. xxv. 16. 20.
s Josh. xxi. 16. 1 Sam. vi. 9.
* Heb. *smitten.*
t 1 Sam. iv. 10. 2 Sam. xviii. 17. 1 Kings xxii. 36.
u xxv. 6. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 6. 10. Job xl. 11, 12. Prov. xvi. 18. xxix. 23. Is. ii. 11, 12. Dan. iv. 37. Luke xiv. 11.
x 2 Chr. xxv. 23, 24. Neh. viii. 16. xii. 39.
y Jer. xxxi. 38. Zech. xiv. 10.
z xxiv. 13. xxv. 15. 1 Kings vii. 51. xiv. 26. xv. 18.
a xviii. 23. *marg.*
b *See on* x. 34, 35. 1 Kings xiv. 19, 20.
c *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings i. 21.
d *See on* xiii. 9.
e xiii. 13. Hos. i. 1. Am. i. 1. vii. 10, 11.
f 1, 2. 23. xiii. 10. 2 Chr. xxv. 25. B. C. 810.
g xiii. 8. 12. 1 Kings xi. 41. xiv. 29.
h xii. 20, 21. xv. 10. 14. 25. 30. xxi. 23. 2 Chr. xxv. 27, 28.
i Josh. x. 31. Mic. i. 13.
k viii. 24. ix. 28. xii. 21. 1 Kings ii. 10. xi. 43. 2 Chr. xxi. 20. xxvi. 23. xxxiii. 20.
l xv. 13. 2 Chr. xxvi. 1. *Uzziah.* Matt. i. 8, 9. *Ozias.*
m xxi. 24. 1 Chr. iii. 12.
n xvi. 6. Deut. ii. 8. 1 Kings ix. 26. 2 Chr. xxvi. 2. *Eloth.*
o 17.

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same light, as if the thistle should aspire to unite families with the cedar; and the meanest of his soldiers should have chastised his insolence, and crushed him, as easily as a wild beast of the forest could trample down the thistle: how much more then, when Amaziah dared to challenge him to battle, would he bring destruction upon himself!—There was, however, much good sense in Joash's counsel. Let Amaziah rest satisfied with the reputation which he had acquired, and not meddle or rashly involve himself in a contest with his neighbour, who was disposed to peace, which would terminate in the disgrace and ruin of himself and his kingdom. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—14. As Amaziah prepared for war, it became necessary for Joash to oppose him: in consequence Amaziah's army was completely routed, many lives were thrown away, Amaziah was made prisoner, Jerusalem was taken, and its fortifications to a large extent demolished, and the very temple plundered of its treasures and sacred vessels, by the rapacious and profane conqueror.

Came to Jerusalem. (13) 'Bringing Amaziah with him; 'and letting the inhabitants know, (as Josephus saith,) that 'he would slay him before their eyes, if they did not im-'mediately open their gates unto him; which was accord-'ingly done.' *Bp. Patrick.*

Hostages. (14) 'The sons, I suppose of the principal 'persons of the city, for a security that they would...give 'him no disturbance.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17—20. Joash, it seems, set Amaziah at liberty; and he survived Joash fifteen years. But the ill success of his rash expedition rendered his people disaffected to him, which at length produced a conspiracy, or open revolt, which drove him from Jerusalem to Lachish; whither the insurgents pursued him: and when they had slain him, either they brought him themselves, or suffered him to be brought, to Jerusalem to be buried. (*Marg. Ref.* h—k.—*Note, 2 Chr.* xxv. 25—27.)

V. 21. Azariah, or Uzziah, (words of similar meaning, the one signifying, *The help of the Lord*, and the other, *the strength of the Lord*,) is thought by some to have been very young, not more than four years of age, when his father was slain; and they suppose that he was not made king till about twelve years afterwards. Thus he began to reign in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam; though his father was slain in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam. (23. xv. 1.) But the years of Azariah's reign are reckoned from his father's death: and therefore others suppose, that Jeroboam reigned along with his father Joash eleven or twelve years; so that reckoning his reign from this time, Azariah began to reign in his twenty-seventh year, though only fifteen or sixteen years after he began to reign alone. (23. xv. 1, *margins.*)

V. 22. *Elath.*] This was a town upon the Red Sea, convenient for commerce, which the Edomites or Syrians had taken away from the kings of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is supposed that Amaziah had taken it, when he conquered the Edomites; but had not been able to derive much advantage from it, because of subsequent troubles; and that Azariah, after Amaziah's death, rebuilt and fortified it.

V. 23, 24. Jeroboam the second reigned much longer,

B. C. 825.

CHAPTER XIV.

B. C. 822.

p 27. Hos. i. 1. Am. i. 1. vii. 9—11.
* Now he begins to reign alone.

P Jeroboam, the son of Joash king of Israel, * began to reign in Samaria, *and* *reigned* forty and one years.

24 And he did *that which was* evil
q xxi. 6. Gen. xxxviii. 7. Deut. ix. 18. 1 Kings xxi. 25.
r *See on* xiii. 2. 6. 11.
q in the sight of the LORD: r he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

25 He restored the coast of Israel,
s Num. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 7, 8. Ez. xlvii. 16—18. Am. vi. 14.
t Gen. xiv. 3. Deut. iii. 17.
u Jon. i. 1. Matt. xii. 39, 40. xvi. 4. *Jonas.*
x Josh. xix. 13. *Gittah-hepher.*
s from the entering of Hamath t unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant u Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which *was* of x Gath-hepher.

26 For the LORD y saw the affliction
y xiii. 4. Ex. iii. 7. 9. Judg. x. 16. Ps. cvi. 43—45. Is. lxiii. 9.
of Israel, *that it was* very bitter: for *there was* z not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel.

z Deut. xxxii 36. 1 Kings xiv. 10 xxi. 21.

27 And the LORD a said not that he would b blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but c he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

a xiii. 23. Hos. i. 6.
b Ex. xxxii. 32, 33. Deut. ix. 14. xxv. 19. xxix. 20. Ps. lxix. 28. Rev. iii. 5.
c v. 1. xiii. 5. Hos. i. 7. Tit. iii. 4—6.

28 Now d the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered e Damascus, and Hamath, *which belonged* to Judah, for Israel, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

d *See on* 15.
e 2 Sam. viii. 6. 1 Kings xi. 24. 1 Chr. xviii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. viii. 3, 4.

29 And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, *even* with the kings of Israel; and f Zachariah his son † reigned in his stead.

B. C. 784.
f xv. 8.
† After an interregnum of eleven years.

than any other of the kings of Israel.—'As he had the 'name, so he trod in the steps of him, who first corrupted 'Israel with idolatry.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Joash, in giving this name to his son, seems almost to have pointed out to him the conduct, which he would have him adopt.

V. 25. The various enemies of Israel had encroached on their borders, from the northern to the southern extremity of the country belonging to the ten tribes; from Lebanon to the dead or salt sea, which had been the plain of Sodom: but, Jeroboam, encouraged by the predictions of Jonah, drove back these enemies, and recovered the country. (*Preface to Jonah.*)

V. 26, 27. Joash had been successful, both against the Syrians and Judah. But probably the Syrians, not being totally subdued, still carried on destructive hostilities against Israel: and the neighbouring nations, as the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, made continual incursions, and plundered whatever they could seize upon; so that the most valuable treasures of the Israelites were pillaged, those who seemed to have taken refuge in the safest places were destroyed, and there were none to help them. But as the time for their final dispersion was not yet come, the Lord saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, notwithstanding his idolatries.—*Blot out.* (27) *Notes, Ex.* xxxii. 30—33. *Deut.* xxix. 19, 20.

V. 28. Damascus and Hamath belonged to *Judah*, in the reigns of David and Solomon: (*Notes, 2 Sam.* viii. 3—11. 1 *Kings* iv. 21:) and Jeroboam so effectually subdued the Syrians, that he obtained possession of them for *Israel;* which is called *recovering* them, because, though divided in government, Judah and Israel were still to be considered as one people.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Many appear righteous unto men, whose inward parts are very wickedness, and whose base conduct at length betrays their hypocrisy. Yet the Lord gives due commendation to the actions which accord to his law, because *thus far* they honour him.—Where his judgments are most evidently righteous, the wickedness of the instruments may deserve punishment by the sword of the magistrate: and "the Judge of all the earth" may do many things consistently with his justice, and in his omniscience, unerring wisdom, and all-sufficiency, which would not be right for short-sighted, feeble mortals to imitate. It will appear, however, in the day of final retributions, that no one has suffered who did not deserve it, and that none perish but for their own sins.—Unsanctified success increases pride; pride excites contentions; and these are the sources of trouble and iniquity in private life: but when they arise between princes, they become the misery of whole kingdoms; and the blood of thousands is lightly esteemed by vain-glorious mortals, who seek to be admired and extolled by men as foolish and worthless as themselves.—The effects of pride in others are often insufferable, even to those who are equally proud themselves; and all naturally delight in expressing contempt for such, as avowedly aim to outshine their neighbours.—We might smile at the ridiculous methods, which arrogant worms take to vaunt themselves, and to express their contempt of their rivals for fame; did not the fatal effects of such competitions call for our lamentations: and the vain boastings of those who follow peace are most tolerable, because most harmless. But did men consider from whom, and for what, their talents and successes were given, and how prone they are to abuse them; and did they understand how mean, guilty, and polluted man is, at his best estate, their boastings must needs be excluded. In reality, all the distinctions between one sinful man and another would not be worth noting, except for the sake of relative obligations, and the peace of society: but what images can shadow forth the absurdity and madness of those, who by their daring crimes seem to challenge the Almighty to the conflict, and to rush upon the thick bosses of his buckler? Or, who could have conceived such an amity and union, as the Lord invites us wretched sinners to enter into with himself, through the mysterious union of the divine and human nature in our Emmanuel?—In all our undertakings, we should previously consider our ability to accomplish them: and rather rest satisfied with moderate advantages, or inferior reputation, than risk the consequences of beginning what we are not able to finish, which is indeed to "meddle to our hurt:" (*Notes, Prov.* xvii. 14. *Luke*

CHAP. XV.

Azariah's good reign, 1—4. He is smitten with leprosy; and Jotham his son governs for him, and succeeds him, 5—7. Zachariah reigns ill, and is slain by Shallum; and the fulfilment of the word of God to Jehu is noticed, 8—12. After one month, Shallum is slain, and succeeded by Menahem; who treats his opposers with savage cruelty; reigns wickedly; becomes tributary to Pul, king of Assyria; dies, and is succeeded by his son Pekahiah, 13—22. Pekahiah reigns ill, and is slain and succeeded by Pekah, 23—26. Pekah imitates the sins of his predecessor; Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, carries captive part of Israel; and Hoshea kills and succeeds Pekah, 27—31. Jotham reigns well in Judah, 32—35. He dies, and is succeeded by his son Ahaz, 36—38.

IN [a] the * twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

2 [b] Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

3 And [c] he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;

4 Save that [d] the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

5 And [e] the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, [g] and dwelt in a several house: and [h] Jotham the king's son *was* over the house, [i] judging the people of the land.

6 And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* [k] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

7 So [l] Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

8 ¶ In [m] the † thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did [n] Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.

9 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [o] as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

10 And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and [p] smote him before the people, and [q] slew him, and reigned in his stead.

11 And [r] the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

12 This *was* [s] the word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, [t] Thy

a 2 Kings xiv. 16, 17.
* This is the twenty seventh year of Jeroboam's partnership in the kingdom with his father, who made him consort at his going to the Syrian wars. It is the sixteenth year of Jeroboam's monarchy.
b xiv. 21. 2 Chr. xxvi. 1. 3. *Uzziah.*
c xii. 2, 3. xiv. 3, 4. 2 Chr. xxvi. 4.
d xiv. 4. xviii. 4. 1 Kings xv. 14. xxii. 43. 2 Chr. xvii. 6. xxxii. 12. xxxiv. 3.
e 2 Sam. iii. 29. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—20. Job xxxiv. 19.
f v. 27. Num. xii. 10.
g vii. 3. Lev. xiii. 46. Num. xii. 14. Deut. xxiv. 8, 9.
h 2 Chr. xxvi. 21.
i 2 Sam. viii. 15. xv. 2—4. 1 Kings iii. 9. 28. Ps. lxxii. 1, 2.
k *See on* xiv. 18. —2 Chr. xxvi. 5—15.
l 2 Chr. xxvi. 23. Is. vi. 1. *Uzziah.* B. C. 758.
m B. C. 772.
n xiv. 21. † There having been an interregnum for eleven years.
o *See on* x. 29. 31. xiii. 2. 11. xiv. 24.
p Am. vii. 9
q 14. 25. 30. ix. 24. 31. 1 Kings xv. 28. xvi. 9, 10. Hos. i. 4, 5.
r *See on* xiv 28.
s x. 30.
t xiii. 1. 10. 13. xiv. 29.

xiv. 28—33.) But caution is especially needful, when if we fail of success, we cannot suffer alone, but must involve many in our calamities: and those who will not take fair warning and good advice, even from an insulting enemy, may too late wish they had.

V. 15—29.

Wicked princes and nations are frequently successful, because opposed by others more guilty than themselves.—The proud are often visited with most humiliating providences; and if not humbled by them, their destruction is inevitable. Yet even in those places, where ungodliness is generally prevalent, the Lord takes notice of the extreme bitterness under which men groan, and spares them from time to time, that his goodness may lead them to repentance. Especially, is he thus long-suffering to those nations, where he has a remnant of true believers.—But the lives and successes of wicked men are contracted within narrow limits, and they are soon "driven away in their wickedness," one after another. And though the Lord will never blot out the name of his true Israel from under heaven, but will always raise them up helpers, that the enemy may never prevail against his cause on earth: yet there is an appointed period to his patience and long suffering; beyond which he will no longer bear with impenitent sinners, corrupt professing churches, or wicked nations; but will proceed to deal with them according to the most awful denunciations of his holy word.

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1. *Marg.*—*Notes*, xiv. 21.

V. 2—7. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxvi.)—*Two and fifty years.* (2) The long reign of Azariah must be considered as very advantageous to Judah, when contrasted with the state of Israel during the same period.

A several house. (5) Retired, but spacious, where he had liberty to recreate himself, though excluded from publick business.

V. 8. Amaziah reigned fifteen years after Jeroboam came to the crown of Israel; (xiv. 17;) so that the death of Jeroboam, who reigned forty-one years, coincided with the twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh year of Azariah. An interregnum of about eleven years must therefore be allowed for, in the kingdom of *Israel*, between the death of Jeroboam, and the succession of his son: either because of his youth, or through the factious temper of the people. (*Marg.*)

V. 12. Notwithstanding the wickedness of Israel, and the persevering idolatry of Jehu and his descendants, the Lord would not proceed to execute vengeance upon them,

sons shall sit on the throne of Israel
u ix. 25, 26. 36, 37. x. 10. Num. xxiii. 19. Zech. i. 6. Mark xiii. 31. John x. 35. xix. 24. 36, 37. Acts i. 16. unto the fourth *generation*. [u] And so it came to pass.

13 ¶ Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth
v 1 *Azariah*. Matt. i. 8, 9. *Ozias*. year of [v] Uzziah king of Judah; and
* Heb. *a month of days*. he reigned [*] a full [x] month in Samaria.
x 1 Kings xvi. 15. Job xx. 15. Ps. lv. 23. Prov. xxviii. 2. 17.

14 For Menahem the son of Gadi
y 1 Kings xiv. 17. xv. 21. 33. xvi. 8, 9. 15. 17. went up from [y] Tirzah, and came to
z *See on* 10. Samaria, [z] and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

a *See on* 11. 1 Kings xiv. 19. 29. xxii. 39. 15 And [a] the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

b 1 Kings iv. 24. 16 Then Menahem smote [b] Tiphsah, and all that *were* therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not *to him*, therefore he smote *it*;
c *See on* viii. 12.—Am. i. 13. *and* [c] all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

17 ¶ In [d] the nine and thirtieth year
d 15. of Azariah king of Judah, began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria.

18 And he did *that which was* [e] evil
e *See on* 9. in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

19 *And* [f] Pul the king of Assyria
f 1 Chr. v. 25, 26. Is. ix. 1. came against the land; and [g] Menahem
g xii. 18. xvi. 8. xvii. 3, 4. xviii. 16. Hos. v. 13. viii. 9, 10. x. 6. gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him, [h] to
h xiv. 5. Jer. xvii. 5. confirm the kingdom in his hand.

20 And [i] Menahem [†] exacted the
i xxiii. 35.
† Heb. *caused to come forth*. money of Israel, *even* of all [k] the mighty
k Ruth ii. 1. 2 Sam. xix. 32. Job i. 3. men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria: so the king of Assyria turned back, and
l 29. xvii. 3, 4. xviii. 14—17. [l] stayed not there in the land.

21 And [m] the rest of the acts of Me-
m *See on* 15.

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till the predicted period. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, x. 29—31.) And bad as Jehu's family was; the times, during which they reigned, were by far the best that Israel experienced, from their separation from the family of David to their final dispersion.

V. 13—16. *Marg. Ref.—Tiphsah.* (16) A city called Tiphsah, near the Euphrates, was one boundary of Solomon's dominions. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* iv. 24.) But that was so far distant from Tirzah, that some other city of the same name, situated in Canaan, is supposed to be here meant. If, however, Menahem attempted to recover all that had been lost to Israel, after the death of Solomon, he might march to Tiphsah, on the Euphrates; and this might give occasion to the king of Assyria to invade his dominions. —*All the women*, &c.] This savage barbarity was exercised by Menahem against the inhabitants of those cities, which did not immediately submit to his usurped authority.—Things were now hastening to a fatal crisis in the kingdom of the ten tribes. After the death of Elisha, true religion evidently began to decline; and neither the labours, nor the writings, of the succeeding prophets could stop the rapid increase of immorality, idolatry, or profaneness, which inundated that people. This chapter gives such an account of their publick affairs, as will afford the attentive reader great assistance in understanding the writings of those prophets, who lived during that period, viz. Isaiah, Hoshea, Micah, and Amos.

V. 19, 20. The king of Assyria, coming to invade Israel, seems to have found the people much disaffected to Menahem, who must have been odious for his cruelties; but he, having made submission to Pul, and engaged for the payment of one thousand talents of silver, (nearly four hundred thousand pounds,) obtained his assistance in subjugating the Israelites, and was thus confirmed in the kingdom; and then by force he extorted the money from his richer subjects. Thus the kingdom was impoverished, and the people exasperated; and that powerful prince having been so well paid for invading the land, left an example to his successors, which they followed till they had totally desolated the country.—The kingdom of Assyria is here mentioned, for the first time, after the building of Nineveh by Nimrod. (*Note*, *Gen.* x. 8—12.) And this shews, that the history, given by many writers, of a very prosperous and large monarchy, lasting for much above a thousand years previous to this time, is in great measure a romance. David and Solomon met with no opposition from the kings of Assyria, in establishing their kingdom, even to the Euphrates. Nor is Assyria once mentioned in their history. Assur indeed helped the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, on some occasions: but yet the very connexion implies, that it was of itself not very considerable. (*Note*, *Ps.* lxxxiii. 6—8.) But it seems that Nineveh had by this time become a very great city, and no doubt the king of Nineveh had acquired a considerable territory. (*Jon.* i. 2. iii. 3, 4. iv. 11.) And some think that Pul was the king, when Jonah prophesied against Nineveh. It is not, however, agreed, whether he was one of the ancient line of the Assyrian kings; or whether he was one of those who effected that revolution, which, all allow, took place about this time; and so was the father of Tiglath-pileser. The latter indeed seems most probable: but such darkness and uncertainty rest on this part of ancient history, that the most learned men differ exceedingly in their opinions on the subject (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* v. 25, 26. 2 *Chr.* xxviii. 16—18.)

Of each man fifty shekels. (20) 'He gave to the king of 'Assyria so many shekels for every man...in his army. 'So they' (the Hebrew words) 'run exactly, "to give to '"the king of Assyria fifty shekels of silver for each man."' *Bp. Patrick.* It may be supposed, that Menahem compelled "the mighty men of wealth" to give much more apiece than this sum, and each of them in some proportion to his affluence.

nahem, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

22 And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

23 ¶ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, [n] *and reigned* two years.

24 And he did *that which was* [o] evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

25 But [p] Pekah the son of Remaliah, [q] a captain of his, [r] conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieh, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.

26 And [s] the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

27 ¶ In [t] the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, [u] Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years.

28 And he did *that which was* [v] evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel, came [x] Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took [y] Ijon, and [z] Abel-beth-maachah, and [a] Janoah, and [b] Kedesh, and [c] Hazor, and [d] Gilead, and [e] Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and [f] carried them captive to Assyria.

30 And Hoshea the son of Elah, [g] made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, [h] and smote him, and slew him, and [*] reigned in his stead, [i] in [†] the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

31 And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel, began [k] Jotham the son of [l] Uzziah king of Judah to reign.

33 Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [m] Jerusha the daughter of Zadok.

34 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD: he did [n] according to all that his father Uzziah had done.

35 Howbeit [o] the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still in the high places. He built [p] the higher gate of the house of the LORD.

36 Now [q] the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

37 In those days the LORD [r] began [s] to send against Judah [t] Rezin, the king

n xxi. 9. 1 Kings xv. 25. xvi. 8. xxii. 51. Job xx. 5.
o *See on* 9. 18.
B. C. 759.
p 27. 2 Chr. xxviii. 6.
q ix. 5. 1 Kings xvi. 9. *See on* 10. ix. 14.
See on 15.
2. 8. 13. 23.
u 25. 37. Is. vii. 1. 9.
v *See on* 9. 18. xiii. 2. 6.—xxi. 2.
B. C. 740.
x. xvi. 7. 1 Chr. v. 6. 26. 2 Chr. xxviii. 20, 21. *Tiglath-pilneser.* Is. ix. 1.
y 1 Kings xv. 20. 2 Chr. xvi. 4.
z 2 Sam. xx. 14, 15.
a Josh. xvi. 6, 7. *Janohah.*
b Josh. xix. 36, 37.
c Josh. xi. 1. 10. 13. xii. 19. Judg. iv. 2.
d Num. xxxii. 1. 40. Deut. iii. 13. Am. i. 3. 13.
e Josh. xx. 7. 1 Kings ix. 11. Is. ix. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 15, 16.
f xvii. 6. 23. Lev. xxvi. 32. 38, 39. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 25. 64, 65. Is. i. 7. vii. 20.
B. C. 739.
g *See on* 10. 25.
h Hos. x. 3. 7. 15.
* After an anarchy for some years.
i 32, 33. xvi. 1. xvii. 1. 2 Chr. xxviii. 1—6. 16. Is. vii. 1—9. viii. 6.
† In the fourth year of Ahaz, in the twentieth year after Jotham had begun to reign.
k 7. 1 Chr. iii. 12. 2 Chr. xxvii. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Joatham.*
l *See on* 1. 7. 13. 17. 23. 27. xiv. 21.—1 Chr. iii. 12. *Azariah.*
B. C. 758.
m 2 Chr. xxvii. 1. *Jerushah.*
n 3, 4. 2 Chr. xxvi. 4, 5. xxvii. 2.
o *See on* 4.—xviii. 4. 2 Chr. xxxii. 12.
p 2 Chr. xxvii. 3.
q *See on* 6, 7.—2 Chr. xxvii. 4—9.
r x. 32. 1 Sam. iii. 12. Jer. xxv. 29. Luke xxi. 28.
s Deut. xxviii. 48. Ps. lxxviii. 49. Is. x. 5—7. Jer. xvi. 16. xliii. 10.
t xvi. 5. 2 Chr. xxviii. 6. Is. vii. 1. 8. Hos. v. 12, 13.

V. 25. It does not clearly appear, whether Argob, Arieh, and the fifty Gileadites, were slain with the king; or whether they were conspirators with Pekah.

V. 29. Pul seems to have carried captive many out of those tribes which dwelt to the east of Jordan: (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* v. 25, 26:) and Tiglath-pileser, who is, with great probability, thought to have been his son and successor, carried captive a considerable number of the inhabitants of the northern parts of the land, as well as the inhabitants of the districts to the east of Jordan. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Thus the prophecies, in this respect, had a gradual accomplishment. (*Notes*, xvii. 5, 6. xviii. 9—12.)

V. 30. *In the twentieth*, &c.] That is, the twentieth year from Jotham's accession; for he reigned only sixteen years (33); and Hoshea succeeded Pekah in the *fourth* year of Ahaz, though he was not established in the kingdom till the twelfth year of that king. It is also evident from the whole narrative, that Ahaz reigned over Judah some time before the death of Pekah. (*Note*, xvii. 1.) Perhaps the conspiracy was entered into before the death of Jotham; but was not successful till four years after. In respect of many of these difficulties in settling the chronology, (which infidels vainly magnify into objections against the sacred history,) it may be proper to observe, that no writer wilfully contradicts himself within a few lines: and therefore some solution of the difficulty should be sought, and *must exist*, whether our information enable us to solve it or not.

V. 31. *Notes*, xvi. 5. 2 *Chr.* xxviii. 6—8. *Is.* vii. 1. 5—9.

V. 32—36. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxvii.—*In the second year.* (32) Pekah reigned twenty years (27). Jotham therefore began his reign seventeen or eighteen years before the death of Pekah: consequently Pekah survived Jotham a considerable time; as indeed the scriptures referred to (*Note*, 31) fully prove. (*Note*, 30.)

V. 37. In the days of Jotham, those designs of Rezin and Pekah were formed, and in some degree carried into

[u] *See on* 27. of Syria, and [u] Pekah the son of Remaliah.

[x] *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings i. 2.. xiv. 20. 31. 38 And [x] Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and [y] Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

[y] xvi. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxviii. 1. Matt. i 9. *Achaz.*

effect, which became far more formidable during the reign of Ahaz. (*Notes*, 30. 2 *Chr.* xxviii. 1—15. *Is.* vii. 1—9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The study of history has a tendency to render the reflecting person thankful even for a mediocrity of character, in those placed in authority; and to dispose him to bear patiently many evident faults in the administration of publick affairs. For as every thing may be estimated by *comparison;* and as the history of the world exhibits by far the greater part of princes desperately wicked, and the people exposed to every kind of misery, in consequence of their ambition, cruelty, and tyranny, or the contests between rivals for power: so, we may repress our murmurs under slighter grievances, by reflecting with grateful satisfaction on our exemption from flagrant oppressions. In this view, we seem to congratulate Judah, under the peaceful reigns of Azariah and Jotham; as that kingdom was very highly favoured, compared with the distracted state of Israel, under a succession of bloody murderers, usurpers, and tyrants. And if the inhabitants of our land of liberty and peace can read this narration, without forgetting their imaginary or trivial causes for complaint, or without blessing God for their mercies, and praying for their rulers, and the continuance of our distinguishing privileges, they cannot be acquitted from the charge of base ingratitude.—But with regret we must observe, that such is the depraved tendency of human nature to evil, that revivals in religion are commonly transient: whereas corruptions endure from age to age, and few good men have at once power and courage effectually to remove them. For great defects are found even in godly persons: and, though they are graciously accepted, as to their eternal state, they are often in this world marked with the tokens of the divine displeasure for particular offences, by which they have dishonoured him; nor can any situation prevent these effects of sin.—When persons in authority are incapacitated from the duties of their high station, it is peculiarly happy for them and for the publick, when they have children, who, like Jotham, are disposed and qualified to fill up their places, and to enter into their views of serving God and doing good to the people; and who can give satisfaction both to them and to the community.—The imperfections of true believers are very different from the allowed, habitual, and pertinacious wickedness of ungodly men. In the former, the remains indeed of depravity are visible, and occasionally break forth into evident evil: but in the latter case, when restraints of conscience, regard to reputation, fear of human laws, and want of power, are surmounted; the desperate wickedness of the heart, like an impetuous torrent which has burst its banks, bears down all opposition, and spreads devastation all around.

V. 13—38.

The words concerning Jeroboam, so often repeated, for ages after his death, that "he made Israel to sin," should impress our minds with dread and horror, at the thought of tempting others to wickedness; as it can never be known how extensively or durably the mischief may spread. For, however ungodly men may disagree in all other things, they perfectly accord, in either utterly neglecting religion, or in making it a state-engine, or in some way subservient to their selfish projects: and the most notorious and detestable idolatries and superstitions have, in many kingdoms, been supported by authority from generation to generation, through successive revolutions in the government, by those who in their hearts despised the whole system which they patronized!—When the gratification of ambition, avarice, revenge, or lust, requires it, there is no conceivable kind or degree of treachery and barbarity, which men may not be tempted to commit: yet the madness of those who thus act, equals their wickedness; for repeated examples of the fatal end of those, who through blood have waded to a throne, will not deter them from pressing forward in the same way, and mounting the slippery pre-eminence, to be thence hurried by a violent death to a premature grave! We should then be thankful for external restraints, and for being kept out of temptation; and beg of God incessantly to "create in us a clean heart, "and renew a right spirit within us:" and may he help us to seek that honour which comes from him, to those who do good in their generation; and to dread that greatness, which is obtained and secured by doing mischief and diffusing misery. Yet in these horrid scenes, the truth and justice of God are manifest: they perfectly accord to the character of human nature given in the Scriptures, and form a confirmation of their divine original.—"For "the wickedness of the land many are the princes thereof;" whose crimes and sufferings are the punishment of the sins both of the governors and governed. (*Note, Prov.* xxviii. 2.) "A man that doeth violence to the blood of any per-"son, shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him." (*Note, Prov.* xxviii. 17.) For a time, wicked men may prosper, to execute the vengeance of God on other sinners, and then others will be raised up to execute vengeance on them; as criminals, or the refuse of society, are commonly employed for publick executioners.—The most innocent sufferers from man's wickedness must plead guilty before God, and may often read his *just* displeasure in the *injustice* and cruelty of their oppressors.—Proud men cannot endure contradiction, and the ambitious are exasperated by opposition: yet often, in aiming at independence and supreme authority, they crouch with the basest submissions, and bring themselves into the most abject dependence on strangers and enemies, who from mercenary motives, at first assist, and then enslave them.—Death in various forms hurries men to God's judgment-seat: the righteous are then taken from the evil to come, and enter into rest; and it is a mercy to be spared the anguish of witnessing the miseries that are coming on corrupted churches and nations. But the wicked are stopped in their career, that they may do no more mischief, and "their "lamp is put out in utter darkness." May we live the life of faith and holiness, and die the death of the righteous, that "an entrance may be ministered to us abundantly

CHAP. XVI.

Ahaz reigns very wickedly, 1—4. Rezin and Pekah war against him; and Rezin takes Elath, 5, 6. Ahaz hires Tiglath-pileser against them, who takes Damascus and slays Rezin, 7—9. Ahaz sends a pattern of an altar from Damascus; and Urijah, the high priest, makes one like it for burnt-offerings; reserving the brazen altar for Ahaz to enquire by, 10—16. Ahaz robs and defaces the temple for the king of Assyria, 17, 18. He dies, and is succeeded by his son Hezekiah, 19, 20.

[a] xv. 27—30. 32, 33.
[b] *See on* xv. 38.—2 Chr. xxviii. 1. Is. i. 1. vii. 1. Hos. i. 1. Mic. i. 1.
[c] xiv. 3. xv. 3. 34. xviii. 3. xxii. 2. 1 Kings iii. 14. ix. 4. xi. 4—8. xv. 3. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. xxix. 2. xxxiv. 2, 3.
[d] viii. 18. 1 Kings xii. 28—30. xvi. 31—33. xxii. 25, 26. xxii. 52, 53. 2 Chr. xxii. 3. xxviii. 2—4.
[e] xvii. 17. xxiii. 10. Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2. Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 10. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Ps. cvi. 37, 38. Jer. xxxii. 35. Ez. xvi. 21. xx. 26. 31.
[f] xxi. 2. 11. Deut. xii. 31. 1 Kings xiv. 24. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. Ps. cvi. 35. Ez. xvi. 47.
[g] Deut. xii. 2. 1 Kings xiv. 23. Is. lvii. 5—7. Jer. iv. 4. lxvi. 17. Jer. xvii. 2. Ez. xx. 28, 29.

IN the [a] seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, [b] Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty years old *was* Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and [c] did not *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his father.

3 But [d] he walked in the way of the kings of Israel: yea, and [e] made his son to pass through the fire, [f] according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.

4 And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and [g] on the hills, and under every green tree.

5 Then [h] Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, [i] but could not overcome *him*.

[h] xv. 37. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5—5. Is. vii. 2
[i] 1 Kings xi. 36. xv. 4. Is. vii. 4—6. 14. viii. 6. 9, 9. ix. 6, 7.

6 At that time Rezin king of Syria [k] recovered Elath to Syria, and drave the Jews from [*] Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day.

[k] xiv. 22. Deut. ii. 8.
[*] Heb. *Eloth.* 1 Kings ix. 26. 2 Chr. xxvi. 2.

7 So Ahaz sent messengers [l] to [†] Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, [m] I *am* thy servant, and thy son: come up [n] and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me.

[l] *See on* xv. 29.
[†] Heb. *Tilgath-pilezer.* 1 Chr. v. 26. 2 Chr. xxviii. 20. *Tilgath-pilnezer.*
[m] 1 Kings xx. 4. 32, 33.
[n] Ps. cxlvi. 3—5. Jer. xvii. 5. Lam. iv. 17. Hos. xiv. 3.

8 And Ahaz took [o] the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent *it for* a present [p] to the king of Assyria.

[o] 17, 18. xii. 17, 18. xviii. 15, 16. 2 Chr. xvi. 2. xxviii. 20, 21.
[p] Ps. vii. 15, 16. Is. vii. 17. viii. 7, 8.

9 And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him; for the king of Assyria [q] went up against [‡] Damascus, and took it, and carried *the people of* it captive to [r] Kir, [s] and slew Rezin.

[q] 2 Chr. xxviii. 5. Am. i. 3—5.
[‡] Heb. *Dammesek.*
[r] Is. xxii. 6. Am. ix. 7.
[s] Is. vii. 16. ix. 11.

10 ¶ And king Ahaz went to Da-

"into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour "Jesus Christ!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 2. "He did not that which was right "in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father;" 'as might have been expected from the good education, 'which no doubt, so pious a man as Jotham his father gave 'him; who left him an excellent example.' *Bp. Patrick.* Ahaz was an entire contrast to his ancestor David, and a disgrace to his family.

V. 3, 4. Ahaz imitated the kings of Israel, in worshipping idols, and rebelling against the Lord. It is said in Chronicles that he "burnt *his children* in the fire," and here that he "made *his son* to pass through the fire," to consecrate him to the demon which he worshipped. (2 *Chr.* xxviii. 1—4. *Notes, Lev.* xviii. 21. xx. 2—5.) In short he copied the crimes of the Canaanites, whom God had destroyed by Israel; (*Note, Lev.* xviii. 24—30:) and not only allowed, but set the people an example of, a variety of idolatrous practices. Hezekiah was born some years before the death of Jotham; if he was the son here intended, he was past his infancy at the time. (*Note,* xviii. 2.) He, however, proved an eminently pious prince, and an entire contrast to his most wicked father. (*Notes,* xviii—xx.)

V. 5. The Lord brought these enemies against Ahaz for his crimes: their successes, and the miseries of Judah were very great, immense numbers being slain and taken prisoners; and Ahaz was extremely terrified. But they could not take Jerusalem, dethrone Ahaz, and destroy the family of David, as they had intended: for this was contrary to the purpose, the promises, and the prophecies of God. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxviii. 5—19. *Ps.* lxxvi. 10. *Is.* vii. 1—9.)

V. 6. (*Note,* xiv. 22.)—The word "Jews" is here first used. It is literally the *Judeans;* that is, the men of Judah; as all those, who adhered to the family of David, were called, to distinguish them from the subjects of the kings who reigned over the ten tribes, called Israel.—The general custom among even learned writers, of calling the nation of Israel *Jews,* from the days of Moses, and even before, is inaccurate and unscriptural.

V. 7—9. (*Notes,* xv. 19, 20. 29.) As the king of Assyria brought Ahaz into abject dependence on him, and both weakened him and drained his treasury, it is said that "he distressed him, but strengthened him not," (2 *Chr.* xxviii. 20, 21,) though he averted the present storm.—From this time Syria ceased to be a kingdom: and the region formed successively a part of the kingdom of Assyria, of Chaldea, or of Persia; till it was subjugated by Alexander the Great; after whose death, a new kingdom of Syria was formed, which, with all his other dominions, at length became a part of the Roman empire. (*Note, Dan.* vii. 6.) Ahaz feared danger to his kingdom from Syria, and sought help from Assyria; whence indeed the greatest danger was to be apprehended. (*Note, Is.* vii. 17—25.)

Kir. (9) 'A place in...the upper Media, as Josephus 'tells us.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10—16. (*Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxv. 14—16. xxviii. 22, 23.)

mascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, [t] and saw an altar that *was* at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and [u] the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof.

11 And Urijah the priest [x] built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so [y] Urijah the priest made *it* against king Ahaz came from Damascus.

12 And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and the king [z] approached to the altar, and [a] offered thereon.

13 And [b] he burnt his burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and sprinkled the blood [*] of his peace-offerings upon the altar.

14 And he brought also [c] the brazen altar which *was* before the LORD, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of [d] the altar.

15 And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn [e] the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and [f] the king's burnt-sacrifice, and his meat-offering, with the burnt-offering of all the people of the land, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brazen altar shall be [g] for me to enquire *by*.

16 Thus did [h] Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded.

17 And king Ahaz [i] cut off [k] the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down [l] the sea from off the brazen oxen that *were* under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones:

18 And [m] the covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the LORD, for the king of Assyria.

19 Now [n] the rest of the acts of Ahaz, which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and [o] was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and [p] Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

t Deut. xii. 30. 2 Chr. xxviii. 23—26. Jer. x. 2. Ez. xxiii. 16, 17. Rom. xii. 2. 1 Pet. i. 18.
u Ex. xxiv. 4. xxxix. 43. 1 Chr. xxviii. 11, 12, 19. Ps. cvi. 39. Ez. xliii. 8, 11. Matt. xv. 6, 9.
x 1 Kings xxi. 11—13. 2 Chr. xxvi. 17, 18. Jer. xxiii. 11. Ez. xxii. 26. Dan. iii. 7. Hos. iv. 6. v. 11. Mal. ii. 7—9. Gal. i. 10.
y Is. viii. 2.
z 1 Kings xiii. 1. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—19. xxviii. 23. 25.
a Num. xviii. 4—7.
b Lev. i. ii. iii.
* Heb. *the peace-offerings which were his.*
c Ex. xl. 6. 29. 2 Chr. i. 5. iv. 1. Matt. xxiii. 35.
d 10—12.
e iii. 20. Ex. xxix. 39—41. Num. xxviii. 2—10. Dan. ix. 21. 27. xi. 31. xii. 11.
f Lev. iv. 13—26. 2 Sam. vi. 17, 18. 1 Kings iii. 4. viii. 64. 2 Chr. vii. 4, 5. xxix. 21—24. 32. 35. Ez. xlvi. 4—7. 12—14.
g xviii. 4. Gen. xliv. 5. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Is. ix. 6. Hos. iv. 12.
h *See on* 11.—Acts iv. 19. v. 29. 1 Thes. ii. 4. Jude 11.
i 2 Chr. xxviii. 24. xxix. 19.
k 1 Kings vii. 27—39. 2 Chr. iv. 14.
l xxv. 13—16. 1 Kings vii. 23—26. 2 Chr. iv. 15. Jer. lii. 20.
m xi. 5. 1 Kings x. 5. Ez. xlvi. 2.
n B. C. 726. xv. 6, 7, 36, 38. xx. 20, 21.—*See on* 1 Kings xiv. 29.
o xxi. 18, 26. 2 Chr. xxviii. 27.
p xviii. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxix. 1. Is. i. 1. Hos. i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9, 10. *Ezekias.*

Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of the vanquished Syrians, perhaps when he went to Damascus to congratulate Tiglath-pileser on his success. There he saw an altar, in the temple of some of their idols, which appeared to him more magnificent or convenient, than that which Solomon had made according to the will of God. At the command of Ahaz, with which he sent a model of the altar from Damascus, probably adorned by many figures of idols, the wretched high priest, Urijah, without scruple or hesitation, prepared one like it, with which he profaned the court of the temple; and when Ahaz returned, the altar of God was removed to make way for it. It is uncertain whether sacrifices were offered to the gods of Damascus on this altar, or whether the oblations were presented to JEHOVAH alone.—It seems that Ahaz professed a purpose of converting the former altar into an oracle, at which he might enquire: as the church of Rome, by *adoring the host*, has converted the Lord's supper into the most absurd and detestable idolatry, under the pretence of *honouring* it. (*Note*, xviii. 4.) Some however think, that Ahaz only meant, that he would take advice what to do with the altar: and tradition reports that he demolished it, and made a sun-dial, (called the sun-dial of Ahaz,) of the brass. (xx. 11.) But this is uncertain, and not probable: for we do not read, that Hezekiah made any altar, as in that case he must have done. In the whole transaction, the high priest was willing to oblige the king by servile compliances; and did not, as far as it appears, need either menaces, or promises, or even bribes, to procure his concurrence! 'There are always some men to be found, that will comply with the most wicked commands.' *Bp. Patrick.* He might have said, some *priests*, and *chief priests* and *high priests*. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxvi. 16—23.)

V. 17, 18. Ahaz pillaged and defaced the temple, and its courts, and sacred utensils, in various ways, either to supply his necessities with the plunder, or to express his enmity against the worship of the Lord. (2 *Chr.* xxviii. 24, 25.) The covert of the sabbath, and the entry, seem to have been accommodations for the king and his attendants to repair to the temple-service. To please the king of Assyria, who it is probable paid him a visit, he turned these another way, or to other uses. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* x. 5. *Ez.* xlvi. 1—3.)

V. 20. Ahaz died young; and it has been observed that no king of Judah reached David's age of seventy years, though some of them reigned longer than he had done: but the age of Asa is not recorded.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The word of God affords abundant encouragement to pious parents to give their children good instructions, enforced by good examples, and to pray for them: and these means are so generally made effectual, as sufficiently to verify the proverb, "Train up a child in the way he should

CHAP. XVII.

Hoshea becomes tributary to Shalmaneser, conspires with the king of Egypt against him, and is shut up in prison by the king of Assyria, 1—4. Shalmaneser besieges Samaria; and after three years takes it, and carries Israel captive into Assyria and Media, 5, 6. The crimes, which brought this punishment from God on his people, 7—23. The strange nations, planted in the land, are plagued by lions, 24, 25: but, instructed by a priest of Israel, in the worship of the Lord, they serve him along with their own idols, 26—41.

IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, began [a] Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years.

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [b] but not as the kings of Israel that were before him.

3 Against him came up [c] Shalmaneser [d] king of Assyria; [e] and Hoshea became his servant, and * gave him † presents.

[a] xv. 30. xviii. 9.
[b] iii. 2. x. 31. xiii. 2. 11. xv. 9. 18. 24. 2 Chr. xxx. 5—11.
[c] xviii. 9. Hos. x. 14. *Shalman.*
[d] xv. 19. 29. xvi. 7. xviii. 13. xix. 36, 37. Is. vii. 7, 8. x. 5, 6. 11, 12. xvi. 8. xviii. 14—16. 31.
[e] xvi. 8. xviii. 14
* Heb. *rendered.*
† Or, *tribute,* 2 Sam. viii. 2. 6.

"go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (*Note, Prov.* xxii. 6.) Yet there are exceptions recorded in the Scriptures, to remind us, that every man is born in sin, and that the grace of God alone can change the heart; in order that we may expect the blessing from him only. On the other hand, some who have been, as it were, early dedicated to Satan, and initiated into his service, have, by the victorious grace of God, been made eminent examples of faith and piety: and every accurate observer of mankind, in places favoured with the light of the gospel, has remarked instances of both.—The infatuated slaves of sin heedlessly proceed in those paths, whence others have been hurried into destruction. But we need not wonder that men violate the law of God, in the indulgence of their *natural* passions, when they cannot be restrained from disobeying him, in the most *unnatural* cruelty to themselves and their own children: nor should the insolence and obstinacy of prosperous sinners excite astonishment; seeing so many sin more and more, while severely suffering under the effects of former crimes!—Such is man's carnal enmity against God, that he will have recourse to any expedient, or make the most abject submission to his fellow-creatures, rather than humble himself before God, and seek help from him! But the relief thus obtained, tends to enfeeble and enslave men the more; and it often accelerates, as well as increases, that ruin which it seemed to retard.—Our natural propensity to some sort of religion is not easily extinguished: but, except it be regulated according to the word and by the Spirit of God, it produces the most absurd superstitions, or the most detestable idolatries; or at best it quiets the sinner's conscience, and amuses his mind, with a round of unmeaning ceremonies, frequently connected with the most immoral practices. Even *infidels* have been remarkable for credulity; and the *capacity of believing*, when not exercised on the truth, frequently embraces the most ridiculous falsehoods. But whether kings are impious, or superstitious, or infidel, or sacrilegious, they generally meet with priests of their own stamp, who court their favour by assisting their iniquities or idolatries! Yet such mercenary time-servers and men-pleasers, who bear the name and wear the garb of ministers, are guilty of a greater breach of trust, and the prostitution of a more sacred character, than even the wicked princes whom they flatter and embolden in their sins: as their conduct is, in the highest degree, dishonourable to God and ruinous to man, they merit the deepest contempt and detestation; and assuredly they will "receive the "greater damnation," except by a miracle of grace they are brought to repentance.—The arrogant self-wisdom, which induces men to new model divine ordinances after their own vain imaginations, is insufferably provoking to that "God, who resisteth the proud:" and that external magnificence, which carnal minds affect in his worship, obscures the real glory of heavenly things, excites false ideas of the divine character, and turns men aside from that spiritual service, which alone the Lord accepts and delights in. (*Notes, John* iv. 21—24.) Thus, new ways of worshipping God very speciously introduce gross idolatries; as the church of Israel, and that of Rome, among other examples, have abundantly evinced. But when men forsake God, they forsake their own mercies: and if those who have been trained up in the ways of God, forsake his house and ordinances; and, affecting to be wiser than their pious parents, turn things into another channel, associate with more fashionable companions, and seek to acquire the favour, assistance, or commendation of ungodly men; there is reason to fear that sudden destruction is coming upon them, from which they shall by no means escape. (*Notes,* xxi. 1—3. 1 *Kings* xii. 6—15. *Ec.* ii. 18—23.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. (*Note,* xv. 30.) During more than eight years after the slaughter of Pekah, Hoshea was kept out of possession of the kingdom, or was unsettled in it: and the years of his reign are reckoned from his establishment on the throne, and not from the death of his predecessor.

V. 2. We are told by the Jewish writers, that the golden calf had before this been carried away from Dan; (*Notes, Hos.* x. 5—8;) that Hoshea did not enforce that idolatry as his predecessors had done; and that he allowed the Israelites, who were so disposed, to go up to Jerusalem to worship. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxx. 6—9.) He, however, did "evil in the sight of the LORD;" though he was not in all respects so wicked as his predecessors. Whether an *idolater*, or not, he was ungodly; and his murder of Pekah, and usurpation of the kingdom, merited the punishment which he endured: whilst the people were fully ripe for destruction; and the guilt, which had been accumulating for ages, was punished in that generation. (*Note, Zech.* v. 5—11. *P. O.*)—In finally destroying the kingdom of Israel, during the time of that king, who was less wicked than the rest; the Lord shewed, that he punished the crimes of the people at large, and not those of their princes only, as many might be ready to imagine. (*Note,* 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1, 2.)

V. 3. It is most probable that Shalmaneser was the son

4 And the king of Assyria [f] found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So [g] king of Egypt, and [h] brought no present to the king of Assyria, as *he had done* year by year; therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and [i] bound him in prison.

5 Then [k] the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it [l] three years.

6 In the ninth year of Hoshea, [m] the king of Assyria took Samaria, and [n] carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in [o] Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of [p] the Medes.

7 For *so* it was, that the children of Israel had [q] sinned against [r] the LORD their God, [s] which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, [t] and had feared other gods,

8 And [u] walked in the statutes of the heathen, (whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel,) and [x] of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

9 And the children of Israel did [y] secretly *those* things that *were* not right against the LORD their God; and they built them high places in all their cities, [z] from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

10 And [a] they set them up [*] images and [b] groves [c] in every high hill, and under every green tree:

11 And there they [d] burnt incense in all the high places, as *did* the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things [e] to provoke the LORD to anger.

f xxiv. 1. 20. Ez. xvii. 13—19.
g xviii. 21. Is. xxx. 1—4. xxxi. 1—3. Ez. xvii. 15.
B. C. 725.
h xviii. 14, 15.
i xxv. 7. 2 Chr. xxxii. 11. Ps. cxlix. 7, 8.
k xviii. 9. xxv. 1—3. Jer. lii. 4, 5.
l xviii. 10, 11. Hos. i. 6. 9. xiii. 16.
m Lev. xxvi. 32, 33. 38. Deut. iv. 25—28. xxviii. 36. 64. xxix. 28. xxx. 18. 1 Kings xiv. 15, 16. Am. v. 27.
n xix. 12. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. xxxvii. 12, 13.
o Is. xiii. 17. xxi. 2. Dan. v. 28.
p Deut. xxxi. 16, 17. 29. xxxii. 15, &c. Josh. xxiii. 16. Judg. ii. 14—17. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14—16. Neh. ix. 26. Ps. cvi. 35—41. Ez. xxiii. 2, &c. Hos. iv. 1—3. viii. 5—14.
q xvi. 2. 1 Kings xi. 4. xv. 3. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 5.
r *See on* Ex. xx. 2.
t 35. Jer. x. 5.
u xvi. 3. 10. xxi. 2. Lev. xviii. 3. 27—30. Deut. xii. 30, 31. xviii. 9. 1 Kings xii. 28. xvi. 31—33. xxi. 26. Jer. x. 2.
x Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.
y Deut. xiii. 6. xxvii. 15. Job xxxi. 27. Ez. viii. 12.
z xviii. 8. Hos. xii. 11.
a xvi. 4. Ex. xxxiv. 13. Lev. xxvi. 1. 1 Kings xiv. 23. Is. lvii. 5.
* Heb. *statues.*
b Deut. xvi. 21. Mic. v. 14.
c *See on* 1 Kings xiv. 23.—Deut. xii. 2, 3.
d 1 Kings xiii. 1. 2 Chr. xxviii. 25. Jer. xliv. 17.
e xxi. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 56—58.

of Tiglath-pileser.—Menahem had given his predecessor Pul footing in the land, and encouragement to come again; by raising a large sum of money for him, and by rendering his kingdom dependent on him. Ahaz king of Judah likewise, by purchasing the help of Tiglath-pileser, had procured the destruction of the kingdom of Syria, which was of small extent and force, compared with that of Assyria: and thus every rampart was broken down, which could exclude the Assyrians from the land of Israel and Judah. (*Notes*, xv. 19, 20. xvi. 7—9.)

V. 4. So is supposed to be the same person, as is called Sabacus, or Sabacon, in pagan writers. He was king of Ethiopia; but he invaded Egypt, took possession of the kingdom, and reigned there for a long term of years.—About this time, or rather earlier, the rivalship began between the kings of Egypt, and the monarchs of different nations, who successively were powerful in Asia, to the north, or north-east of Canaan; which, lying between the contending powers, was for many ages brought into dependence on the one or the other of them. (*Notes*, *2 Chr.* xxxv. 20—24. *Dan.* xi. 5. *Zech.* ix. 8.) But the people, contrary to the commands of God, were more disposed to unite with the Egyptians, than with any of their opponents. —Had Hoshea endeavoured to effect a thorough reformation in Israel; and then, in dependence on God, had he openly attempted to shake off every foreign yoke; he might possibly have succeeded. But the manner, in which he attempted to change one yoke for another, without returning to the Lord, or seeking his assistance, formed a mixture of perfidy, impolicy, and ungodliness; and proved the immediate occasion of his ruin and that of his people. It seems probable, that Shalmaneser by some means took Hoshea prisoner, before he laid siege to Samaria: and that Hoshea ended his days in a prison. His name is the same as that, by which Joshua was at first called: (*Note*, *Num.* xiii. 16:) so that the settlement of Israel in Canaan, and the expulsion of the ten tribes from it, occurred under the government of persons originally of the same name!

V. 5, 6. The inhabitants of Samaria doubtless endured great extremities, in the long siege and terrible destruction of the city: but the brevity of the sacred historian seems significantly to intimate, that the Lord did not now notice their affliction, as he had done before the measure of their iniquities was filled. (*Notes*, xiv. 26, 27. xviii. 9—12. *Hos.* viii. 7, 8. x. 14, 15. xiii. 15, 16. *Mic.* i. 5—7.)—When Shalmaneser had taken Samaria, and become absolute master of the whole land, he formed the project of changing the inhabitants, and in part accomplished it; but it was more fully completed by Esar-haddon, his grandson, several years afterwards. (*Ezra* iv. 2.) It is, however, here spoken of by anticipation. Yet it seems, that some of the poorer Israelites were at last left in the land, many of whom were incorporated with the new inhabitants. (*2 Chr.* xxxiv. 6, 7.) But, as the northern part of the country, called Galilee, was, in the time of Christ, inhabited by persons acknowledged to be of the seed of Israel, who went up to Jerusalem to worship; whilst the middle of the country was occupied by the Samaritans, who were of another origin and religion; it is probable that the new inhabitants did not so fully occupy the *northern*, as the *middle* parts of the land.—Probably, the Israelites, who were carried captive to a great distance, in the dominions of the conqueror, were chiefly incorporated among the nations: yet some of them seem to have retained the knowledge of their original, and of part of their religion; and either to have returned with their brethren after the Babylonish captivity, or to have united with those Jews, who were afterwards dispersed in many different countries of the world. (*Note*, *Ezra* ii. 64. *Luke* ii. 36—38.)—Some, however, think, that incorporated bodies of them are still existing.

V. 7—11. The iniquities of Israel were many and aggravated: but their apostasy from God to idolatry especi-

12 For they served idols, [f] whereof the LORD had said unto them, [g] Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the LORD [h] testified against Israel, [i] and against Judah, [k] by [*] all the prophets, *and by* all the [l] seers, saying, [m] Turn ye from your evil ways, and [n] keep my commandments, *and* my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but [o] hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that [p] did not believe in the LORD their God.

15 And they rejected his statutes, and [q] his covenant that he made with their fathers, and [r] his testimonies which he testified against them, and they followed [s] vanity, and [t] became vain, and went after the heathen that *were* round about them, *concerning* [u] whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them.

16 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them [x] molten images, *even* two calves, and made [y] a grove, and [z] worshipped all the host of heaven, and served [a] Baal.

17 And [b] they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and [c] used divination and enchantments, and [d] sold themselves to do evil [e] in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and [f] removed them out of his sight: there was none left but [g] the tribe of Judah only.

f Ex. xx. 3—5. xxxiv. 14. Deut. v. 7—9.
g Deut. iv. 15—19. 23—25. xii. 4.
h Deut. viii. 19. xxxi. 21. Neh. ix. 29, 30. Ps. l. 7. lxxxi 8, 9. Jer. xlii. 19. Acts xx. 21.
i 2 Chr. xxxvi. 15, 16. Jer. iii. 8—11. Hos. iv. 15.
k Deut. iv. 26. Josh. xxiii. 16. Judg. vi. 10. x. 11—14. 1 Sam. xii. 7—15. Is. i. 5—15. 21—24. Jer. v. 29—31. Zech. i. 3—6.
* Heb. *the hand of all.*
l *See on* 1 Sam. ix. 9.—1 Chr. xxix. 29.
m Is. i. 16—20. iv. 6, 7. Jer. vii. 3—7. xviii. 11. xxv. 4, 5. xxxv. 15. Hos. xiv. 1.
n Jer. vii. 22, 23. xxvi. 4—6.
o Deut. xxxi. 27. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13. Prov. xxix. 1. Is. xlviii. 4. Jer. vii. 26. Rom. ii. 4, 5. Heb. iii. 7, 8.
p Deut. i. 32. Ps. lxxviii. 22. 32. cvi. 24. Heb. iii. 12. xxix. 10—15. 25. Jer. xxxi. 32. xliv. 4.
q Ex. xxiv. 6—8. Deut. r 2 Chr. xxxvi. 15, 16. Neh. ix. 26. 29, 30.
s Deut. xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. xii. 21. 1 Kings xvi. 13. Ps. cxv. 8. Jer. x. 8. 15. Jon. ii. 8.
t Jer. ii. 5. Rom. i. 21—23. 1 Cor. viii. 4.
u 8. 11, 12. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. 9.
x Ex. xxxii. 8. 1 Kings xii. 28. Ps. cvi. 19—20. Is. xliv. 9, 10.
y 10. 1 Kings xiv. 15. 23. xv. 13. xvi. 33.
z Deut. iv. 19 Jer. viii. 2.
a x. 18—28. xi. 13. 1 Kings xvi. 31. xxii. 53.
b xvi. 3. xxi. 6. Lev. xviii. 21. 2 Chr. xxviii. 3. Ps. cvi. 37, 38. Ez. xx. 26. 31. xxiii. 37. 39.
c xxi. 6. Deut. xviii. 10—12 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Is. viii. 19. xlvii. 9. 12, 13. Jer. xxvii. 9. Mic. v 12. Acts xvi. 16. Gal. v. 20.
d 1 Kings xxi. 20. 25. Is. l. 1.
e 11. xxi. 6.
f xiii. 23. xxiii. 27. Deut. xxix. 20—28. xxxii. 21—26. Josh. xxiii.
13. 15. Jer. xv. 1. Hos. ix. 3. g 1 Kings xi. 13. 32. 36. xii. 20. Hos. xi. 12.

ally formed the violation of the national covenant. The Lord had, as it were, graciously espoused them to himself: but this spiritual adultery excited his jealousy; and, by persisting in it, they provoked him to give them a writing of divorcement, and to put them away. (*Note, Jer.* iii. 6—11.) They had, as a nation, experienced his power and love in delivering them from Egypt, and giving them Canaan; and they had witnessed and executed his vengeance upon the idolatrous Canaanites: yet, in disobedience to express and repeated commandments, they had ungratefully and absurdly worshipped their idols. They had also willingly obeyed the orders of idolatrous kings to worship the golden calves and Baalim. (*Note, Hos.* v. 11, 12.) They had likewise committed much secret idolatry, in addition to that which was established by law; and especially they had worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, which as the *hosts* or *armies* of God, stationed in the visible heavens, are employed to fulfil his will: (*Note, Deut.* iv. 19:) and finally, they so multiplied their temples, or altars, that they were found in every village, and at every shepherd's lodge, where he watched his flocks and fruits, (*Is.* i. 8. *Note, Hos.* xii. 10, 11,) as well as in the fenced cities. Thus "they wrought wicked things," as if they had expressly intended "to provoke the LORD to anger;" so that at length the predicted and denounced judgments came upon them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12—14. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Neh.* ix. 26—30. *Zech.* i. 5, 6.) The people rejected the testimonies of God which he testified against them; and they did not believe in him, or depend on him for protection, according to his promises. They hoped to sin with impunity, and concluded that the service of the Lord would be unprofitable. They not only violated the law, by presumptuously doing those things, concerning which "the LORD had said unto them, Ye "shall not do this thing;" (*Note, Num.* xv. 30, 31:) but they persisted in their rebellion and idolatry, and hardened their hearts in impenitency. (*Notes, Jer.* viii. 4—7. *Ez.* xviii. 30—32. *Rom.* ii. 4—6.) "To harden the neck," is a metaphor taken from the stiffness of the neck of an ox, when with his full strength he resists the attempts of the husbandman, to put the yoke upon him, or to bring him to draw in it: and it aptly represents the self-will, earnestness, and stubbornness, with which the presumptuous sinner sets himself to rebel against God, in the midst of warnings, convictions, judgments, and mercies. (*Note, 2 Chr.* xxx. 6—9. *Prov.* xxix. 1. *Is.* xlviii. 3—5.) 'This was the original of all the sins they committed; 'they did not believe God's prophets, but hearkened to deceivers.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 15. *Became vain.*] By making and worshipping lifeless images, the people became senseless, like unto them: and by worshipping imagined deities under these images, they learned to imitate all the vices ascribed to those demons. Thus among the Greeks and Romans, the worshippers of Bacchus revelled in intemperance, those of Venus rioted in licentiousness, and those of Mars delighted in shedding human blood. The case is the same with modern idolaters. By worshipping Satan under all these names, they were conformed to the very nature, and imbibed all the hateful qualities, of that arch-apostate and rebel. (*Note, Rom.* i. 24—32.)

V. 16. It is probable that the words (אֲשֵׁרִים and) rendered *a grove* and *groves* (10), mean some kind of images set up in the temples originally built in groves; and not the trees which formed the grove. (*Notes,* xxi. 7, 8, *v.* 7. 1 *Kings* xiv. 22—24.)

V. 17. *Marg. Ref.—Notes,* xvi. 3, 4. *Ex.* xxii. 18. *Deut.* xviii. 9—12.—*To provoke,* &c.] The people acted, as if their express intention had been to provoke the Lord to anger: they had sold themselves as slaves to Satan, to work evil in the sight of God, that they might in every thing displease him as much as possible. (*Notes,* 7—11. 1 *Kings* xxi. 20. 25, 26. *Jer.* vii. 19. *Ez.* viii. 17.)

V. 18. *The tribe of Judah only.*] That is, the tribe of

19 Also [h] Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but [i] walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

20 And the LORD [k] rejected [l] all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and [m] delivered them into the hand of spoilers, [n] until he had cast them out of his sight.

21 For [o] he rent Israel from the house of David: and [p] they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and [q] Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin [r] a great sin.

22 For the children of Israel [s] walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them:

23 Until [t] the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, [u] as he had said by all his servants the prophets. [x] So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria, unto this day.

24 ¶ And [y] the king of Assyria brought *men* from [z] Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from [a] Ava, and from [b] Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria, instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt [c] in the cities thereof.

25 And *so* it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, *that* [d] they feared not the LORD; therefore [e] the LORD sent lions among them, which slew *some* of them.

26 Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, [f] and placed in the cities of Samaria, [g] know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land.

27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither [h] one of the priests whom ye brought from thence, and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.

28 Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt [i] in Beth-el, and [k] taught them how they should fear the LORD.

h 1 Kings xiv. 22, 23. 2 Chr. xxi. 11. 13. Jer. ii. 28. iii. 8—11. Ez. xvi. 51, 52. xxii. 2—16. xxiii. 4—13.
i viii. 18. 27. xvi. 3.
k 15. 1 Sam. xv. 23. 26. xvi. 1. Jer. vi. 30. Rom. xi. 1, 2.
l 1 Chr. xvi. 13. Neh. ix. 2. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. xxxi. 36, 37. xxxiii. 24—26. xlvi. 28.
m xiii. 3. 7. xv. 18—20. 29. xviii. 9. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5, 6.
n *See on* 18.—Deut. xi. 12. Jon. i. 3. 10. Matt. xxv. 41. 2 Thes. i. 9.
o 1 Kings xi. 11. 31. xiv. 8. Is. vii. 17.
p 1 Kings xii. 19, 20. 2 Chr. x. 15—19.
q *See on* 1 Kings xii. 28—30. xiv. 16. 2 Chr. xi. 14, 15.
r Gen. xx. 9. Ex. xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 17. 24. Ps. xxv. 11. John xix. 11.
s *See on* iii. 3. x. 29. 31. xiii. 2. 6. 11. xv. 9.
t *See on* 18. 20.
u *See on* 13.—1 Kings xiii. 2. xiv. 16. Hos. i. 4—9. Am. v. 27. Mic. i. 6.
x 6. xviii. 11, 12.
y Ezra iv. 2—10.
z 30. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11.
a 31. xviii. 34. Is. xxxvii. 13. *Ivah.*
b xix. 13. Is. x. 9. xxxvi. 19.
c 6. Matt. x. 5.
d 28. 32. 34. 41. Josh. xxii. 25. Jer. x. 7. Dan. vi. 26. Jon. i. 9.
e ii. 24. 1 Kings xiii. 24. xx. 36. Jer. xv. 3. Ez. xiv. 15.
f *See on* 24.
g 27. 1 Sam. viii. 9. x. 25. Am. viii. 14.
h Judg. xvii. 13. 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 2. 2 Chr. xi. 15.
i 1 Kings xii. 29—32.
k Is. xxix. 13. Matt. xv. 14.

Judah, with the Benjamites, Levites, and others, who were incorporated along with Judah into one people.

V. 19—23. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi. 12, 13. xii. 16. 26—33. xiv. 15, 16. *Ps.* li. 11.

V. 24. (*Note*, 5, 6.) Shalmaneser seems to have carried away all the chief men, and the bulk of the nation; but to have left some poor remains of the Israelites, who dwelt in the land, during the remainder of his reign, and the busy reign of Sennacherib. But Esarhaddon more entirely removed the old inhabitants, and peopled the country from different parts of his dominions: and by that time Babylon, which had formed a distinct kingdom, was brought under the government of the king of Assyria, and some of these new inhabitants were removed from thence. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 11. *Ezra* iv. 10.)—The cities in the region of Samaria had not been destroyed, but reserved for the new inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25, 26. These colonists had met with no remarkable judgments, when they served idols in their own countries: but they now possessed the land, which JEHOVAH had called by his own name; and he was pleased to shew them, that Israel had not been dispossessed, because he was not able to defend them, but because he had given them up to ruin for their sins. It was also proper they should be convinced, that they had no right to their new possessions, except by JEHOVAH's allowance; and that he expected that they should do him homage for their estates: and therefore a number of lions were let loose upon them, as soon as they entered the land. The desolations of war would naturally make way for the increase of wild beasts: but these lions assaulted the people in so remarkable a manner; that they reasonably and truly concluded, that they were sent by "the God of the land" to punish them for not serving him. (*Notes, Judg.* xvi. 23, 24. 1 *Kings* xx. 23—25. *Dan.* v. 1—4.)

V. 27, 28. It is not at all probable, that this instructor was a priest of the family of Aaron, or that he taught the people from the book of the divine law; as some have thought. One of the priests "carried away from Samaria" is expressly mentioned. And the person selected had, most likely, been one of the priests, either of the golden calf at Beth-el, or of some high place in that neighbourhood: accordingly he resorted to Beth-el as his residence, when sent to teach the people to worship the God of the land, having doubtless assistants in the business.—It is, however, probable, that he did not teach them to worship JEHOVAH by images; though we can only know what he taught, by the result: but it is evident, they were led to consider JEHOVAH as the local tutelary god of the land, one among a group of other deities; instead of worshipping him as the one, true, eternal, almighty, and glorious Creator, Governor, and Judge of the world. (*Note, Jer.* x. 6—8. 11. *Zeph.* ii. 11. *Zech.* xiv. 6—9.) They probably learned to offer sacrifices, with some external regard to the ceremonies of the Mosaick law, but without understanding the meaning and use of the sacred ordinances: but it is not certain whether circumcision was introduced among the Samaritans at this time, or at a later period. (*Notes*, 41. *Neh.* xiii. 23—30.) Along with these and such like observances, they were allowed, or they assumed,

29 Howbeit every nation [l] made gods of their own, and put *them* in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.

30 And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima.

31 And [m] the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites [n] burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.

32 So they feared the LORD, and [o] made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in [p] the houses of the high places.

33 They [q] feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations * whom they carried away from thence.

34 Unto this day they do after the former manners: they [r] fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, [s] whom he named Israel;

35 With [t] whom the LORD had made a covenant, and [u] charged them, saying, Ye shall not [x] fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them:

36 But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power, and [y] a stretched out arm, [z] him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.

37 And [a] the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he [b] wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; [c] and ye shall not fear other gods.

38 And the covenant that I have made with you [d] ye shall not forget, neither shall ye fear other gods.

39 But [e] the LORD your God ye shall fear; and [f] he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.

40 Howbeit they did not hearken, [g] but they did after their former manner.

41 So [h] these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they [i] unto this day.

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the liberty of serving their own idols, according to the customs of their several tribes.

V. 29—31. Learned men have framed many conjectures concerning the meaning of the several names here made use of, and the idols and idolatries signified by them. But such obsolete abominations, with which every thing brutal, cruel, and licentious was connected, are not worth understanding. (*Notes, Ex.* xxiii. 13. *Josh.* xxiii. 7. *Jer.* x. 11. *Zech.* xiii. 2, 3.)

V. 32. After the example of Jeroboam, these men chose the priests of JEHOVAH from the lowest of the people; (*1 Kings* xiii. 33;) whilst probably, the chief nobles were ambitious of the honour, of being priests to their favourite idols!

V. 33—40. The new inhabitants of the land imitated the idolatrous Israelites, by associating their idols with JEHOVAH, as the objects of worship. The remainder, however, of the verses seems to relate to the Israelites after they were carried captive. They still persevered in idolatry and disobedience; and, not being purified, were left to be consumed, in the furnace.—It is said, that the Israelites "did not fear the LORD" (34); yet the heathens, who followed their example, are said "to have feared the "LORD." (32. 40.) The Israelites did not so much as fear the wrath of the almighty God: but on the other hand the poor Pagans feared the power of his wrath, and to avert it paid him some ignorant worship, according to the wretched instructions given them. As this was an external acknowledgment of his power and Godhead, and a homage paid to him, he was pleased in consequence to withdraw his judgments from them.

V. 41. Some ascribe these words to Jeremiah, the supposed writer of this part of the history, others to Ezra after the captivity. However, these *Cutheans*, (as the Jews call them from *Cuthah*, 24,) maintained this mongrel religion till after that latter period, and so were proper successors of idolatrous Israel, the professed people of God. About four hundred years before Christ, a temple was built by them, in competition with the temple at Jerusalem: for, having been joined by a number of apostate Jews and a priest of the family of Aaron, they renounced gross idolatry, and became schismatical worshippers of JEHOVAH, receiving some parts, and rejecting others, of the Jewish scriptures. (*Notes, 27, 28. Neh.* xiii. 23—30.) It is not requisite to decide, whether there were any true godliness among them: but, as a people, "they knew not what they "worshipped, for salvation was of the Jews." (*Notes, John* iv. 19—24.) Christ commanded his disciples, whom he sent forth in his life-time, not to enter into any city of the Samaritans: yet he himself spent two days at Sychar, one of their cities; (*Note, John* iv. 39—42:) and the apostles after the day of Pentecost did not regard the

CHAP. XVIII.

Hezekiah reigns well, abolishes idolatry, and prospers, 1—8. In his time Samaria is taken, and Israel carried captive, 9—12. Sennacherib invades Judah, and Hezekiah pays him tribute, 13—16. Rabshakeh, sent by Sennacherib, in an insulting and blasphemous speech, aims to induce the people to revolt, 17—35. Hezekiah's servants hold their peace, and rend their clothes, 36, 37.

Samaritans as Gentiles; for they preached in their cities before the conversion of Cornelius. (*Notes, Acts* i. 4—8. viii. 5—8. x. 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The long-suffering of God, instead of leading sinners to repentance, often renders them more secure: for, having long transgressed with impunity, they conclude that there is no danger; and thus they "treasure up wrath "against the day of wrath." (*Notes, Ec.* viii. 11—13. *Rom.* ii. 4—6.)—Ungodly men are not all alike abandoned to flagrant enormities: but the least criminal deserve worse than the most severe temporal calamities; and consequently none have any right to complain, if God the righteous Sovereign shall see good, in their days, to execute upon a guilty people the accumulated vengeance of many generations. For when the appointed measure of iniquity is filled up, the Lord will forbear no longer. Then kings and people reciprocally suffer on account of each other's crimes; and their causes and interests are no more separable, in the great concerns of national judgments and mercies, than those of the head, or heart, and the several members of the human body. (*P. O. 2 Sam.* xxiv. 1—9.)—When the service of God, which is perfect freedom, is renounced, men become slaves to the vilest and most tyrannical of masters: and sinners, left to themselves, never attempt any thing more than a change of one tyrant for another; not having the most remote idea or expectation of complete liberty in the service of God. The extravagant profligate sometimes, in advancing years, exchanges the bondage of his sensual lusts, for the yoke of avarice or ambition; and the immoral and profane may commence Pharisees, or hypocrites: but mere nature can advance little further than this. Yet the gospel calls us, not only to break our league with every lust, and to renounce every sinful connexion, however formed, confirmed, or palliated by specious pretences; but to refuse obedience to every superior who would require us to sin against God; which if we would do, we must seek the effectual assistance of his special grace. In all other cases the Lord marks with disapprobation men's violations of agreements, and refusal of obedience to those whom his providence has placed over them: and perfidious attempts for deliverance, from trouble or thraldom, commonly terminate in deeper misery and ruin.

V. 7—23.

When God arises to judgment, all opposition is vain, and only tends to prolong or increase misery. He keeps an exact register of our advantages, as well as of our sins and their aggravations: and when the day of retribution arrives, he will produce the whole account; that all the world may see "he hath not done without cause, all that "he hath done" against the workers of iniquity: for the day of his wrath will be the revelation of his righteous judgment; and indeed his justice in the temporal sufferings of guilty nations is frequently evidenced in the same manner. (*Note, Ez.* xiv. 22, 23.)—No authority or example can bear men out in breaking the commandments of God: but the judgments which they have known to be executed upon sinners; the favours conferred on themselves; and the testimony of the Lord's ministers, warning, exhorting, and inviting them to repent and to turn to God, will aggravate the guilt of those, who harden their hearts in disobedience.—Enormous as the outward wickedness of the world evidently is, the secret crimes, and sinful thoughts, desires, and purposes of mankind are immensely worse.—Murders, rapines, adulteries, thefts, robberies, and treason, are atrocious evils, which, for the good of society, are marked with a black brand of infamy: yet, in the balance of unbiassed reason, as well as in holy writ, ingratitude and enmity to God, proud rebellion against him, and contempt, neglect, or defiance of him; and all the idolatry, or impiety, which result from these propensities, violate still higher obligations, with far deeper malignity, and spring from the worst state of the heart imaginable. These evils will therefore be peculiarly considered, in the condemnation of the wicked: especially of such as have been favoured with revelation, and the ordinances of God; and who have been his professed people, outwardly dedicated to him, and admitted into covenant with him.—Without turning from every evil way, and unreservedly keeping the commandments and statutes of God, there can be no true godliness: yet, this conversion must spring from a belief of his testimony, both concerning "his wrath "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unright-"eousness of men," and concerning his mercy in Jesus Christ, to all who repent and embrace this salvation. The rejection of his statutes and covenant is always the effect of unbelief; through which sinners harden their hearts against the fear of God, exclude the desire of his favour, and obstinately set themselves to break his commandments; and thus following lying vanities, become worthless and base, like their worldly idols.—When sinners have resolutely turned away from God, they not only commit those sins, which promise present advantage or gratification; but they transgress without any conceivable temptation, as if they purposely devised to provoke the Lord to anger: and, having sold themselves to do evil, they serve Satan, with greater self-denial, and violence done to their most rational natural affections, than ever could be required of them in the service of God. He peculiarly abhors those, who seduce or *drive* others, by any means, from following him, and cause them to sin against him; and generations yet unborn may curse the inventors of any false religion, or plausible system of infidelity, as the occasions of their everlasting perdition: nay, bad examples alone may render men chargeable with this tremendous guilt of murdering the souls of others; for human nature is far more ready to copy the evil than the good, and to listen to tempters than to monitors. How circumspectly then should we walk, seeing such dreadful consequences may ensue, for ages to come, in various ways, from our misconduct!

a 9. xv. 30. xvii. NOW it came to pass [a] in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of
b xvi. 20. 1 Chr. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxix. 1. Matt. i. 9, 10. *Ezekias.* Israel, *that* [b] Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* [c] Abi the daughter of Zechariah.

c 2 Chr. xxix. 1. *Abijah.*
d xx. 3. Ex. xv. 26. Deut. vi 18. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Job xxxiii. 27. Ps. cxix. 128 Rom. vii. 12. Eph. vi. 1.

3 And he did *that which was* [d] right in the sight of the LORD, [e] according to all that David his father did.

e xxii. 2. 1 Kings iii. 14. xi. 4. 38. xv. 5. 11. 2 Chr. xxix. 2.

4 He [f] removed the high places, and [g] brake the * images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces [h] the brazen serpent that Moses had made: [g] for [i] unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it † Nehushtan.

f xii. 3. xiv. 4. xv. 4. 35. Lev. xxvi. 30. 1 Kings iii. 2, 3. xv. 14. xxii. 43. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Ez. xx. 28, 29.
g xxiii. 4, &c. Deut. vii. 5. xii. 2, 3. Judg. vi. 25. 28. 1 Kings xv. 12, 13. 2 Chr. xix. 3. xxxi. 1. xxxiii. 3.
h Num. xxi. 8, 9. John iii. 14, 15. i xvi. 15. * Heb. *statues.* † That is, *a piece of brass.*

V. 24—41.

When the Lord casts off his professing people, or delivers them into the hands of their enemies, he will take care of his own glory: and he can let their insulting conquerors know, that they have not prevailed against them for their own righteousness, or by their own power; but that he has been provoked by the sins of those who were called by his name, to give their enemies power against them. (*Notes* and *P. O.* 1 *Sam.* v. vi.)—All rational creatures ought to serve their Creator: and the very heathen, who honour not his "eternal power and Godhead," and are not thankful for his goodness, are left without excuse: (*Note, Rom.* i. 18—20:) yet, that ignorance, which springs from a comparative want of the means of instruction, is an alleviation of the sinner's guilt, and will plead effectually for the mitigation of his punishment; and the nearer any approach to "the valley of vision," the more inexcusable will they be, if they continue irreligious, or attached to absurd and cruel superstitions.—The terror of the Almighty sometimes induces unconverted sinners to a forced or feigned submission: but, when instructed by ignorant or hypocritical teachers, they form very unworthy thoughts of God; expect to please him by an outside form and a lip-labour; and endeavour to reconcile his service with that of Mammon, the love of the world, and the indulgence of their darling lusts. Thus, slavish fear united with ignorance, produces an unwilling worship, with the worthless dregs of men's time and spirits, when the prime of them have been spent and exhausted in pursuits and pleasures more agreeable to their carnal minds; and they remain destitute of true repentance, faith, love, and devotedness to God. This kind of religion abounds from age to age, being congenial to the human heart, meeting with little disquietude from the natural conscience, and exciting no opposition from the world; or from Satan, who willingly compounds to give up a part, for a time, that he may at length engross the whole. Yet, even such a worthless form of godliness is less dishonourable to the Lord, than the confident presumption of bold hypocrites and apostates. These come short even of this "fear of God;" and in opposition to the knowledge which they have acquired, they cast his law behind their backs; set his threatenings, his power, and justice at defiance; and despise or abuse his mercies and his promises.—If severe afflictions fail to bring such men to repentance, (an effect which they seldom produce,) their ruin will be inevitable and most tremendous. But, may that "fear of the LORD which is the "beginning of wisdom," possess our hearts and influence our conduct, that we may be ready for every change! Our worldly settlements are precarious: we know not whither we may be driven before we die; and we must soon leave this world: then "the wicked will be driven away in his "wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death;" having "chosen that good part, which shall never be taken "from him." (*Notes, Prov.* xiv. 32. *Luke* x. 38—42.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. Hoshea seems to have been placed on the throne above four years before the death of Ahaz; but his establishment in quiet possession of the kingdom might take place some time after, from which the third year here mentioned was reckoned. (*Notes,* 9, 10. xv. 30. xvii. 1.) For it is not likely that Hezekiah reigned a year along with his father.

V. 2. *Twenty and five,* &c.] If we suppose that Ahaz at his death had nearly completed his thirty-seventh year, and Hezekiah was only entering on his twenty-fifth when he began to reign, Ahaz must have been under thirteen years of age, when his son was born! (xvi. 1, 2.) But there are on record well-attested instances, especially in those climates, of men having children at as early a period: and there seems to have been a peculiar wisdom of Providence displayed in this uncommon circumstance; for thus Ahaz had a son of mature age to succeed him, when he had filled up so speedily the measure of his iniquities. And as Hezekiah was about nine years of age at the death of Jotham his grandfather, perhaps some good seed, which that pious prince had sown in his tender mind, might conduce to the excellency of his character. (*Note,* xvi. 3, 4.)

V. 3. After the example of David, Hezekiah was sincerely and inwardly devoted to God; he delighted in his service, and persevered in promoting the cause of true religion to the end of his days: and, while preserved from scandalous offences, such as David had been betrayed into, he emulated the strength of his faith, the vigour of his love, and the fervency of his piety. (*Notes,* xxii. 1, 2.) 2 *Chr.* xxxi. 20, 21.)

V. 4. We shall hereafter meet with a fuller account of Hezekiah's reformation.—(*Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxix—xxxi.)—His father had set him a very bad example, and probably had given him as bad an education: yet he came to the throne a confirmed servant of God, full of zeal for his glory, and confidence in his protection and assistance. Isaiah began to prophesy in the reign of Uzziah, or Azariah: (*Notes, Is.* i. 1. vi. 1—4:) and it is highly probable, that Hezekiah became attached to him during Ahaz's life-time and received from him those instructions, which, by the

5 He [j] trusted in the LORD God of Israel: so that [k] after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him.

6 For [l] he clave to the LORD, *and* departed not [*] from following him, but [m] kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

7 And [n] the LORD was with him, *and* [o] he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he [p] rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

8 He smote [q] the Philistines, *even* unto [†] Gaza, and the borders thereof, [r] from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

9 ¶ And it came to pass in [s] the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which *was* the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel; *that* [t] Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

10 And at the end of three years [u] they took it, *even* in the sixth year of Hezekiah, (that *is*, the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel,) Samaria was taken.

11 And [v] the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah, and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

12 Because [x] they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that

j xix. 10. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Job xiii. 15. Ps. xiii. 5. xxvii. 1, 2. xlvi. 1, 2. lxxxiv. 12. cxlvi. 5, 6. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Matt. xxvii. 43. Eph. i. 12.

k xix. 15—19. xxiii. 25. 2 Chr. xiv. 11. xvi. 7—9 xx. 20. 35.

l Deut. x. 20. Josh. xxiii. 8.

* Heb. *from after him.*

m xvii. 13. 16, 19. Jer. xi. 4. John xiv. 15. 21. xv. 10. 14. 1 John v. 3.

n Gen. xxi. 22. xxxix. 2, 3. 1 Sam. xviii. 14. 2 Chr. xv. 2. Ps. xlvi. 11. lx. 12. Matt. i. 23. xxviii 20. Acts vii. 9, 10.

o Gen. xxxix. 2. 1 Sam. xviii. 5. 14. *marg.* 2 Sam. viii. 6. 14. 2 Chr. xxxi. 21. xxxii. 30. Ps. i. 3.

p 20. xvi. 7.

q 2 Chr. xxviii. 18. Is. xiv. 29.

† Heb. *Azzah.*

r xvii. 9. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. Is. v. 2.

s 1. xvii. 4—6.

t xvii. 3. Hos x. 14. *Shalmán.*

u Hos. xiii. 16. Am. iii. 11—15. iv. 1—3. vi. 7. ix. 1—4. Mic. i. 6—9. vi. 16. vii. 13.

v xvii. 6. xix. 11. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. vii. 8. viii. 4. ix. 9—21. x. 5. 11. xxxvii. 12. Hos. viii. 8, 9. ix. 3. Am. v. 1—3. 6. 25—27. Acts vii. 43.

x xvii. 7—23. Deut. viii. 20. xi. 28. xxix. 24—28. xxxi. 17. Neh. ix. 17. Is. i. 19. Jer. iii. 8. vii. 23. Dan. ix. 6—11. Mic. iii. 4. 2 Thes. i. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 8. iv. 17.

B. C. 720.

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blessing of God, rendered him so illustrious an example of genuine piety, wisdom, and holiness, as he proved, notwithstanding the wickedness of his father. The prophet had occasionally been sent to Ahaz; but he was the friend and counsellor of Hezekiah.—In this reformation, he not only removed the monuments of idolatry, which abounded through the wickedness of Ahaz, his predecessor; but he suppressed the irregular worship upon the high places, which had subsisted, and been connived at, even by the pious kings of Judah, for many ages: and in doing this he must have risked much opposition even from his own subjects.—One instance of Judah's idolatry, and of Hezekiah's reformation, is mentioned in this place alone. The brazen serpent had been preserved by Israel, as a monument of the miracles wrought by means of it in behalf of their forefathers, in order to excite their gratitude, and encourage their faith and hope. (*Notes, Num.* xxi. 6—9. *John* iii. 14, 15.) We are not informed where it was placed; but it seems that after a time the people stupidly and wickedly made an idol of it, and burnt incense to it; as if *it* had wrought the cures, instead of being the external sign of the powerful and merciful interposition of the Lord. Hezekiah finding this idolatry deeply rooted, destroyed the brazen serpent, and called it *Nehushtan*, or *a piece of brass;* (*marg.*) by way of exposing the folly of those who worshipped it, when it was of no more value or efficacy than any other piece of brass.—The superstitious veneration paid to sacred relicks in the Christian church, and especially the adoration paid to the form of the cross, and even in express words to the wood and nails of it, with all the impostures which have arisen from that absurd idolatry, have been exactly parallel to the worship of the brazen serpent; and Hezekiah's example fully authorizes the total abolition or disuse of every thing of that kind in religious worship. There were no relicks under the Old Testament-church, except the pot of manna, Aaron's rod, and this brazen serpent. The two former were preserved by God's own appointment, but they were concealed in the holy of holies from popular inspection: the other was preserved by human contrivance, and became an occasion of idolatry, until a pious king, who doubtless recollected with reverence and gratitude the event commemorated by it, destroyed it with decided abhorrence. And there never were any relicks preserved in the Christian church, however good the intention of the preserver might be, which have not issued in such abuses, superstitions, and impositions, as must cause all *judicious* friends to the gospel to unite in earnestly praying for their extirpation. Yet, true piety, and fervent affection for holy things and holy men, naturally lead this way; unless sound judgment, and considerable acquaintance with human nature, and the history of superstition, counteract their efficacy.

V. 5, 6. None of the kings of Judah, from the time of the division of the kingdom, equalled Hezekiah, in the vigour and simplicity of his dependence upon the Lord; in which he aspired to an equality with his progenitor David, who had reigned over the whole land. Even Asa, through weakness of faith, sought the assistance of a heathen prince; and Jehoshaphat formed an alliance with idolatrous Ahab: but Hezekiah clave to the Lord in entire confidence and unreserved obedience, to the end of his life. (*Notes*, xxii. 1, 2. 1 *Kings* xv. 17—24. 2 *Chr.* xvi. 7—12. xix. 1—4.)

V. 7. Ahaz had basely made the land tributary to the king of Assyria, to purchase his assistance against the Israelites and Syrians: but Hezekiah, who was under no personal engagements to that prince, would not stand to the agreement which his father had formed. (*Notes*, xvi. 7—9. xvii. 3, 4.) Having set about a complete reformation of religion, and confiding in the Lord's assistance, he refused submission to any foreign potentate: and, as the king of Assyia would call this *rebelling* against him, that term is here used. But it does not appear that Hezekiah violated any treaties; and the king of Assyria could have no just claim to rule over the king of Judah. Some think, however, that he was too precipitate in this measure; being rather elated by his prosperity in other transactions.

V. 8. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Philistines had recovered strength, in the unsettled state of affairs in Israel and Judah; but Hezekiah again reduced them to subjection. (2 *Chr.* xxviii. 18. *Is.* ix. 12. *Note, Is.* xiv. 28—32.)

V. 9—12. Shalmaneser began the siege of Samaria, in

y Num. xii. 7. Deut. xxxiv. 5. Josh. i. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 24. Heb. iii. 5, 6.

y Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*.

B. C. 713. z 2 Chr. xxxii. 1. Is. xxxvi. 1. * Heb. *Sanherib.* a Is. vii. 17. &c. viii. 7, 8. x. 5. Hos. xii. 1, 2.

13 ¶ Now in z the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did * Sennacherib king of Assyria a come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.

14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, b I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me, will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold.

b 7. 1 Kings xx. 4. Prov. xxix. 25. Luke xiv. 32.

c xii. 18. xvi. 8. 1 Kings xv. 15. 18, 19. 2 Chr. xvi. 2

15 And Hezekiah c gave *him* all the silver *that was* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

16 At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the* d *gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave † it to the king of Assyria.

d 1 Kings vi. 31—35. 2 Chr. xxix. 3.

† Heb. *them.*

B. C. 712. e 2 Chr. xxxii. 9. Is. xx. 1. xxxvi. 2.

17 ¶ And e the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh, from Lachish to king Hezekiah, with a ‡ great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem: and when they were come up, they came and stood by f the conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the highway of the fuller's field.

‡ Heb. *heavy.*

f xx. 20. Is. vii. 3. xxii. 9—11. xxxvi. 2.

18 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them g Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and h Shebna the § scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph i the recorder.

g xix. 2. Is. xxii. 20—24. xxxvi. 3. 22. xxxvii. 2.

h Is. xxii. 15—19.

§ Or, *secretary.* 2 Sam. viii. 17. *marg.*

i 2 Sam. viii. 16. xx. 24. 1 Kings iv. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 8.

19 And Rabshakeh said unto them,

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the beginning of the fourth year of Hezekiah, and the seventh of Hoshea; so that the *three years' siege* was concluded, by the end of the sixth of the former, and the ninth of the latter prince. (*Notes*, 1. xvii. 1—11.)—The desolations of Israel would tend to dispose the Jews to concur with Hezekiah, and thus facilitate his endeavours for reformation, as well as quicken him in them.

V. 13. A few years after the reduction of Samaria, Shalmaneser died, and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib. Shalmaneser doubtless would have attempted to subjugate Hezekiah; but he was otherwise employed, and this leisure was given to Hezekiah, to effect his reformation without interruption. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxix—xxxi.) Sennacherib, as soon as he mounted the throne, emulated his father's military honours, and imitated his example. He therefore purposed to treat Jerusalem and Judah, as Shalmaneser had done Samaria and Israel: and it pleased God to chastise the lukewarmness, hypocrisy, or reluctancy, with which many of the Jews concurred in Hezekiah's reformation, and to try his faith, and that of other believers, by permitting this potent monarch to reduce the other fenced cities and strong holds of Judah, and to threaten Jerusalem with a siege. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 1. *Is.* vii. 17—25. viii. 6—8. x. 5—14. 28—34. xxxvi. 1, 2.)

V. 14—16. Some expositors charge Hezekiah with criminality, in revolting from the king of Assyria; but he seems rather to have sinned by yielding to him in so timid a manner. He evidently distrusted God's protection: (*Note*, *Gen.* xii. 11—16:) and by confessing to the haughty conqueror, that he had offended, and was ready to submit to any imposition that he laid upon him; and by hiring his departure with his own treasures, and the gold of the temple, he invited and encouraged his further impositions. The event shews, that if he had boldly stood out, and committed his cause to God, he would have been protected. But though Hezekiah's conduct might perhaps be reprehensible; yet it served to render Sennacherib's subsequent violence more inexcusable.—Probably, Ahaz had cut off the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple, and Hezekiah had replaced it: yet he too, in this emergency, cut it off to purchase peace. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 3—8.)

V. 17. This second invasion is computed by some learned men to have been three years after the former agreement; during which time Sennacherib was occupied in other wars. But it seems more probable from the narrative, that he returned the ensuing year. (*Note*, *Is.* xxxvi. 2.) Having, however, accomplished his other projects, and being lifted up with pride, he was determined, without provocation, to reduce Judah and Jerusalem, and to treat the inhabitants as his father had done those of Samaria. (*Notes*, *Is.* x. 8—14. xxxiii. 5—9.) He therefore sent his commanders with a large army to encamp against that city, being himself engaged in besieging Lachish; (2 *Chr.* xxxii. 9:) and they were instructed to summon Hezekiah to surrender at discretion, having doubtless particular orders what to say to him or his envoys, on that subject.

Stood by the conduit, &c.] 'They took up their head 'quarters, as we now speak, by the conduit, or canal, 'into which water was derived from the upper fish-pond 'or pool, which was in the high way to the field, where 'the fullers, after they had washed their clothes in the 'pool, were wont to spread them.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. Hezekiah, though summoned to a personal conference, did not choose to trust himself with his perfidious and domineering invaders; and therefore he appointed commissioners, or deputies, to attend in his name. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 15—18. *Is.* xxii. 15—25. xxxvi. 3.)

V. 19. *Rabshakeh*, &c.] This man is reported by tradition to have been an apostate Jew; which supposition, if well grounded, may account both for his fluency in

Speak ye now to Hezekiah, [j] Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, [k] What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

20 Thou [*] sayest, (but *they are but* [†] vain words,) [‡] *I have* counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou [l] rebellest against me?

21 Now, behold, thou [§] trustest upon [m] the staff of this bruised reed, *even* upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, [n] it will go into his hand and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

22 But if ye say unto me, [p] We trust in the LORD our God: *is* not that he, [q] whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

23 Now therefore, I pray thee, give [‖] pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and [r] I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

24 How then [s] wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put [t] thy trust on Egypt for [u] chariots, and for horsemen?

25 Am [v] I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

26 Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants [x] in the Syrian language; for we understand *it:* and talk not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

27 But Rabshakeh said unto them,

j 2 Chr. xxxii. 10. Is. x. 8—14. xxxvi. 4. xxxvii. 13. Dan. iv. 30.
k 22. 29, 30. xix. 10. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. 10, 11. 14—16. Ps. iv. 2. Is. xxxvi. 4. 7. xxxvii. 10.
* Or, *talkest.*
† Heb. *word of the lips.*
‡ Or, *but counsel and strength are for the war.* Prov. xxi. 30, 31.
l 14.
§ Heb. *trustest thee.*
m Is. xxxvi. 6. Ez. xxix. 6, 7.
n Is. xxx. 2. 7. xxxi. 1—3.
o xvii. 4. Jer. xlvi. 17.
p 5. Dan. iii. 15. Matt. xxvii. 43.
q 4. 2 Chr. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 12. Is. xxxvi. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 15.
‖ Heb. *hostages.*
r 1 Sam. xvii. 42—44. 1 Kings xx. 10. 18. Neh. iv. 2—5. Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4. Is. x. 13, 14. xxxvi. 8, 9.
s Is. x. 8. Dan. ii. 37, 38. iv. 22. 37.
t 21. *See on* Deut. xvii. 16. Is. xxxi. 1. 3. xxxvi. 6. 9. Jer. xxxvii. 7. xlii. 14—18. Ez. xvii. 15. 17.
u Ps. xx. 7, 8.
v xix. 6. 22, &c. 1 Kings xiii. 18. 2 Chr. xxxv. 21. Is. x. 5, 6.
x Ezra iv. 7. Is. xxxvi. 11, 12. Dan. ii. 4.

speaking the Hebrew tongue, and concerning the God of Israel; and for his embittered enmity against true religion.

V. 20, 21. It does not appear that Hezekiah, after the preceding agreement, had refused to pay tribute to the king of Assyria, or had attempted to shake off his yoke: but when he found him determined to destroy Jerusalem and enslave its inhabitants, he refused to surrender at discretion, and prepared to stand a siege; and this was deemed rebellion, and the most unreasonable presumption! (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xx. 2—11.)—Rabshakeh supposed that Hezekiah had neither counsel nor strength for such a war: and indeed he did not place his dependence on his own wisdom, or on the number and valour of his troops. —Hoshea had confided in the king of Egypt, and had been deceived and ruined by that confidence: (*Note,* xvii. 4:) and if Hezekiah had done the same, he might have proved to him like a bruised cane, which deceives those who lean on it, and not only lets them fall, but pierces or wounds their hands. (*Note, Ez.* xxix. 6, 7.) He, however, had not put his trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen; though probably many of his nobles were disposed to that measure, and some engagements of that kind had before been attempted. (*Notes, Is.* xxx. 1—7. xxxi. 1—5.) —*Vain words.* (20) "Word of the lips." *Marg.*

V. 22. The Assyrians had learned that Hezekiah professed to confide in God: and Rabshakeh combated that confidence, by enquiring how he could presume to expect assistance from him, whose altars and high places he had destroyed? (*Notes,* 4. 2 *Chr.* xxxi. 1.) For he ignorantly supposed that the Lord would be pleased, and deem himself honoured, in proportion to the number of the temples and altars dedicated to him, though erected contrary to his express command; and therefore he concluded that Hezekiah had forfeited God's protection, by that very reformation which ensured it. (*Notes, Num.* xxiii. 1, 2. 4—6. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14—16.) As none of the kings who supported the worship of JEHOVAH, and reformed religion, had ventured to take away the high places, this gave the greater plausibility to the objection. (*Note,* 4.)

V. 23, 24. If Hezekiah would give security, that he would submit in case of failure, Rabshakeh vaunted that he would send him two thousand horses, provided he could find men to ride them. By this he meant to insult and expose Hezekiah's inability to resist the immense army of Sennacherib; or even a small detachment of it, under the command of the least of his captains. But the Israelites were forbidden to multiply chariots and horses, and Hezekiah had learned to depend on a firmer support. (2 *Chr.* xxxii. 6—8. *Notes, Deut.* xvii. 16. *Ps.* xx. 6—8.)

V. 25. Rabshakeh intended to discourage the people, and to induce them to a revolt. Samaria had been destroyed according to the denunciations of JEHOVAH, and Shalmaneser had been considered as his instrument in that destruction. The Jews also were menaced with judgments for their sins, and Rabshakeh affected to believe, that Sennacherib was commissioned to execute similar vengeance on Jerusalem. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxxv. 20—24. *Is.* xxxvi. 10.) But there was no truth in his assertion, which the late effectual reformation might inspire the people with confidence to disregard: and the impiety of pretending, that Sennacherib came by the command of JEHOVAH, when he was entirely instigated by ambition, resentment, and rapacity, and when he treated God himself in the most blasphemous manner, was horrible profaneness. (*Notes,* xix. 4. 25 —28. 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 9—16, *v.* 15. 17—22, *v.* 19. *Is.* x. 5—15.)

V. 26. The ambassadors fully understood the drift of Rabshakeh's discourse, and reasonably and mildly required him to make his proposals to them in the Syrian language; and not to address himself to the people, who were not proper judges in such matters, by speaking in the language of the Jews. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27. These were hyperbolical expressions, denoting

Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, that they may [y] eat their own dung, and drink [*] their own piss with you?

28 Then [z] Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of [a] the great king, the king of Assyria.

29 Thus saith the king, [b] Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

30 Neither let Hezekiah [c] make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and [d] this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

31 Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, [†] Make *an agreement* with me by a present, and come out to me, and *then* [e] eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his [‡] cistern:

32 Until [f] I come and take you away to a land [g] like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he [§] persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

33 Hath [h] any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

34 Where *are* [i] the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where *are* [k] the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? [l] have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

35 Who *are* they, among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, [m] that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

36 But the people [n] held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah, [o] with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

y vi. 25. Deut. xxviii. 53—57. Ps. lxxiii. 8. Lam. iv. 5. Ez. iv. 13.
* Heb. *the water of their feet.*
z 2 Chr. xxxii. 18. Is. xxxvi. 13—18.
a 19. Ezra vii. 12. Ps. xlvii. 2. Is. x. 8—13. Ez. xxix. 3. xxxi. 3—10. Rev. xix. 16.
b 2 Chr. xxxii. 11, 15. Dan. iii. 15—17. vi. 16. John xix. 10, 11. 2 Thes. ii. 4.
c 22. xix. 10. 22. Ps. iv. 2. xi. 1. xxii. 7, 8. lxxi. 9, 11. Matt. xxvii. 43. Luke xxiii. 35.
d xix. 32—34.
† Or, *Seek my favour.* Heb. *Make with me a blessing.* Gen. xxxii. 20. xxxiii. 11. Prov. xviii. 16.
e 1 Kings iv. 20, 25. Zech. iii. 10.
‡ Or, *pit.*
f 11. xvii. 6. 23. xxiv. 14—16. xxv. 11.
g Ex. iii. 8. Num. xiii. 26, 27. xiv. 8. Deut. viii. 7—9. xi. 12. xxxii. 13, 14.
§ Or, *deceiveth.* 29.
h xix. 12. 17, 18. 2 Chr. xxxii. 14—17. 19. Is. x. 10, 11. xxxvi. 18—20.
i xix. 13. Num. xiii. 21. 2 Sam. viii. 9. Jer. xlix. 23.
k xvii. 24—33. *Ava.* Is. xxxvi. 18, 19. xxxvii. 11, 12. 18, 19.
l xvii. 6. 23, 24. 30, 31. xix. 12, 13.
m Ex. v. 2. 2 Chr. xxxii. 15. Job xv. 25, 26. Is. x. 15. xxxvii. 23—29. Dan. iii. 15.
n Ps. xxxviii. 13, 14. xxxix. 1. Prov. ix. 7. xxvi. 4. Am. v. 13. Matt. vii. 6.
o v. 7. xxii. 11. 19. Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34. Job i. 20. Is. xxxiii. 7. xxxvi. 21, 22. Jer. xxxvi. 24. Matt. xxvi. 65.

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the utmost extremities of famine, which the people must expect to endure, in case they dared to resist the king of Assyria. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28—35. Rabshakeh supposed that the Assyrian monarchs had overpowered the gods, as well as the kings, of all the nations which they had subjected; and that JEHOVAH was no more powerful then the rest of them: and therefore if the Jews regarded Hezekiah's persuasions, and expected help from the LORD, they would certainly be deceived, for he would never be able to deliver them. What mean thoughts of the infinite God, and what arrogant thoughts of himself, must have possessed the mind of Sennacherib, who doubtless had instructed his servant to speak of him in this style! The gods of Hamath, &c. were mere idols, not able to do good or evil. The people of Samaria had provoked the Lord to sell them into the hands of their enemies; and the idols, which they had chosen, were indeed unable to defend them: but, soon after, the new inhabitants experienced to their loss, that the God of their land could, if he had so pleased, have delivered Samaria out of the hand of the king of Assyria. (xvii. 25, 26. xix. 17—19. 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 19.) Surely, if this proud worm had not been intoxicated with success, he must have admitted, that somewhere in the universe there was a power superior to that of mortal man! and if so, it must be highly irrational thus to set at defiance "all that "was called God, or worshipped!" But, by this blasphemy the Lord was expressly engaged in the cause; and his honour required him to crush the self-important wretch, who dared to exalt himself against him: so that the greatest kindness imaginable was done to the king and the people of Judah, by this language of impiety and defiance. (*Notes*, xix. 4. 14—19, *v.* 19. 25—29. *Ps.* lxxix. 8—13. *Is.* x. 15—19.)—The proposal made to the people was not very alluring, unless they could be previously terrified with the dread of impending destruction: for Rabshakeh avowed the intention of extorting more money from them; and only of permitting them to continue in their own land, till the king had leisure to remove them to another: and the fertility of that other country was not likely to be very useful to those, who were to be captives and slaves in it. But who could have depended upon the word of such a man, if he had made more equitable proposals?—Rabshakeh, however, argued very plausibly on his own principles, and his eloquence has been much admired: but when a man addresses himself to an uninformed populace, and has sufficient effrontery, and no reserves as to what he says, be it ever so false, impious, or malignant, provided it is suited to inflame their passions, to excite their fears or terrors, and to set them against the rulers whom God has placed over them; eloquence requires comparatively no great talent or genius.

V. 36, 37. Hezekiah was aware what sort of language Rabshakeh would employ, and had wisely counselled his envoys, and commanded the people, to hold their peace; lest they should get engaged in a reviling contention, or provoke him to further impiety. 'This was a wise order; '... and it was no less pious: for Hezekiah believed that

CHAP. XIX.

Hezekiah in distress sends to desire Isaiah's prayers, and receives an encouraging answer, 1—7. Sennacherib, going to oppose the king of Ethiopia, sends a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah, 8—13. His prayer on the receipt of it, 14—19. Isaiah, in the name of God, rebuking the proud blasphemies of Sennacherib, foretels his overthrow, and the prosperity of Zion, 20—34. An angel destroys the Assyrian army, 35. Sennacherib is slain by his own sons, in the temple of his idol, 36, 37.

'God would answer for himself, not in words, but in such 'deeds as would demonstrate that he was above all gods.' *Bp. Patrick.* In abhorrence, however, of his blasphemy, and in grief for the afflicted estate of the nation, the ambassadors rent their clothes, and returned to the king. (*Notes, Is.* xxxiii. 7—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

In times of increasing impiety we should not despond, as if things must necessarily proceed from bad to worse; for the Lord is able to give them an unexpected and effectual turn. From the most abandoned families he sometimes raises up the brightest ornaments and most useful friends of true religion, to illustrate the sovereignty and power of his grace: and when parents have been notoriously profane and wicked, their children should not hesitate to express, *by an opposite conduct*, a decided disapprobation of their crimes, and to counteract to the utmost the effects of them on others; whether they have occupied a publick, or a more private station in society: for, when the honour of God is concerned, the reputation of the nearest relatives is entitled to a very subordinate regard. (*Notes, Matt.* x. 37—39. *Luke* xiv. 25—27. 2 *Cor.* v. 16. *Note* and *P. O.* 1 *Pet.* i. 17—21.)—It is not enough, that we do not imitate the conduct of atrocious offenders, or that we tread in the steps of those, who have upon the whole served God sincerely: but we should aim high; and, in aspiring at that eminence which the Scripture proposes, we should set before our eyes the most approved patterns, whose actions are there recorded; that we may follow those who have most nearly followed Christ, and most effectually served God and their generation; and thus become good examples for others to copy. (*Note*, 1 *Thes.* i. 5—8.)—In attempting personal or publick reformation, those things should be removed or avoided, which have proved *occasions of evil*, though not sinful in themselves. Human depravity is prone to pervert the bounty of Providence into fuel for sinful lusts; and, in some circumstances, is equally propense to abuse the peculiar mercies of God into occasions of superstition and idolatry. It is natural to fallen man to put the creature in the place of the Creator, and to regard the *instrument*, rather than the *Author*, of our comforts: and though this is more evidently absurd when the instrument is irrational or inanimate; it is equally idolatrous, when the most exalted of intelligent agents are thus unduly honoured. However excellent, useful, or deserving of honour, such creatures have been; when they are thus idolized, their comparative meanness and worthlessness ought to be exposed, and the abuse of them treated with the deepest indignation and abhorrence: nay, it were better that the most exalted creature should perish, than that God should be dishonoured by having the least of his glory given to another. Much more then, should every monument of his former mercies be extirpated, when it becomes the occasion of fatal delusions; and the perversion cannot otherwise effectually be prevented: but the propriety of such a measure is still more conspicuous, when the relick, or the custom, was originally the creature of superstition, a mere human invention, perhaps the result of fraud and imposture. True faith needs not such aids to devotion: the word of God, daily meditated upon, leads the mind to realize past, future, and invisible things, as if present: thus every good end proposed by other expedients is answered, without the danger to which they expose us; and the simple scriptural use of the sacramental signs, and pledges of heavenly things, may effectually be preserved from such abuse, and answer every purpose, which can be obtained by presenting the objects of our faith to our bodily senses, in any way not warranted by the word of God; which only tends to distract the mind, to interrupt the simple exercise of faith, to excite spurious affections, to deprave the imagination with gross and false notions of heavenly things, and to introduce, either absurd superstition, or wild enthusiasm.—Those, who most entirely trust in God, will feel themselves most effectually emancipated from other dependences, and from the dominion of every other master; and will be encouraged to resist every enemy and rival, "that they may cleave to the LORD, and not depart from "following him, and keeping his commandments."

V. 9—16.

While the interests of religion decline or are run down in one place, the Lord takes care that they shall revive and flourish in another. The judgments, which desolate degenerate churches and nations, instead of injuring his cause, tend to warm, animate, and embolden others in personal religion, and in attempting publick reformation; nay, they often facilitate the work of active instruments in religious revivals, by intimidating opposers, and exciting those who were indifferent, or reluctant to assist.—Yet, the believer, when pursuing heavenly things, and seeking the glory of God, with the greatest simplicity and most vigorous affections, must stand prepared for trouble. For a time, he may enjoy the sunshine of peace and prosperity, to encourage him in his labour of love, and to enable him to bring it to some establishment; and "whatsoever he doeth" shall eventually "prosper." But, when the Almighty is pleased to remove his restraining hand, Satan and wicked men will assault him, with rancour and vehemence proportioned to his zeal and success: and the Lord often permits them to do this; for he regards not so much the present transient feelings of his beloved servants, as the final happy and glorious event of their trials and conflicts. Nations also may meet with publick calamities, when true religion is most vigorously and successfully promoted, by the general concurrence of all orders of men. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xx. 1—4. *Ps.* xliv. 17—22.) The secret dislike, the hypocrisy, and the lukewarmness of numbers, require correction: while trials tend to purify the faith and hope of upright persons; to bring them to greater simplicity in their zeal

a Is. xxxvii. 1. b v. 7. xviii. 37. 1 Sam. iv. 12. Ezra ix. 3. Job i. 20. Jer. xxxvi. 24. Matt. xxvi. 65.

AND it came to pass, [a]when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that [b]he rent his clothes, and [c]covered himself with sackcloth, and [d]went into the house of the LORD.

c vi. 30. Gen. xxxvii. 34. 1 Kings xxi. 27. 29. Esth. iv. 1—4. Ps. xxxv. 13. Jon. iii. 8. Matt. xi. 21. d 2 Chr. vii. 15, 16. Job i. 20, 21.

for the honour of God, and in their dependence on his help; and to increase the fervency of their addresses at the throne of grace: and thus they make way for the fuller display of the glory of God in their deliverance. Yet, in such trying situations the strongest believers are apt to waver, to make improper concessions, and to speak and act unadvisedly.—Whatever is withheld or withdrawn from God, which has been or ought to be devoted to him, in order to purchase exemption from trouble, or peace with the enemies of his church, will eventually occasion our shame, and involve us in greater difficulties.

V. 17—37.

No dependence can be placed on the engagements of the covetous or ambitious: and all attempts to purchase their favour, or to soothe them into peace, are vain. When it is in their power, they will find some pretence for seizing on those possessions which they covet, while every acquisition increases their insatiable rapacity. Success in wickedness elates them with pride and insolence; they forget that they are men, or have any superior; and treat all as enemies or rebels, who do not implicitly comply with their exorbitant demands. Our only safety then consists, in committing our persons, property, connexions, reputations, liberty, and every thing which we value, into the powerful keeping of our God, in the exercise of faith, and by adhering to the path of duty.—"The tongue is an "unruly evil, full of deadly poison; it setteth on fire the "whole course of nature and is set on fire of hell:" What pride, reproaches, lies, impiety, atheism, and blasphemy have, in all ages, been vented by it, to the dishonour of God, and the unutterable injury of mankind! We may form some estimate of the desperate wickedness of the human heart, from the horrible language which is uttered by the lips of men; "for out of the abundance of the "heart the mouth speaketh." (*Notes, Matt.* xii. 31—37. *Jam.* iii. 3—6.) May the Lord replenish our hearts with his grace, that out of that good treasure we may speak such things, and such only, as may "minister grace unto "the hearers!"—If indeed, "as the fool hath said in his "heart, there were no God," it would in general be vain and presumptuous for the weaker to resist the stronger: but, as "the LORD doeth what he will in the armies of "heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" so, "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the "strong." All confidence in man may justly be exploded, as leaning on a broken staff, which will not only fail, but also wound: and dependence on our own counsel and might, whatever proportion they may bear to those of our opponents, is equally vain and fallacious. But our God never fails those who trust in him: in this confidence the believer, when more conscious of his own extreme debility, than his insulting foes can conceive, may boldly defy the most potent of them; and if they deride this dependence on the omnipotent God, they only engage him, "for his own name's sake," the more decisively to fight against them; and to turn their vauntings and threatenings, into confusion, dismay, and ruin.—When they, who have domineered over their fellow worms, presume to assault those whom the God of heaven protects; they will soon feel their inability to resist his power, or to endure the weight of his indignation. Yet many who atheistically, or impiously, deny his existence, blaspheme his truths, or condemn his authority; inconsistently, upon other occasions, advance claims to his favour, and express their expectations that he will prosper their wicked devices! Because they have succeeded in exposing or seducing hypocritical and degenerate professors of Christianity; they triumph as if they had, or soon should, completely ruin the cause of vital godliness, and prevail against the house of David and his kingdom, which is founded upon an immoveable foundation. Numbers also, ignorantly and absurdly, suppose those things to be pleasing to God, which he most abhors; because they form their judgment on the deductions of their own understandings, or on the traditions and authority of men, and not on the plain and sure testimonies of the sacred scriptures. "For the things "of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the natural man." Hence they embolden themselves, and endeavour to discourage scriptural worshippers, upon the most false and preposterous grounds. Such cavils, objections, and arguments have no weight with the established believer: and therefore these men pretend to despise him, that they may address the prejudices and passions of the ignorant, unstable, and unthinking multitude, with whom their specious declamations go further, than either solid arguments or scriptural testimonies. They endeavour to insinuate, that the persons, who labour to prevail with them to trust and serve God, according *to the plain meaning of his holy word*, are deceivers, to whom they cannot safely attend: and, while they are only aiming at the gratification of their own ambition or avarice, they profess great compassion and kindness for them, are lavish of good words, and set before them alluring prospects of felicity. But, it is often best to leave persons of this description to rail and blaspheme, without directly answering: because such attempts ordinarily increase their self-importance, and tend to disseminate still more widely the effect of their poisonous tenets; while a decided expression of abhorrence of their guilt generally forms the best testimony against them. The matter must be left to the Lord, who has all hearts in his hands: he will plead his own cause, and that of his truth and people; and our safety and duty consist in committing ourselves into his hands, by humble submission, believing hope, and fervent prayer.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. Hezekiah, by rending his garments and clothing himself in sackcloth, expressed his abhorrence of Rabshakeh's blasphemy; his grief for the afflictions of his people; and his humble consciousness of his own and his people's unworthiness, and need of pardoning mercy; while he wholly depended upon God for protection.

2 And [e] he sent Eliakim, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, [f] to Isaiah the prophet [g] the son of Amoz.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, [h] This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and [*] blasphemy: [i] for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth.

4 It may be [k] the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, [l] whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will [m] reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore [n] lift up *thy* prayer for [o] the remnant *that are* [†] left.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 And [p] Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, [q] Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which [r] the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will send [s] a blast upon him, and he shall [t] hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and [u] I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 ¶ So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring

e xviii. 18. xxii. 13,14. Is. xxxvii. 2—5.
f 2 Chr. xxvi. 22. Matt. iv. 14. Luke iii. 4.
g Is. i. 1. ii. 1.
h xviii. 29. Ps. xxxix. 11. cxxiii. 3, 4. Jer. xxx. 5—7. Hos. v. 15. vi. 1.
* Or, *provocation.* Ps. xcv. 8. Heb. iii. 15, 16.
i Is. xxvi. 17, 18. lxvi. 9. Hos. xiii. 13.
k Gen. xxii. 14. Deut. xxxii. 36. Josh. xiv. 12. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 2 Sam. xvi. 12.
l xviii. 17—35.
m 22. 1 Sam. xvii. 45. Ps. l. 21. lxxiv. 18.
n 2 Chr. xxxii. 20 Ps. l. 15. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Ez. xxxvi. 37. Jam. v. 16, 17.
o xvii. 3, 6. xviii. 13. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5, 6. Is. viii. 7, 8. x. 6.
† Heb. *found.*
p Is. xxxvii. 6, 7.
q vi. 16. Ex. xiv. 13. Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. xx. 1. 3, 4. Josh. xi. 6. 2 Chr. xx. 15, 17. Is. xli. 10—14. li. 7. 12, 13.
r xviii. 35. Ps. lxxiv. 18. 23. Rev. xiii. 6.
s 35. 37. Job iv. 9. Ps. xi. 6. xviii. 14, 15. l. 3. Is. x. 16—18. xi. 4. Jer. li. 1.
t vii. 6. Job xv. 21. Jer. xlix. 14. li. 46. Ob. 1.
u 36, 37. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21.

V. 2. Isaiah had at this time prophesied almost fifty years, if he entered upon that office only a short time before the death of Uzziah: for he prophesied, in the days of Uzziah, who died about 758 before Christ; and these transactions occurred about 712. (*Notes, Is.* i. 1. vi. 1—4, *v.* 1.) It must be supposed that Hezekiah had often consulted him: and the nature of this message implies a previous acquaintance, and a mutual confidence. (*Note,* xviii. 4.) Isaiah's visits to Hezekiah, at and after his sickness, are thought by some to have taken place before this, though recorded afterwards (xx): and many parts of his prophecy evidently refer to these events.—In this emergency therefore Hezekiah sent to Isaiah the prophet, rather than to the high priest; though he had employed the priests and Levites in his reformation. Perhaps Urijah was still living, or some other high priest too much resembling him in character. (*Note,* xvi. 10—16.) There seems, however, to have been an intended slight upon the high priest. Some learned men indeed think, that the appointed method of enquiring of God by the high priest, was disused from the time that the temple was built: but this can only be collected from the silence of Scripture, as no express declaration to that effect is recorded.—Shebna, who was employed on this occasion, as well as in receiving the message of Rabshakeh, is elsewhere represented in an unfavourable light. (*Notes, Is.* xxii. 15—19.) For pious persons cannot always employ such characters, and such only, as they approve. The elders of the priests accompanied the chief officers of the king, in going to the prophet: and they all went to him in the habit of mourners and penitents.

V. 3. It was not only a season of great distress to Israel; but the confidence of the king, in the protection of God, was rebuked by Rabshakeh in the name of Sennacherib, as a groundless presumption, and the name of JEHOVAH was blasphemed on that account. Indeed the affairs of Judah were come to a crisis: every thing valuable was at stake. As the woman in travail, who has not strength to bring forth, must die, if she be not speedily assisted; so, Hezekiah and his people, in their pressing necessity, were utterly unable to do any thing effectual to extricate themselves, and must perish without immediate help from God. (*Note, Hosh.*. xiii. 12, 13.)

V. 4. Hezekiah's confidence in God was in some respects encouraged by the blasphemy of the Assyrians. For though he and his people were unworthy of the divine favour; yet it was proper for the Lord to rebuke and silence the reproachful words which had been spoken. In this hope therefore he intreated and required the prophet to "lift up his prayer," with earnestness and importunity, for the remnant which was left, that the people of God might not be swallowed up and extirpated. Israel had been carried into captivity, and dispersed; and Judah was reduced to extremities: and would God suffer his blasphemers finally to prevail against his worshippers, and entirely to destroy his holy religion? (*Notes, Is.* viii. 6—8. x. 5, 6.)

V. 7. *A blast,* &c.] Some have supposed that this expression related to the manner, in which the Assyrian army was destroyed: viz. by exciting one of those scorching winds, which in those countries have been known to destroy great multitudes almost instantaneously. But this is uncertain: and perhaps it only means, that the Lord would destroy all his prosperity, as easily as the pinching gale of wind blasts the tender vegetables: while the death of his numerous forces, probably attended by a report, that Tirhakah and the Ethiopians were marching to assault him, as a terrifying rumour in his ears, would hurry him home with dismay and disgrace. (*Notes,* 35—37. *Job* xx. 10—29, *vv.* 23—26.)—As the word, rendered *blast,* is often translated *spirit;* some explain the expression to mean, that God would send an *angel,* or *spirit,* to destroy Sennacherib's army; but others think it signifies, that God would fill his heart with terror by some supernatural agent. "I will "infuse a spirit into him."—The phrase 'never signifies any 'thing, but putting a spirit into a person; this was πνευμα 'δειλιας' (a spirit of fear). *Secker* in *Bp. Lowth.*

V. 8. It is probable, that Rabshakeh marched the army back from Jerusalem to join Sennacherib, when he found that Hezekiah would neither surrender, nor return any answer to his insulting message (32). For Jerusalem was so advantageously situated, and so well fortified, that, with a moderate garrison, it might have made a stout resistance against any detachment of the Assyrian army: (*Notes,* xxv. 1—5. 2 *Sam.* v. 6—8. *Ps.* xlviii. 12, 13. cxxv. 2. *Lam.*

against [x] Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed [y] from Lachish.

9 And [z] when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee; [a] he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak unto Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, [b] Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

11 Behold [c] thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?

12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; *as* [d] Gozan, and [e] Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of [f] Eden which *were* in Thelasar?

13 Where *is* [g] the king of Hamath, and the king of [h] Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?

14 And [i] Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and [k] spread it before the LORD.

15 And Hezekiah [l] prayed before the LORD, and said, [m] O LORD God of Israel, which [n] dwellest *between* the cherubims, [o] thou art the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; [p] thou hast made heaven and earth.

16 LORD, [q] bow down thine ear, and hear: [r] open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, [s] which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

17 [t] Of a truth, LORD, [u] the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and the lands,

18 And [v] have [*] cast their gods into the fire: [x] for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

19 Now therefore, [y] O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.

x viii. 22. Josh. x. 29. xii. 15. xv. 42.
y xviii. 14. Josh. xii. 11. xv. 39. Is. xxxvii. 8, 9. Mic. i. 13.
z 1 Sam. xxiii. 27, 29. Is. xxxvii. 9.
a xviii. 17.
b xviii. 5. 29, 30. 2 Chr. xxxii. 15—19. Is. xxxvii. 10—14.
c 17, 18. xvii. 5, &c. xviii. 33, 34. 2 Chr. xxxii. 13, 14. Is. x. 8—11.
d xvii. 6. 1 Chr. v. 26.
e Gen. xi. 31. xxix. 4. Acts vii. 4. *Charran.*
f Gen. ii. 8. Is. xxxvii. 12. *Telassar.* Ez. xxvii. 23.
g xviii. 34. Num. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 8. Is. xi. 11. Jer. xxxix. 5. xlix. 23. Zech. ix. 2.
h xvii. 24. Is. xxxvii. 13. *Arphad.*
i Is. xxxvii. 14.
k 1 Kings viii. 28—30. Ezra ix. 5. Ps. lxxiv. 10, 11. xci. 1, 2. cxxiii. 1—4.
l 2 Sam. vii. 18, &c. 2 Chr. xiv. 11. xx. 6. Dan. ix. 3, 4.
m Gen. xxxii. 28. xxxiii. 20. 1 Kings viii. 23. 1 Chr. iv. 10. Is. xli. 17.
n Ex. xxv. 22. 1 Sam. iv. 4. Ps. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1.
o v. 15. 1 Kings xviii. 39. Is. xliii. 10. xliv. 6. 8. xlv. 22. Dan. iv. 34, 35.
p Gen. i. 1. ii. 4. Ps. xxxiii. 9. cxlvi. 6. Jer. x. 10—12. John i. 3.
q Ps. xxxi. 2. Is. xxxvii. 17.
r 1 Kings viii. 29. 2 Chr. vi. 40. Dan. ix. 18.
s 4. Ps. lxxix. 12. Is. xxxvii. 4, 17. Heb. xi. 26.
t Job ix. 2. Is. v. 9. Jer. xxvi. 15. Dan. ii. 47. Matt. xiv. 33. Luke xxii. 59. Acts iv. 27. 1 Cor. xiv. 25.
u xvi. 9. xvii. 6. 24. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. vii. 17, 18. x. 9—11.
v 2 Sam. v. 21. Is. xlvi. 1, 2.
* Heb. *given.*
x Ps. cxv. 4—8. Is. xxxvii. 18, 19. xliv. 9—20. Jer. x. 3—9. 14—16. Acts xvii. 29.
y Ex. ix. 15, 16. Josh. vii. 9. 1 Sam. xvii. 45—47. 1 Kings viii. 43. xviii. 36, 37. Ps. lxvii. 1, 2. lxxxiii. 18. Dan. iv. 34—37.

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iv. 12:) though it must probably at length have shared the fate of Samaria, if the Lord had not immediately interposed. The siege, however, was postponed, or not carried on with vigour, till Sennacherib had leisure to come against it in person. In the mean time he had withdrawn from Lachish, (it is not known whether he had taken that city or not;) and was besieging Libnah, another city, which refused to open its gates to the conqueror.

V. 9—13. When Sennacherib had, the first time, levied contributions upon Hezekiah, he marched his army into Egypt; probably in resentment against the king, for forming alliances with the vassals of the Assyrians, as he regarded the Jews and the Samaritans to be. After several successes there, while he was besieging Pelusium, an important fortress in that country, he heard that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia was marching against him with a great army: and, not choosing to wait his approach, he raised the siege; and, returning into Judea, began to commit hostilities there, as it has been before related. But, finding that Tirhakah pursued him as a fugitive, he marched back to encounter him; and, having totally routed his army, he returned to wreak his vengeance on Hezekiah and Jerusalem. This gave the Jews some respite for preparation and for prayer; and afforded Sennacherib an occasion for more deliberately uttering his blasphemies, by a letter sent to Hezekiah, when detained for a time from marching against him.—Learned men differ in opinion concerning Tirhakah; whether he were king of Ethiopia, or *Cush*, to the south of Egypt in Africa, or of the Cushites in Asia. He was, however, an ally of the king of Egypt. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xviii. 20, 21. 28—35. 1 *Kings* x. 1, 2.)

V. 14—19. *Notes*, 3, 4. 1 *Kings* viii. 33, 34. 2 *Chr.* xiv. 9—15. xx. 6—12.—*Spread it*, &c. (14) By this action Hezekiah referred the matter entirely to God, intimating that as his honour was immediately assaulted, he was chiefly concerned to defend it: and by this appeal the king meant to shelter himself and his people under the shadow of the Almighty; that while the Lord pleaded his own cause, he might also deliver them from their enraged enemies. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xx. 14—17. *Ps.* xxi. 13.)

Thou art the God, &c. (15) JEHOVAH, the God of Israel, who dwells between the cherubim, on the mercy-seat, was considered by Sennacherib and Rabshakeh as merely the local deity of a small region: but Hezekiah prayed, that he would arise, and make it appear that he was the God of all the kingdoms of the earth, and the Creator of the world.

Hath sent him, &c. (16) That is Rabshakeh, who probably was sent with this letter.—*Cast their gods*, &c. (18) *Notes*, 2 *Sam.* v. 21. *Ps.* cxv. 3—8. *Is.* xliv. 12—20. xlvi. 1, 2. 5—9. *Jer.* x. 3—11. *Hos.* viii. 5, 6.

Now, &c. (19) It would have been comparatively a small matter for Hezekiah and his people to perish; but it would be an evil of infinite magnitude, for all the nations to conclude, that JEHOVAH was no more powerful than their

20 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *That* [z] which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, [a] I have heard.

21 This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him: [b] The virgin [c] the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath [d] shaken her head at thee.

22 [e] Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou [f] exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against [g] the Holy *One* of Israel.

23 * By thy [h] messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, [i] With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the † tall cedar-trees thereof, *and* the choice fir-trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, *and into* ‡ the forest of his Carmel.

24 I have digged and drunk strange waters, and [k] with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of § besieged places.

z 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 23.
a xx. 5. 2 Chr. xxxii. 20, 21. Job xxii. 27. Ps. l. 15. lxv. 2. Is. lviii. 9. lxv. 24. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Dan. ix. 20—23. John xi. 42. Acts x. 4. 31. 1 John v. 14, 15.
b Is. xxiii. 12. xxxvii. 22. xlvii. 1. Jer. xiv. 17. xviii. 13. xxxi. 4. Lam. i. 15. ii. 13. Am. v. 2.
c Ps. ix. 14. cxxxvii. 8. Is. i. 8. xxiii. 10. xlvii. 5. Jer. xlvi. 11. Lam. ii. 13. iv. 21. Mic. iv. 8. Zech. ix. 9.
d Job xvi. 4. Ps. xxii. 7, 8. Is. xxxvii. 22. Lam. ii. 15. Matt. xxvii. 39.
e xviii. 28—35. Ex. v. 2. Ps. lxxiii. 9. lxxiv. 22, 23.
f Ex. ix. 17. Prov. xxx. 13. Is. x. 15. xiv. 13, 14. Ez. xxviii. 2—9. Dan. v. 20—23. 2 Cor. x. 5. 2 Thes. ii. 4.
g Ps. lxxi. 22. Is. v. 24. xxx. 11. 12. 15. Jer. li. 5.
* Heb. *the hand of.*
h xviii. 17. 2 Chr. xxxii. 17.
i xviii. 23. 33, 34. Ps. xx. 7. Is. x. 7—11. 14. xxxvii. 24, 25. Ez. xxxi. 3, &c.
† Heb. *tallness of the cedar-trees thereof.*
‡ Or, *the forest, and his fruitful field.* Is. x. 18.
k Ex. xv. 9. 2 Sam. xvii. 13. 1 Kings xx. 10. Dan. iv. 30.
§ Or, *fenced.*

worthless idols: and it would be unspeakably honourable to the name of God, to shew the difference between the Creator of the world, and these his puny rivals; and to prove, that he only was the LORD almighty, able to save and to destroy. Sennacherib's blasphemous challenge gave a fair opportunity of publickly demonstrating this most important truth: and a plea grounded so directly on the honour of God could not but prevail. (*Notes, Ex.* xxxii. 11—14. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 45—47. *Is.* xxxvii. 20. *Matt.* vi. 9, 10. 13.)

V. 21. *The virgin,* &c.] The inhabitants of Jerusalem, as forming or representing the visible church of God, having his temple and instituted worship among them, are called in one body, "the daughter of Zion," or of Jerusalem. (*Marg. Ref.* c.) They were safe under his protection and care, as a virgin-daughter in the house of a wise and tender parent: and, though the Assyrian attempted brutal violence, they might treat his efforts with disdain and defiance; might despise them and laugh them to scorn, and menace his destruction by shaking their heads at him. Perhaps the term, *virgin,* might refer to the state of Jerusalem, as free from idolatry, and reserved for the Lord alone; (2 *Cor.* xi. 1—6, *v.* 2;) or as having never been exposed to the ravages of an enraged victor. (*Notes, Is.* xxiii. 12. xlvii. 1—3.) The city of David, or Zion, seems never to have been taken by any assailant, from the time when David got possession of it, till the Babylonish captivity.—The former part of this message is addressed, not to Hezekiah, but to Sennacherib, as if present; first by the daughter of Zion, and then by the Lord himself.

V. 22. Sennacherib had both exalted his voice, in reproach and blasphemy against God; and lifted up his eyes, in pride and ambition; as if he even aspired to his throne, and affected equality with him, or even superiority above him. (*Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 9—16, *v.* 15. 17—22, *v.* 19. *Is.* x. 15—19. *Ez.* xxviii. 2—10. *Dan.* v. 18—24. 2 *Thes.* ii. 3, 4.) But he did not consider whom he had thus affronted: not the idols of the heathens, which being wood and stone, he had easily cast into the fire; but Israel's holy Protector, who would execute signal vengeance upon him for his bold presumption; and who, being the Creator of heaven and earth, could crush as a moth the feeble worm, which had set him at defiance.

V. 23. The Assyrian monarch was elated by his successes; and, on account of the number and valour of his troops, his chariots, and other military preparations, supposed that nothing would be too hard for him to accomplish. He is here introduced as *glorying* in what he had done, and would do. No mountain was so inaccessible but he could drive his chariots over it; no forest so impervious, but he could level it with the ground; no place so fortified, but he would force his way into it! Some suppose he meant, that he had marched his army through the defiles, or over the craggy summits, of mount Lebanon: but others think that by these expressions, the temple on mount Zion is intended; and that he gloried, as already indisputably master of the whole land; and as if he had marched his army, and driven his chariots, into the mountain of the Lord's house, and dispossessed him of his habitation. The temple may be called Lebanon, either because difficult of access, or because it was built with cedars of Lebanon: the removal of all obstructions, by slaying the bravest of Hezekiah's captains, may be denoted, by cutting down the cedars and choice fir-trees: and, "the lodgings of his borders, and the forest of his "Carmel," may mean the strong-holds upon the borders of the land; and the fruitful fields, which would come into the possession of the conqueror. For Carmel being situated in a very fruitful part of the land, every fruitful spot seems to have been called by that name. (*Marg.*—*Notes, Is.* x. 12—15.)

V. 24. Hezekiah had before taken measures to prevent the Assyrians from finding water near Jerusalem. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 3, 4.) But this haughty conqueror boasted, that wherever his armies marched to besiege cities, that by digging deep wells he found water where none had ever been found before, so that he and his army had "drunk "strange waters:" and likewise, that they dried up all the rivers by which the cities were defended, either by the numbers who drank of them, or by diverting their course into other channels: as if he had been capable of dividing the rivers, that his army might march over; and of bringing waters from the rock, as JEHOVAH had done for his people! (*Notes, Ex.* xiv. 26—31. xvii. 5, 6. *Josh.* iii. 15—17.)—The cities of Egypt, where Sennacherib had been very successful, were chiefly defended by rivers or deep moats.

* Or, *Hast thou not heard how I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? Should I now bring it to be laid waste, and fenced cities to be ruinous heaps?*

25 * Hast thou not heard long ago *how* [l] I have done it, *and* of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities *into* ruinous heaps.

l Ps. xxxiii. 11. lxxvi. 10. Is. x. 5, 6. 15. xxxvii. 26, 27. xlv. 7. xlvi. 10, 11. liv. 16. Acts iv. 27, 28.

26 Therefore their inhabitants [m] were † of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; [n] they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* [o] the grass on the house-tops, and *as corn* blasted before it be grown up.

m Num. xiv. 9. Ps. xlviii. 4—7. cxxvii. 1. Jer. xxxvii. 10. l. 36, 37. li. 30. 32.

† Heb. *short of hand.* Num. xi. 23.

n Ps. xcii. 7. cii. 11. Is. xl. 6—8. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.

o Ps. cxxix. 6—8.

27 But [p] I know thy ‡ abode, and [q] thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

p Ps. cxxxix. 2—11. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.

‡ Or, *sitting.*

28 Because [r] thy rage against me, and [s] thy tumult is come up into mine

q Deut. xxviii. 6. 19. Ps. cxxi. 8. Is. xxxvii. 28, 29.

ears, therefore I will put [t] my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back [u] by the way by which thou camest.

r Ps. ii. 1—5. vii. 6. x. 13, 14. xlvi. 6. xciii. 3, 4. Luke vi. 11. John xv. 18. 23, 24. Acts vii. 54.

t Job xli. 2. Ps. xxxii. 9. Ez. xxix. 4. xxxviii. 4. Am. iv. 2.

u 33. 36, 37.

29 And this *shall be* [x] a sign unto thee, [y] Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year, sow ye and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

x 21. 31—34. xx. 8, 9. Ex. iii. 12. Is. vii. 11—14. Luke ii. 12.

y Lev. xxv. 4, 5. 20—22. Is. xxxvii. 30.

30 [z] And [§] the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah [a] shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.

z 4. 2 Chr. xxxii. 22, 23. Is. i. 9. x. 20—22.

§ Heb. *the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth.*

a Ps. lxxx. 9. Is. xxvii. 6. xxxvii. 31, 32.

b Jer. xliv. 14. Rom. ix. 27. xi. 5.

31 For [b] out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and [‖] they that escape out of mount Zion: [c] the zeal of the LORD *of hosts* shall do this.

‖ Heb. *the escaping.*

c Is. ix. 7. lix. 17. lxiii. 15. Ez. v. 13. xx. 9. Zech. i. 14. John ii. 17.

s Ps. lxv. 7. lxxiv. 4. 23. lxxxiii. 2.

V. 25. When the Lord had declared the vain-glorious thoughts of Sennacherib's heart, who affected to be thought invincible and omnipotent; he addressed him as in person, and interrogated him, whether he had never heard that these were the peculiar works of Israel's God? In ancient times, long before Sennacherib, or the ancestors of whom he boasted, were born, JEHOVAH (for the deliverance of his people, and to *form* them into a nation who should worship him,) had, as it were, levelled mountains: he had literally dried up rivers and seas to afford them a passage; and caused them to drink strange waters flowing from the rock of flint.—Or Sennacherib, in what he had done, had only fulfilled the purposes and predictions of JEHOVAH, as his instrument in his least honourable work of executing vengeance: and this without intending it, and instigated only by his own ambition, rage, and insatiable rapacity. God, in righteousness, had allotted him the service of "laying waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps" which he performed in a most iniquitous manner.—Isaiah's prophecies concerning the Assyrians seem to be referred to. (*Notes, Is.* vii. 17—25. viii. 6—10. x. 5—15. 24—34. xxx. 27—32. xxxiii. 1—13.)

V. 26. (*Note,* 9—13.) The Lord had been pleased to enfeeble and intimidate all the enemies, which Sennacherib had hitherto encountered; so that they fell before him as the grass before the scythe; nay, they withered of themselves, "as grass on the house-tops, or as corn blasted "before it be grown up." (*Note, Ps.* cxxix. 6—8.) His success was therefore no decided proof, that he possessed extraordinary power, courage, or conduct; and he had no reason thus to vaunt, as if he had done wonderful things.

V. 27, 28. The Lord knew Sennacherib's secret thoughts and plans, as well as his undertakings; and that he was actuated by implacable enmity against his perfections, authority, worship, and worshippers: especially since Hezekiah, trusting in the Lord, had dared to disregard his menaces and resist his will. This rage had vented itself in blasphemies and reproaches against God; and it had also occasioned insolent threatenings and tumultuous preparations against Jerusalem. But the Lord was about to deal with him by force, as with some savage beast, or untractable horse or mule: he would fasten a hook in his nose, and a bridle in his mouth, and let him know that there was One, infinitely above him; and send him home baffled and disgraced. (*Notes, Job* xli. 1—11. *Is.* xxxvii. 29. *Ex.* xxix. 2—5. xxxviii. 4.)

V. 29. The Lord here addresses Hezekiah.—The devastations of the Assyrians had, probably, prevented the land from being sown that year; and the next is supposed to have been the sabbatical year; though this is the only intimation, in all the history of Israel, that any regard was paid to that institution: (*Note, 2 Chr.* xxxvi. 21:) but the Lord here engaged, that the spontaneous produce of the land, from the corn shaken out, in gathering the preceding harvest, should be sufficient for the support of the people, during those two years, and till a supply was obtained in the ordinary way. (*Note, Lev.* xxv. 20—22.) As the performance of this promise was evidently subsequent to the destruction of Sennacherib's army, it was a sign to Hezekiah's faith, that the present deliverance would be an earnest of the Lord's persevering care of the kingdom of Judah; and of the accomplishment of that part of the promise, which related to events still more remote. (*Note, Ex.* iii. 12.)

V. 30, 31. The ten tribes were already carried captive; Judah was brought very low; Jerusalem alone withstood the victor's arms, and it was menaced with a siege. (*Note, Is.* viii. 6—8.) The professed worshippers of God were a very small remnant, and seemed devoted to ruin. But that remnant would be as *seed-corn;* which, striking root in a fruitful soil, springs up and yields a large increase. (*Note, Is.* xxvii. 2—6, *v.* 6.) They were destined to go forth from mount Zion, to possess the land, and to spread into distant countries; and were a typical resemblance of the apostles and primitive Christians, who from Jerusalem carried the gospel into all the nations of the earth, in order to produce an immense increase of true believers, who are all the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. (*Note, Gal.* iii. 26—29.) This the Lord himself undertook to perform; not because of their righteousness,

32 Therefore thus saith the LORD, concerning the king of Assyria, [d] He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor [e] cast a bank against it.

33 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

34 For [f] I will defend this city, to save it, [g] for mine own sake, and for [h] my servant David's sake.

35 ¶ And it came to pass [i] that night, that [k] the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and [m] when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

36 So [n] Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went, and returned, and dwelt at [o] Nineveh.

37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of [p] Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer [q] his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of [*] Armenia. And [r] Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

[d] Is. viii. 7—10. x. 24, 25. 28—32. xxxvii. 33—35.
[e] 2 Sam. xx. 15. Ez. xxi. 22. Luke xix. 43, 44.
[f] Ps. xlvi. 5, 6. xlviii. 2—8. Is. xxxi. 5. xxxviii. 6.
[g] Deut. xxxii. 27. Is. xliii. 25. xlviii. 9. 11. Ez. xxxvi. 22. Eph. i. 6. 14.
[h] 1 Kings xi. 12, 13. xv. 4. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 21. 26.
[i] Ex. xii. 29. Dan. v. 30. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3.
[k] Ex. xii. 29, 30. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. 1 Chr. xxi. 12. 16. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21, 22. Ps. xxxv. 5, 6. Acts xii. 23.
[l] Is. x. 16—19. 33. xxx. 30—33. xxxvii. 36. Hos. i. 7.
[m] Ex. xii. 30. Ps. lxxvi. 5—7. 10.
[n] 7. 28. 33.
[o] Gen. x. 11, 12. Jon. i. 2. Nah. i. 1. ii. 8. Matt. xii. 41.
[p] B. C. 709. 10. xviii. 5. 30. Deut. xxxii. 31. 2 Chr. xxxii. 14. 19. Is. xxxvii. 37, 38.
[q] 2 Chr. xxxii. 21.
[*] Heb. *Ararat.* Gen. viii. 4. Jer. li. 27.
[r] Ezra iv. 2.

but out of zeal for his own glory; to make known his perfections, to magnify his law and authority, and to promote his own cause, and increase the number of his worshippers. (*Note, Is.* ix. 6, 7.)

V. 32, 33. It is certain from these verses, that Sennacherib never approached near enough to Jerusalem, to lay siege against it, or even to make preparations for a siege: and there is no proof that Rabshakeh or Rabsaris had proceeded to besiege the city; though they had come with an army and menaced it. (*Notes*, 8. 27, 28. xviii. 17. *Is.* xxxiii. 20—22.)

V. 34. *For my servant*, &c.] That is, from a gracious regard to David's faith and piety, to perform the promises made to his family, and to make way for the coming of the Messiah who was to descend from him. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xi. 12, 13.)

V. 35. Rabshakeh seems to have rejoined the king with his detachment: and, after the victory gained over Tirhakah, Sennacherib marched directly to besiege Jerusalem; and was just arrived and encamped in the neighbourhood of that city, but had not made any assault upon it. (*Note*, 32, 33.) And this happened the very night after Hezekiah had spread the letter before God, and sought his help by prayer. The devastation was made with such profound silence, that the survivors were not aware of the blow, till they arose in the morning, and found one hundred and eighty-five thousand of their comrades dead in the camp! "When they arose,... these," (the hundred and eighty-five thousand,) "were all dead corpses." Probably, Rabshakeh perished among the rest; but Sennacherib was preserved to still deeper disgrace, and a more dreadful end.—The "angels excel in strength:" this angel was commissioned by divine authority, and armed with adequate power; and it is not requisite for us to determine in what manner he effected this tremendous slaughter. (*Notes, Ps.* lxxvi. *Is.* x. 16—19. 28—34. xxix. 5—8. xxxi. 8, 9. xxxiii. 23, 24.)—'Herodotus reports from the Egyptians, that their king, being also a priest, by his prayers to his god, brought this destruction on the Assyrians, as they lay before Pelusium: a great army of rats coming in the night, and gnawing all their bow-strings in pieces, so that they could not fight. So studious were they to pervert the truth, and corrupt the sacred story!' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 36, 37. Sennacherib is supposed to have survived this catastrophe for some time; and to have lived under great contempt, but exercising the most odious cruelty towards his subjects. Though he had had such awful demonstration of the power of JEHOVAH, and the impotence of his own idols; yet he adhered to the latter, and died in an act of idolatrous worship: a striking example of the difference between the God in whom Hezekiah trusted, to whom he prayed, and by whom he was miraculously delivered, in the most urgent extremity; and the god of Sennacherib, who could not defend him in his own capital, during profound peace, from the sword of his sons, even while employed in acts of religious worship!—Some have conjectured, that Sennacherib had vowed to sacrifice his sons to his idol, and that they murdered him in self-defence: and then escaped into the adjacent mountains of Armenia, or Ararat. (*Note, Gen.* viii. 4, 5.)—Esarhaddon seems to have been a man of much better character than his father. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

In times of great distress and prevailing impiety, strong expressions of poignant sorrow and deep humiliation are peculiarly seasonable: for, "the LORD calls to weeping, "and mourning, and girding with sackcloth," and the contrary spirit and conduct are irrational, offensive, and tokens of a profane, sensual, and selfish heart. (*Note, Is.* xxii. 8—14.)—They, who best know the efficacy of fervent believing prayer, will most desire the supplications of others for them; and especially of those, who have long been eminent for piety and simplicity, and zealous for the glory of God. Alas! few kings are very earnest to form alliances with the faithful and devoted ministers of religion, against their hostile invaders; yet, they are of more real utility, than increasing numbers of brave and disciplined troops: and whenever princes, prophets, and people unite in prayer, in real dependence on God, and a disposition to give him the praise; a prosperous event may be confidently expected, notwithstanding their own weakness, and the rebukes and insults of haughty enemies.—The Lord "resisteth the proud," and will vindicate his own cause against those who reproach, defy, or blaspheme his name; or who rival him, and rob him of his glory.—The more we are humbly conscious, that we cannot help ourselves, but must be miserable and perish without his aid; the

CHAP. XX.

Hezekiah, when sick, is warned by Isaiah to prepare for death, 1; but praying, he receives the promise of fifteen years added to his life, and of deliverance from the Assyrians, 2—7. In confirmation, the shadow on Ahaz's dial goes back ten degrees, 8—11. The king of Babylon sends to congratulate Hezekiah, who shews the ambassadors all his treasures, 12, 13. Isaiah reproves him for this, and foretels the Babylonish captivity, 14—19. Hezekiah dies, and is succeeded by Manasseh, 20, 21.

more simple will be our dependence on him, and the more fervent our applications to him, whether in temporal or spiritual exigencies.—'Man's extremity is therefore God's 'opportunity:' and while his servants can speak nothing but terror to the proud, the profane, and the hypocritical; they have comfortable words to say to the discouraged believer. 'Be not afraid: thine enemies are God's enemies, and thy cause is his cause: in glorifying himself, he must protect and save those who trust in him. He delights in giving the very blessings for which thy soul is athirst: and with the breath of his mouth he can slay the wicked, and blast all the machinations of earth and hell against his church.'—The Lord finds wicked men other employment, when he would give his servants a respite from conflict and persecution: and even those projects, which are in themselves most trifling or most detestable, often so engross the minds, occupy the time, and fill the hands of the ungodly, as to detain them from attempting that mischief to the cause of God, to which otherwise they would be disposed. But their pursuits of wealth, of honour, of pleasure, or of learning, do not prevent their discovering the enmity of their hearts, or filling up the measure of their sins: and when this is done, they are taken away, and their place knows them no more.—The blasphemies, which many utter, are not unmeaning words, as they suppose, but the natural produce of their depraved hearts: and therefore they reiterate them, and grow more outrageous in them, when recent occasions are afforded. Absurd as it appears, worldly men do really think, that those who trust in God will be deceived; and they presume upon success, while they despise him, and set him at defiance! Impunity and prosperity inspire confidence and arrogance; and men expect to prevail against all who resist them, because in some instances they have been successful! (*Note, Ec.* viii. 11—13.)

V. 14—22.

We can easily say, "If God be for us, who can be "against us?" but in the crisis of danger, when the eye of sense perceives no way of escape, without removing mountains, and effecting apparent impossibilities, faith is constrained to maintain a severe conflict against unbelief, even in the experience of the most established believers. But prayer is the never-failing resource of the tempted Christian; whether he be called to struggle with outward difficulties, or to engage in the more distressing warfare with his inward enemies. At the mercy-seat of his almighty Friend he opens his heart; before him he particularly *spreads* the case; to him he makes his appeal: and when he can discern, that the glory of God is engaged on his side, his faith gains the victory, and he again exults in the assurance, that he never shall be moved. He knows the difference between JEHOVAH, whose mysterious nature and harmonious perfections are revealed in the sacred Scriptures; and all those idols, which are the work of men's hands, or the creatures of their imaginations. Infidels may indeed triumph over superstition, hypocrisy, and every form of worthless profession: and they may vaunt and boast, as if they could, with equal ease and certainty, prevail against the truths and spiritual worship of God our Saviour. But, whether they employ the terrors of persecution, or the more specious armour of blasphemous reproaches, sarcastick wit, or proud reasonings; their assaults are vain against the faith and prayers, the holy lives, and scriptural preaching of the Lord's true servants. "The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God," not only to repel the assaults of Satan and his ministers, whether they assume the form of the roaring lion, the subtle serpent, or the angel of light; but to subvert his strong-holds, and "to cast down imaginations," (or *reasonings,*) "and every high thing that exalteth itself against "the knowledge of God, and to bring into captivity every "thought to the obedience of Christ." (*Note,* 2 *Cor.* x. 1—6.)—No weapon that is formed against the church can prosper: and the daughter of Zion, whilst untainted with idolatry or hypocrisy, and faithfully reserving herself for him, who has "espoused her in righteousness, and faith-"fulness, and loving kindness," may despise and defy the feeble efforts of all assailants, and confidently predict their speedy and terrible destruction. Oh, that such persons would consider, "whom they have reproached and blas-"phemed!" whom they have opposed and provoked to wrath! "against whom they have exalted their voice, and "lifted up their eyes on high!" They may think that he is altogether such a one as themselves: but they will find, that he is "the Holy One of Israel." He sees their inmost thoughts; he discerns the rage and enmity of their hearts; as well as hears the stout and arrogant words, which they instigate each other to speak against him: and what will they do, when from his awful tribunal he shall give the mandate, "These mine enemies, which would not that "I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them "before me?" (*Note, Luke* xix. 11—27, *v.* 27.)

V. 23—37.

The greatest exploits of men are unworthy of notice, compared with the most ordinary works of God: the most powerful and successful of his enemies undesignedly accomplish his secret purposes, or express predictions; and prosper, only till they have filled up their part of his universal plan. Some the Lord employs, contrary to their own intentions, as executioners of his vengeance, "to lay "waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps;" and therefore their opposers prove weak, timid, or infatuated: but, when they have accomplished their work, (perhaps with hearts full of rage against him, who had exalted and prospered them;) their turn comes next, and others execute vengeance upon them: or he deals with them by his own hand, as with some great Behemoth or Leviathan, and restrains, confines, or enfeebles them, as he sees good. But his believing people, safe under his protection, and living upon his grace and providential bounty, are employed as willing

a 2 Chr. xxxii. 24. Is. xxxviii. 1. John xi. 1—5. Phil. ii. 27. 30.
b xix. 2. 20.
* Heb. *Give charge concerning thine house.* 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Is. xxxviii. 1. *margins.*
c Jer. xviii. 7—10. Jon. iii. 4—10.
d 1 Kings viii. 30. Ps. v. 15. Is. xxxviii. 2, 3. Matt. vi. 6.

1 IN those days [a] was Hezekiah sick unto death. And [b] the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [*] Set thine house in order; for [c] thou shalt die, and not live.

2 Then [d] he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

e Gen. viii. 1. Neh. v. 19. xiii. 14. 22. 31. Ps. xxv. 7. lxxxix. 47. 50. cxix. 49. Is. lxiii. 11.
f Gen. v. 22. 24. xvii. 1. 1 Kings ii. 4. iii. 6. Job i. 1. 8. Luke i. 6.
g 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Ps. xxxii. 2. cxlv. 18. Jer. iv. 2. John i. 47. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 John iii. 21, 22.
h 1 Kings viii. 61. xi. 4. xv. 14. 2 Chr. xvi. 9.
i 2 Sam. xii. 21, 22. Ps. vi. 6. cii 9. Is. xxxviii. 14. Heb. v. 7.
† Heb. *with a great weeping.*

3 I beseech thee, O LORD, [e] remember now how [f] I have walked before thee [g] in truth, and with [h] a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah [i] wept [†] sore.

instruments to perform his works of goodness and mercy, which when finished shall meet a sure reward. Whilst all creatures here below subserve their good; and nature itself is made to transcend her usual limits, or alter her settled course, to supply their wants; and while the mighty angels are all ministering spirits, sent forth to protect them, or avenge them on their enemies: they, in their places, would imitate that prompt obedience, and "delight to do the commandments" of God, "hearkening "unto the voice of his word."—But all creatures, yea, the holy angels, and the Lord of angels himself, fight against those who fight against his church: nay, those objects on which they chiefly depend, and those persons from whom they expect the greatest kindness, will concur in effecting their destruction; and every respite will finally add to their infamy and misery.—The cause of God, however reduced, will surely revive: the remnant of every generation will yield an increase to that which succeeds; and at length "Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the "face of the world with fruit." The zeal of the Lord of hosts, which appointed and sent the mighty Saviour, is engaged to make his salvation triumphant over all opposers, and to fill the earth with the knowledge of his glory: not now for "his servant David's sake," but for the sake of his "beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased." May our hearts be prepared as good ground, that his word may strike root in them, and bring forth fruit in our lives! then we shall witness the full completion of all those prophecies, of which he has already given us so many signs and earnests, while with exulting millions we shall sing, "Hallelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth:" and "the kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of "the Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever "and ever." Amen, and amen. (*Notes, Rev.* xi. 15—18. xix. 1—6.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, and he lived fifteen after this sickness: it must therefore have happened in the fourteenth, or beginning of the fifteenth year of his reign; about the time of Sennacherib's first invasion of Judea. (xviii. 13.)—It is not likely, that all the events recorded in the two preceding chapters occurred within a part of one year; yet, this must have been the case, if Hezekiah's sickness was subsequent to the destruction of the Assyrian army. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxxii. 24—26. *Is.* xxxviii. 6.)—The expression, "Set thine house in "order," or, *command concerning thine house*, was a direction to Hezekiah, to make without delay, a full and final settlement of his domestick and civil concerns, that nothing might interrupt his mind, or take it off from the exercise of devotion, in the nearer approaches of death; and yet, that nothing might be neglected, which related to the interests of survivors. Hezekiah's disorder was in itself mortal, and must have terminated in death, without a miracle: the prophet therefore spoke according to the *natural* tendency of the disorder, and not according to the Lord's *secret purposes*. Hezekiah's prayer shewed, that he did not consider the sentence to be irreversible.

V. 2. It is probable that Hezekiah turned his face to the wall of his chamber, (which might be towards the temple,) merely that he might have more freedom and privacy, in pouring out his heart before God.

V. 3. Hezekiah evidently prayed, that he might recover, though he expressed himself with submission to the will of God: and doubtless he was very unwilling to die at that time. To account for this, it has been said, that believers under the Old Testament, having dark views of the eternal world, might be expected to die with more regret, than those under the New: but facts by no means support this supposition; for Abraham, Jacob, Aaron, Moses, Joshua, David, and others, seem to have left the world with as much joyfulness, as Paul himself. We must, therefore, ascribe Hezekiah's reluctance to die, either to the state of his mind, or to the circumstances of his family and the nation. Nothing appears peculiarly to have distressed him, in the view of immediate death, as to the state of his own soul. But the circumstances of his family, and the state of affairs in Israel seem to solve all the difficulty. Probably, at that time Hezekiah had no son; for Manasseh, who succeeded him, was not born till three years after. (xxi. 1.) By his death, therefore, this branch of David's family would have been extinct, and the succession must have been continued in a more remote and obscure branch of it: and this would have been a discouraging rebuke to him, as if he had forfeited the covenant of royalty. It is a general and probable opinion, that the nation was at this time threatened with an assault by the whole force of the king of Assyria; they therefore needed a commander, who united wisdom, courage, and faith, to head them in such an emergency: and if he were removed, and they were left to a disputed succession, and the weakness of an usurped or opposed government, there could be little prospect, but that Jerusalem would share the fate of Samaria. With great earnestness and perseverance, Hezekiah had brought his reformation to a hopeful establishment: but he might fear, lest the instability of the people, and the dissensions of the nobles, would subvert all, if he were taken away at this crisis. He therefore desired to live, not for his own sake so much, as for that of his family and people, especially for the interests of true religion; and he prayed to that effect, with many tears, as well as with great fervency. (*Notes, Is.* xxxviii. 1—3. 9—20.) The Lord knew, and Hezekiah could ap-

4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle * court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

5 [k] Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, [l] the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, [m] the God of David thy father, [n] I have heard thy prayer, [o] I have seen thy tears: behold, [p] I will heal thee; on the third day [q] thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

6 And [r] I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and [s] I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

7 And Isaiah said, [t] Take a lump of figs: and they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.

8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, [u] What *shall be* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?

9 And Isaiah said, [x] This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?

10 And Hezekiah answered, [y] It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

11 And Isaiah the prophet [z] cried unto the LORD; and [a] he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the † dial of Ahaz.

12 ¶ At that time [b] Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, [c] king of [d] Babylon, [e] sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: [f] for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and [g] shewed them all the house

* Or, *city.*

k 2 Sam. vii. 3—5. 1 Chr. xvii. 2—4.
l Josh. v. 14, 15. 1 Sam. ix. 16. x. 1. 2 Sam. v. 2. 2 Chr. xiii. 12. Heb. ii. 10.
m 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3. Is. xxxviii. 5. Iv. 3. Matt. xxii. 32.
n xix. 20. Ps. lxv. 2. Luke i. 13.
o Ps. xxxix. 12. lvi. 8. Rev. vii. 17.
p 7. Ex. xv. 26. Job xxxiii. 19—26. Ps. cxlvii. 3. Jam. v. 14, 15.
q 8. Ps. lxvi. 13—15. 19, 20. cxvi. 12—14. cxviii. 17—19. Is. xxxviii. 22. John v. 14.
r Ps. cxvi. 15. Acts xxvii. 24.
s *See on* xix. 34. 2 Chr. xxxii. 22. Is. x. 24.
t ii. 20—22. iv. 41. Is. xxxviii. 21.
u 8. xix. 29. Judg. vi. 17. 37—40. Is. vii. 11. 14. xxxviii. 22. Hos. vi. 2.
x Is. xxxviii. 7, 8. Matt. xvi. 1—4. Mark viii. 11, 12. Luke xi. 29, 30.
y ii. 10. iii. 18. Is. xlix. 6. Mark ix. 28, 29. John xiv. 12.
z Ex. xiv. 15. 1 Kings xvii. 20, 21. xviii. 36—38. Acts ix. 40.
a Josh. x. 12—14. 2 Chr. xxxii. 24, 31. Is. xxxviii. 8.
† Heb. *degrees.*
b Is. xxxix. 1. *Merodach-baladan.*
c 2 Chr. xxxii. 31.
d Gen. x. 10. xi. 9. Is. xiii. 1. 19. xiv. 4.
e 2 Sam. viii. 10. x. 2.
f Is. xxxix. 1.
g 2 Chr. xxxii. 27. Is. xxxix. 2.

peal to him, that he had walked before him in sincerity and uprightness of heart; having used all his authority and influence, with zeal and earnestness, to suppress idolatry and wickedness, and by every scriptural means to promote the worship and service of God; and that he had done what was good in his sight, being an example to his people. The consciousness of his integrity gave him confidence; and he begged the Lord to remember the fruits of grace which had been produced, and to spare him, that he might be yet more fruitful and useful. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxx. 23—27. xxxi. 20, 21. *Neh.* xiii. 14. 31. *2 Cor.* i. 12—14.)

V. 4, 5. *Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 1—5.—*The captain.* (5) This title implies that Hezekiah was spared, that he might lead the people to victory, by the prevailing weapons of faith and prayer. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Josh.* v. 13—15.)—*I have heard,* &c.] (*Note, Is.* lxv. 24, 25.) The Lord knew his heart, and saw that he would be disposed, in the first place, after his recovery, to go up to his courts to return thanks for the mercy; and therefore he suited the message to his secret desires and intentions (8). He should 'recover his strength so fast, as to be able in three 'days' time to go up to the temple, and give God thanks 'for his cure.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 6. Hezekiah was the only person, that we read of, who was previously informed how long he was to live. Such information would be of very bad tendency to ungodly men: and it would not be either comfortable or useful to a believer, unless animated with vigorous faith, and glowing zeal for the honour of God. Doubtless, this pious king made a good use of his knowledge, and waited the appointed period of his days with calm resignation; but we need not envy him this peculiar privilege. He was not more than fifty-four years old when he died.—God would also defend Jerusalem, as with a shield, against all the power and rage of the Assyrian king, for the glory of his own name, and for the sake of his servant David. (*Notes,* xix. 34. *Is.* xxxviii. 6.)

V. 7. It seems that Hezekiah's sickness was a species of the plague, accompanied with a boil of fatal tendency: whether this application were *medicinally* proper, or not, doubtless it was rendered effectual by miracle; or rather, it was a token of the divine operation by which he was healed.

V. 8. As the Lord was graciously pleased frequently to confirm his promises by signs, Hezekiah desired one in this case; not in unbelief, but for the confirmation of his wavering faith. (*Notes, Judg.* vi. 36—40. *Is.* vii. 10—12.)

V. 9—11. The dial of Anaz, it is probable, was placed full in Hezekiah's view, and the sun shining upon it: and he was allowed to choose, whether the shadow should go forward, or backward, ten degrees; that is, half hour lines, as it is conjectured. The progression of the shadow with accelerated speed, though evidently miraculous, seemed not so extraordinary to Hezekiah as its retrograde motion, which he preferred, and which accordingly took place. We are not concerned to determine, how God produced this effect: if he saw good, he was able to cause a temporary change in the motion of the earth and heavenly bodies: (*Note, Josh.* x. 12—14:) and some think that the same effect was produced in other places, especially at Babylon. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxxii. 30—33, *v.* 31. *Is.* xxxviii. 8.)—It appears from Herodotus, that the Egyptians had observed some few instances, in which the course of the sun and moon was very different from what was usual; though their traditions of them were greatly distorted, and wholly unlike the real facts, as recorded in Scripture.

V. 12, 13. The king of Babylon seems at this time to have reigned independent; but he was in danger of being

of his * precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the house of his † armour, and all that was found in his treasures: [h] there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

14 Then [i] came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, [k] What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They [l] are come from [l] a far country, *even* from Babylon.

15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, [m] All *the things* that *are* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

16 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, [n] Hear the word of the LORD.

17 Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, [o] shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

18 And of [p] thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and [q] they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

19 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, [r] Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, [s] *Is it* not *good*, if [s] peace and truth be in my days?

20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how [t] he made a pool and a conduit, and brought

* Or, *spicery.* 1 Kings x. 2. 10. 25.

† Or, *jewels.* Heb. *vessels.*

h 2 Chr. xxxii. 25, 26. Ec. vii. 20.

i Is. xxxix. 3—8.

k v. 25, 26. 2 Sam. xii. 7, &c. 2 Chr. xvi. 7—10. xxv. 7—9. 15, 16. Ps. cxli. 5. Prov. xxv. 12. Jer. xxvi. 18, 19. Am. vii. 12, 13. Mark vi. 18, 19.

l Deut. xxviii. 49. Josh. ix. 6. 9. Is. xliii. 5.

m 13. Josh. vii. 19. Job xxxi. 33. Prov. xxviii. 13. I John i. 8—10.

n vii. 1. 1 Kings xxii. 19. Is. i. 10. Am. vii. 16.

o xxiv. 13. xxv. 13—15. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10. 18. Jer. xxvii. 21, 22. lii. 17—19.

p xxiv. 12. xxv. 6. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11.

q Dan. i. 3—7.

r Lev. x. 3. 1 Sam. iii. 18. Job i. 21. Ps. xxxix. 9. Lam. iii. 22, 39.

s Or, *Shall there not be peace and truth, &c.?*

s Esth. ix. 30. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Zech. viii. 19. Luke ii. 10. 14.

t 2 Chr. xxxii. 4. 30. 32. Neh. iii. 16. Is. xxii. 9—11.

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reduced under the power of the Assyrian monarch: yet, in process of time Babylon acquired the pre-eminence, and swallowed up the Assyrian empire. (*Notes*, 17, 18. xvii. 24. xxiii. 29, 30. 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 11. *Isa.* xxxix. 1.) This prince, having heard of Hezekiah's sickness, and the miraculous circumstances of his recovery, and knowing that he had refused submission to the Assyrians, seems to have proposed to enter into a confederacy with him against that potent nation, "and Hezekiah hearkened unto them," as inclined to accede to their proposals. He was too well pleased with this flattering embassy; and, in order to convince the ambassadors, who brought the letters, that he was a desirable ally, he shewed them all his treasures, and armour, and preparations for war of every kind. This resulted from pride and ostentation, and might have led to an improper alliance with an idolatrous prince. He seems likewise to have missed the opportunity of instructing the Chaldeans concerning the perfections of JEHOVAH, who had wrought the miracles which had excited their attention; and concerning his authority, law, and worship; and of shewing them the absurdity and evil of idolatry, especially their worship of the sun, which was evidently the creature and servant of the God of Israel. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 24—26. *Is.* xxxix. 2.)—Though Hezekiah's sickness preceded Sennacherib's invasion and overthrow, it is probable that this embassy arrived after that event; when Hezekiah's exhausted treasuries had been abundantly replenished by the spoil of the Assyrians. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 27—29.)

V. 14, 15. Hezekiah did not resent the prophet's interference in state-affairs; (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xvi. 7—10. xxv. 14—16;) for he reverenced his person, confided in his prudence and affection, and desired to hear the will of God from him. In his answer, he intimated, that he had counted it an honour to receive ambassadors from a far country. (*Notes*, *Josh.* ix. 8—15.) Perhaps, he was not at first conscious of having done wrong; yet, in reviewing and relating his conduct, he was made deeply sensible of his sin and folly. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 30—33; *v.* 31.)

V. 17, 18. Considering the small and unsettled power of the king of Babylon, at this time, compared with that of the Assyrian kings, who seemed about to establish a permanent dominion over all the adjacent countries; nothing could be more unlikely, than the accomplishment of this prediction: yet in somewhat more than a hundred years it was exactly fulfilled!—All the remaining treasures and the vessels of the temple, and furniture made by Solomon, or supplied by subsequent kings, with all the treasures of the palace, and riches of the city, were carried to Babylon; and Daniel and his companions, some of whom were descended from Hezekiah, became eunuchs in the king of Babylon's palace. (*Note*, *Dan.* i. 3—7.)—Hezekiah dreaded the power of the Assyrians; but he was more disposed to expect help, than to fear ruin, from the king of Babylon. If this transaction occurred before Sennacherib's overthrow, as many suppose, (*Note*, 12, 13,) it took place previously to Hezekiah's emptying his treasuries, to hire Sennacherib's departure, on his first invasion of the land. (*Note*, xviii. 14—16.) The chief reason for assigning this date to it is, that the power of the Assyrians, after the destruction of Sennacherib's army, ceased to be formidable; yet Hezekiah's conduct implied, that he chiefly feared danger from that quarter. But indeed, after that blow, the Assyrian power was far greater than that of any of the neighbouring countries; and Hezekiah might desire to form a league to defend himself and his kingdom against it.

V. 19. Hezekiah humbly and submissively allowed the justice of the sentence, and the goodness of God in the respite; and gratefully acknowledged his unmerited kindness, in the peace, prosperity, and continuance of true religion in his days. Yet the prospect, respecting his family and nation, must have occasioned him many painful sensations. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20, 21. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 3, 4. 30—33.

water into the city, *are* they not written in [u] the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

[u] viii. 23. xv. 6. 26. xvi. 29. 1 Kings xiv. 19. xv. 7. 23.

21 And Hezekiah [x] slept with his fathers: and [y] Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

[x] xxi. 18. 1 Kings ii. 10. xi. 43. xiv. 31. 2 Chr. xxvi. 23.

[y] xxi. 1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

'In the midst of life we are in death:'—happy then are they, and they alone, who are habitually prepared for that event! Yet even to them, it is desirable to be apprised of its immediate approach: that they may settle all their temporal concerns, for the peace and benefit of their survivors; and then meet the separating stroke, with that calmness, and in that frame of spirit, which may most impress and edify surrounding friends.—If the Lord seem in his providence to command us "to set our house in order, for we "must die, and not live;" and yet afterwards unexpectedly prolong our days; our preparation in that case will neither mar the comfort, nor lessen the usefulness, of our future lives.—It is frequently required of ministers, to intimate to sick persons the probability, or supposed certainty, of their approaching dissolution; as well as to assist them in improving the visitation, and in preparing for the event: and should such intimations afterwards prove erroneous, they ought not to be censured; for they can only speak according to their judgment, and deliver that message from God, which *appears to them* suited to the case of those whom they address.—Though miracles, properly so called, have ceased; yet the Lord hears the prayer of faith for the sick, and sometimes remarkably prospers simple means, used in dependence on his blessing. And though physicians, (for prophets are not now sent from God to inform us in these matters,) should give little encouragement respecting the recovery of beloved and useful persons; we may still continue to pray for them: for, "with God all things are possible," and the most sagacious of men are often found mistaken. In respect of ourselves, it is generally best to be willing to depart, and to pray especially for spiritual blessings in behalf of ourselves and others. Yet there may be cases, in which men may with propriety be importunate for the continuance of life and health, in order to complete designs of publick and allowed utility, which appear likely to be frustrated if they should be removed; or when in any way the important interests of families, churches, or nations *appear to them* connected with their lives. Yet, as we are all liable to mistake in these concerns, submission to the divine will ought invariably to be united with such petitions; and nothing else should make any man desirous to live in this wretched world, who knows that he is ready for a better.—The mercy of our God, and the merits of our heavenly Advocate, form the sinner's never-failing plea at the throne of grace: yet, the consciousness of sincerity in our professed faith and piety, gives confidence in times of trial; and may, on some occasions, be pleaded before him, without the imputation of pride or self-righteousness.—Secret earnest prayer is the approved and successful method of obtaining relief and comfort, in seasons of the deepest distress: and sometimes the Lord immediately turns the mourning of the humble supplicant into joy and thanksgiving. He always hears the prayers and sees the tears of the broken in heart; and will give health, length of days, and temporal deliverances, as much, and as long, as they are truly beneficial.—The minister of Christ *must* deliver his Lord's message, even when it contains alarms and rebukes; but he delights to be the messenger of joy and consolation, to those whom his word has previously wounded.—If we would have promised mercies, we must observe the *instituted means;* for these, being connected with the end by the express promises of God, are far more certainly efficacious, when used properly, than any of these means which produce their effect in the ordinary course of Providence: and yet, the latter ought not to be neglected, lest we tempt rather than trust the Lord.—Recovery from sickness should always be publickly acknowledged, by first "going up to "the house of the LORD," to render the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, if it can be done: yet alas! few observe this rule, and many of those few do it as a formal task; while re-established health is employed in scenes of diversion or business, if not more directly devoted to the service of Satan by licentious pleasures. (*Note, Luke* xvii. 11—19.) But the true believer values the ability and opportunity of attending on the ordinances of God, and will go up with a glad and thankful heart; (*Notes, Ps.* cxviii. 17—24;) and will value that, more than any other privilege of health.—True faith is not without its misgivings, so that the strongest believers desire to have their's more strengthened: and in their experience, the Lord is pleased sometimes to give those evidences of his power, truth, and love to them, which establish their hearts as effectually as miraculous signs did of old. All creatures are his servants, to minister to the good of his children; and in answer to their prayers he can, in innumerable ways, render them subservient even to their spiritual benefit.

V. 12—21.

Alas! how seldom do we make suitable returns to the Lord for his condescending mercies to us! Ambition and ostentation too generally intrude, where thankfulness alone should occupy the heart; and we are often chargeable with pride, vanity, and carnal confidence, when we do not suspect ourselves.—It is very difficult to possess distinctions in rank, wealth, elegant furniture, or any thing valued by men, without a secret self-preference, and a desire that others should admire the possessor's ingenuity, taste, magnificence, or felicity. This foolish pride the Lord will rebuke and correct in those whom he loves; and especially when they idolize the opinion of ungodly men, and court their acquaintance, because they profess to esteem and admire them. But it is hopeful, when persons in superior rank will endure to be reasoned with, and reproved by those, who in outward circumstances are greatly their inferiors: for generally such interference, however well meant and prudently conducted, excites resentment.—If we could look into futurity, it would damp our joy in present prosperity: and we may expect vexation from every object, in proportion as we have been inordinately pleased with it.—Our regard to posterity, and our grief for the gloomy prospects before us, in the church or the world, must not render us unmindful of our present mercies, or

CHAP. XXI.

Manasseh reigns very wickedly and idolatrously, 1—9. Prophets are sent to predict judgments upon Judah because of his wickedness, 10—16. He dies and is succeeded by Amon, 17, 18. Amon reigns wickedly, 19—22. He is slain by his servants; the people put the conspirators to death, and make his son Josiah king, 23, 24. Amon's acts and burial, 25, 26.

[a] xx. 21. 1 Chr. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxxii. 33. xxxiii. 1. Matt. i. 10. *Manasses.*

MANASSEH [a] *was* twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* [b] Hephzi-bah.

[b] Prov. v. 19. Is. lxii. 4. *Marg.*

[c] 7. 16. xvi. 2—4. xxii. 17. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2—4.

[d] Lev. xviii. 25—29. Deut. xii. 31. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14. Ez. xvi. 51.

2 And [c] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [d] after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

[e] xviii. 4. 22. 2 Chr. xxxii. 12. xxxiv. 3.

3 For he built up again [e] the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and [f] he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did [g] Ahab king of Israel; [h] and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

[f] x. 18—20. 1 Kings xvi. 31—33. xviii. 21. 26.

[g] viii. 18. 27. Mic. vi. 16.

[h] xvii. 16. xxiii. 4. Deut. iv. 19. xvii. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 3—5.

[i] xvi. 10—16. Jer. xxxii. 34.

4 And [i] he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, [j] In Jerusalem will I put my name.

[j] Ex. xx. 24. Deut. xii. 5. 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Kings viii. 29. ix. 3. Ps. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14.

5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven, [k] in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

[k] xxiii. 4. 6. 1 Kings vi. 36. vii. 12. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 5. 15. Ez. xl. 28. 32. 37. 47. xli. 3. xliii. 5. xliv. 19.

6 And [l] he made his son pass through the fire, and [m] observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with [n] familiar spirits and wizards: he [o] wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke *him* to anger.

[l] xvi. 3. xvii. 17. Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2, 3. 2 Chr. xxviii. 3. xxxiii. 6.

[m] Lev. xix. 26. 31. Deut. xviii. 10—14.

[n] 1 Chr. x. 13. Is. viii. 19. xix. 3. Acts xvi. 16.

[o] xxiv. 3, 4. Gen. xiii. 13.

induce impatient murmurs. Our God has wise and righteous reasons for all he does, or permits to be done; and if we enjoy peace, and the advantages of true religion in our days, we should be very thankful. Shortly, our trials and services will end together. Our space is limited, though its limits are unknown to us, and then we shall sleep with our fathers. And "blessed are the dead, which "die in the Lord; ... for they rest from their labours, and "their works do follow them!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. It is uncertain whether Hezekiah had any other children than Manasseh, or any other wives than Hephzi-bah, whose name signifies, *My delight is in her.* (*Is.* lxii. 4.) Doubtless, Manasseh had been properly educated during the life-time of his father; and the rudiments of religious knowledge which he then imbibed, though they exceedingly aggravated the guilt of his enormous impiety, idolatry, and cruelty, might prove the seeds of his subsequent repentance: at least we may be sure, that his pious father offered many prayers for him, which at length were answered. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxxiii. 12—17.) —It would be pleasing to his youthful mind to inherit a prosperous kingdom so early in life; but this circumstance proved extremely prejudicial to him, and was still more ruinous to his people. (*Notes* and *P. O. Luke* xv. 11—16.) The event, as well as the testimony of the prophets, evinces, that Hezekiah's reformation had been complied with in a reluctant and hypocritical manner, especially by many of the chief men; and that the nation was ripening fast for destruction. The nobles, upon whom the regency, or the counselling of the young king, must necessarily devolve, seem to have been disposed to idolatry: and by humouring and flattering Manasseh, they trained him up to concur with their wishes, and probably to go much beyond them. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxiv. 17, 18. *Matt.* xxiii. 15.) Soon after Hezekiah's death, his reformation was subverted; and the king proceeded from bad to worse, till he was carried captive to Babylon. Thus Hezekiah, though a prince of eminent piety and excellence, was the son of a very wicked father, and the father of a still more wicked son! (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. It is probable, that Manasseh was taught to consider his father's attachment to the temple, as the effect of a weak and bigotted mind. It appeared to the nobles more convenient, liberal, and magnificent, to have a variety of temples and altars; than to be confined to meet with the poorest of the people, from all parts of the land, at Solomon's temple. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xii. 26—29. 2 *Chr.* xxiv. 17, 18. *Is.* xxix. 13—16.) In contempt therefore of his father's memory, the king rebuilt the high places, which had been piously destroyed. (*Notes,* xviii. 4. 22. 2 *Chr.* xxxi. 1. *Ec.* ii. 12—17.) Yet this seemed but a light thing, and he soon proceeded to copy Ahab's idolatry, and even greatly to exceed it. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xvi. 30—33.)

V. 4, 5. In order, as it were, the more directly to insult the God of Israel, Manasseh built altars to his idols, and to the host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars; (*Note, Deut.* iv. 19;) not only in Jerusalem, where the Lord had recorded his name; but even in the courts of the temple itself; both that into which the priests and Levites and such as brought sacrifices entered, and that in which the other worshippers assembled. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note, 2 Chr.* xxxiii. 6—8.)

V. 6. *His son.*] "His children." 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 6. Amon was not born till the thirty-third year of Manasseh's reign, which is generally computed to have been subsequent to his captivity and repentance. (1. 19.) If so, some other son was thus dedicated to his idol, perhaps with some of his daughters likewise, of whom nothing is recorded. But it may be doubted whether Manasseh's captivity was so long before his death: the general character of his reign in Scripture, and the very imperfect reformation which afterwards took place, seem to render that opinion improbable; and there is no scriptural information concerning the date of his captivity, or even the name of the Assyrian king who carried him captive: so that perhaps Amon was the son here peculiarly intended. (*Note, 2 Chr.* xxxiii. 11.)

7 And [p] he set a graven image of the grove, that he had made, in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, [q] In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

8 Neither [r] will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; [s] only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.

9 But [t] they hearkened not: and Manasseh [u] seduced them to do [x] more evil than did the nations, whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 And [y] the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying,

11 [z] Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, *and* hath done wickedly [a] above all that the Amorites did, which *were* before him, and hath [b] made Judah also to sin with his idols;

12 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, [c] I *am* bringing *such* evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that [d] whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.

13 And [e] I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and [f] the plummet of the house of Ahab: and [g] I will wipe Jerusalem, as *a man* wipeth a dish, * wiping *it*, and turning *it* upside down.

14 And [h] I will forsake [i] the remnant of mine inheritance, and [j] deliver them into the hand of their enemies, and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies;

15 Because they have done *that which was* evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, [k] since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

16 Moreover, [l] Manasseh shed in-

p xxiii. 6. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 7. 15.
q 4. xxiii. 27. 1 Kings viii. 29. 44. ix. 3. 7. 2 Chr. vii. 7. 16. 20. Neh. i. 9. Ps. lxxiv. 2. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14.
r xviii. 11. 2 Sam. vii. 10. 1 Chr. xvii. 9. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 8.
s Lev. xxvi. 3, &c. Deut. v. 28, 29 xxviii. 1, &c. Josh. xxiii. 11—13. Ps. xxxvii. 3. lxxxi. 11—16. Is. i. 19. Jer. vii. 3—7. 23. xvii. 20—27. Ez. xxii. 2—16. xxxiii. 25—29.
t 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Ezra ix. 10, 11. Neh. ix. 26. 29, 30. Ps. lxxxi. 11. Dan. ix. 6. 10, 11. Luke xiii. 34. John xv. 22. Jam. iv. 17.
u 1 Kings xiv. 16. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9. Ps. xii. 8. Prov. xxix. 12. Hos. v. 11. Rev. ii. 20.
x Ez. xvi. 47. 51, 52.
y 2 Chr. xxxiii. 10. xxxvi. 15. Neh. ix. 26. 30. Matt. xxiii. 34—37.
z xxiii. 26, 27. xxiv. 3, 4. Jer. xv. 4.
a 1 Kings xxi. 26. Ez. xvi. 3. 45.
b 1 Kings xiv. 16. xv. 30. xvi. 19.
c xxii. 16. Dan. ix. 12. Mic. iii. 12.
d 1 Sam. iii. 11. Is. xxviii. 19. Jer. xix. 3. Matt. xxiv. 21, 22. Luke xxiii. 28, 29. Rev. vi. 15—17.
e xvii. 6. Is. xxviii. 17. xxxiv. 11. Lam. ii. 8. Ez. xxiii. 31—34. Am. vii. 7, 8. Zech. i. 16.
f x. 11. 1 Kings xxi. 21—24.
g Is. xiv. 23. Jer. xxv. 9. Ez. xxiv. 10, 11. Rev. xviii. 21—23.
* Heb. *he wipeth and turneth it upon the face thereof.*
h Deut. xxxi. 17. 2 Chr. xv. 2. Ps. xxxvii. 23. Jer. xxiii. 33. Lam. v. 20.
i xix. 4. 30, 31. xxiv. 2. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16, 17. Jer. xxiii. 33.
j Lev. xxvi. 17. 36—38. Deut. iv. 26. 27. xxviii. 25. 31—33. 48. Judg. ii. 14, 15. Neh. ix. 27—37. Ps. cvi. 40—43. Is. x. 6. Lam. i. 5. 10.
k Deut. ix. 24. xxxi. 27. 29. Judg. ii. 11—13. Ps. cvi. 34—40. Ez. xvi. 15, &c. Num. xxxv. 33. Luke xiii. 34.
l xx. 4. 13. 21. 30. xxiii. 3. 8, &c. Dan. ix. 5—11. 1 xxiv. 3, 4. Deut. xxi. 8, 9. Jer. ii. 34. vii. 6. xv. 4. Matt. xxiii. 30, 31. xxvii. 6. Luke xiii. 34. Heb. xi. 37.

Observed times, &c.] (*Notes*, *Ex.* xxii. 18. *Deut.* xviii. 9—12.) The persons, who practised, or pretended to, these several methods of holding correspondence with invisible agents, or obtaining information from them, were Manasseh's oracles: and he enquired of them, instead of consulting the Lord by his prophets, or by the high priest. No doubt, they humoured his vanity, and aimed to gratify his curiosity, without teaching him his duty, or reproving him for his sins. In this he went beyond all his predecessors. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* x. 13, 14. 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 9, 10.)

V. 7, 8. *Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 8—11. 1 *Kings* vi. 11—13. ix. 3—6. *Ps.* lxxviii. 69.

Of the grove. (7) הָאֲשֵׁרָה. Perhaps this was a model of some grove, used for idolatrous worship: though it is commonly supposed to have been the image of one of Manasseh's idols. (*Note*, xvii. 16.) Some think that it was a wooden image of Ashteroth, or Astarte. (*Note*, *Judg.* ii. 11—13.)—Manasseh seems to have placed this image in the temple itself. Thus he purposely affronted the Lord, and set him at defiance; making the idol his rival, to intercept the adoration of his worshippers.

V. 9. Manasseh proposed one idolatry after another; and the people in general readily complied, both to obtain his favour, and because it suited their depraved inclinations. Thus they proceeded to such an excess of wickedness, that they became worse than the ancient Amorites, or Canaanites, on whom Israel had inflicted the vengeance of heaven. (*Notes*, *Lev.* xviii. 24—30. *Ez.* xvi. 48—55.)

V. 10—12. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 9.) It is not certain, that any of the prophets, whose writings have come down to us, lived in the time of Manasseh. Isaiah and Hoshea probably were dead. (*Notes*, 16. xix. 2. *Is.* i. 1. *Hos.* i. 1.) Jeremiah did not begin to prophesy till several years after Manasseh's death. It is not known when Joel flourished. Nahum and Habakkuk seem to have lived at a later period. But a succession of prophets was raised up; and many, doubtless, addressed their contemporaries, whose writings and names have not reached us.—*Tingle.* (12) *Note*, 1 *Sam.* iii. 11.

V. 13. As the builder keeps his work exactly straight and perpendicular, by the line and the plummet: so the Lord would execute strict justice upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem: proceeding by the same measure with them, as he had done with those of Samaria, whom he divided to the famine, to the sword, and to captivity; nay, he would be as severe with them, as he had been with the idolatrous family of Ahab. (1 *Kings* xxi. 21—24.) The subsequent expressive similitude emphatically represents the city subverted, and totally desolated; yet not finally destroyed, but cleansed from idolatry, and reserved for the future residence of the Jews. (*Notes*, *Ez.* xxiv. 3—11.)

V. 14. *Forsake*, &c.] Not *finally*, but *for a season*, during the Babylonish captivity: yet this only related to the collective body of the nation, and their external privileges; for individual believers were preserved, and peculiarly noticed, even during that visitation. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xii. 22.)

V. 15. *Marg. Ref.* k.—*Notes*, *Jer.* xv. 1—5. *Ez.* xx. 5—38.

V. 16. Probably, infants were burnt in the fire, by Manasseh's authority and command, to Moloch; and the oppression, violence, and cruelty of his general administration might occasion much unrighteous shedding of

nocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from * one end to another; [m] beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD.

17 Now [n] the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

18 And Manasseh slept with his fathers, [o] and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

19 ¶ [p] Amon *was* twenty and two years old when he began to reign; and he reigned [q] two years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

20 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [r] as his father Manasseh did.

21 And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:

22 And [s] he forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.

23 And [t] the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house.

24 And [u] the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and [x] the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

25 Now [y] the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

26 And he was buried in his sepulchre [z] in the garden of Uzza: and [a] Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

* Heb. *mouth to mouth.*

m 7. 11. Ex. xxxii. 21. 1 Kings xiv. 15, 16. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9.

n *See on* xx. 20, 21. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—19.

B. C. 643.

o 2 Chr. xxi. 20. xxiv. 16. 25. xxviii. 27. xxxii. 33. xxxiii. 20. Jer. xxii. 19.

p 1 Chr. iii. 14. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 21. Matt. i. 10.

q xv. 23. 1 Kings xv. 25. xvi. 8. xxii. 51.

r 2—7. Num. xxxii. 14. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 22, 23. Matt. xxiii. 32. Acts vii. 51.

s Deut. xxxii. 15. 1 Kings xi. 33. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. ii. 13. Jon. ii. 8.

B. C. 641.

t xii. 20. xiv. 19. xv. 25. 30. 1 Kings xv. 27. xvi. 9. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 24, 25.

u xiv. 5.

x xi. 17. xiv. 21. 1 Sam. xi. 15. 2 Sam. v. 3. 1 Kings xii. 1. 20. 2 Chr. xxii. 1. xxvi. 1. xxxiii. 25.

y 17. *See on* xx. 20.

z *See on* 18.

a 1 Kings xiii. 2.

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blood: but his persecuting rage, against those who opposed and reproved his idolatries, seems especially intended. The Jewish writers assert, that he caused the venerable Isaiah to be sawn asunder, for warning him and his people of approaching vengeance: but this is of very questionable authority. It is not said that Isaiah prophesied in the days of Manasseh; nor is it probable that he did. (*Note, Is.* i. 1.)—His multiplied and varied murders, however, were an addition to his unprecedented idolatries, and indeed inseparably connected with them: for thus, as well as by seducing the people, (*Note*, 9,) "he made "Judah to sin."

V. 17, 18. We shall hereafter meet with a more pleasing account of the latter part of Manasseh's reign. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxxiii. 11—19.)—He was not buried in the sepulchre of the kings, "but in the garden of Uzza," "in his "own house," or some sepulchre which he had prepared there for himself. This seems to have been a penitent confession, that his crimes had rendered him unworthy to be numbered with the descendants of David. Some, however, suppose that the people would not allow him that honour. Yet, no doubt, he was a true penitent, though it is not here mentioned. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xi. 42, 43.)

Of Uzza. (18) 'Some think this was the place where 'Uzziah was buried; (2 *Chr.* xxvi. 23;) and that he 'chose to be buried here, as unworthy because of his 'manifold sins, (of which he repented,) to be laid in the 'common sepulchre of the kings of Judah.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 20—24. If Manasseh repented only in the latter years of his life, Amon was trained up in his youth, with the worst instructions, and was accustomed to copy the worst examples: and to these he adhered, without regarding his father's subsequent good behaviour or advice. 'He 'was bred up in idolatry, and solemnly consecrated by his 'father to the service of Molech.' *Bp. Patrick.* If this were the case, Manasseh's captivity and repentance must have taken place at a later period, than is generally assigned it. (*Notes*, 6. 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 11. 21—25.) Amon's reign was very short, and he was soon cut off in his sins. Perhaps, his murderers meant to exclude the family of David, and seize the throne for themselves; but this was contrary to the purpose of God and met with due punishment from the people: and their wickedness made way for Josiah, under whose government the nation had one bright expiring gleam of reformation and prosperity.

V. 26. *Note*, 18.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

Young persons are generally desirous of being their own masters, and of obtaining early possession of riches or power, that they may indulge their inclinations and self-importance: and too often, from such motives, are secretly rejoiced at the death of their parents. But this generally ruins the comfort of their future lives, and renders them the instruments of immense mischief to those, who are unhappily connected with them. It is much safer and happier, when youth is sheltered under the fostering care of affectionate and prudent parents, or of faithful guardians and tutors; till greater maturity of age and experience gives a more hopeful prospect of discretion. Though such young persons are less indulged, caressed, and flattered, and are laid under restrictions unpleasant at the time; they may live to be thankful for the restraints, under which at present they are impatient.—None are more abandoned than those, who become wicked after a religious education; for they cannot have quietness in vice, till by desperate courses they have effectually stupified their consciences: and in every case, the greater the obstacles which are surmounted, before men attain to the undisturbed indulgence

CHAP. XXII.

Josiah reigns well, 1, 2. He provides for the repairs of the temple, 3—7. Hilkiah finds the book of the law, which is read to the king; who is alarmed, and sends to enquire of God, by Huldah the prophetess, 8—14. She foretels the destruction of Josiah, but speaks peace to Josiah, 15—20.

[a] 1 Kings xiii. 2. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1, 2. Jer. i. 2. Zeph. i. 1. Matt. i. 10. *Josias.*
[b] xi. 21. xxi. 1. Ps. viii. 2. Ec. x. 16. Is. iii. 4.

[a] JOSIAH *was* [b] eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah, of [c] Boscath.

[c] Josh. xv. 39. *Bozkath.*

2 And he did *that which was* [d] right in the sight of the LORD, and [e] walked in all the way of David his father, and [f] turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

[d] xvi. 2. xviii. 3. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. xxix. 2. Prov. xx. 11.
[e] 1 Kings iii. 6. xi. 38. xv. 5.
[f] Deut. v. 32. Josh. i. 7. Prov. iv. 27. Ez. xviii. 14—17.

of their lusts, the more lost they are afterwards to all sense of shame or decency. But the Lord will put his fear into the hearts of his true people, that they shall not finally depart from him: (*Note, Jer.* xxxii. 38—41:) yet in the reformation of collective bodies, numbers are mere time-servers, such as "believe for a season, but in temptation "fall away." (*Note, Matt.* xiii. 20, 21.)—The mind of man is disposed to vibrate from one extreme to another; as the descending stone falls with a force porportioned to the height, to which it was raised: so that times of remarkable revival in religion have often been succeeded by those of most notorious infidelity, impiety, and profligacy.—The ambition of excelling prompts sinners to aspire after pre-eminence even in crimes; and men are capable of glorying in having gone beyond all their predecessors in iniquity, and in refining upon the blasphemy and sensuality of former times, or of contemporary rivals in vice!—An infidel neglect of true religion, is often connected with the most absurd credulity and ridiculous superstitions!—Some daring sinners not only seek to gratify their lusts, but seem desirous of forcing their crimes upon the notice of the Almighty; as if ambitious of provoking his indignation by every token of contempt and defiance! and they peculiarly delight in seducing others to commit the same wickedness, as if ambitious also of promoting the ruin of their souls!—The vain-glory of young persons often appears in affecting to be wiser than their prudent and pious parents, by reversing all their plans, and especially by treating with contempt their religious singularities, as they suppose them to be.—But these are the ways in which men expose their own folly, and bring ruin upon themselves: thus they forfeit the Lord's favour and protection, and fall under his dreadful indignation: and all the mischief which they have done to others, will recoil upon themselves, to their increasing guilt and condemnation; except a timely repentance prevent the fatal consequences.

V. 10—26.

If temporal judgments are so dreadful when foreseen or reported; what will be the horror of that day, when "the "earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover "her slain!" (*Note, Is.* xxvi. 20, 21.) Yet, in the severest vengeance, the Lord proceeds by rule and measure, and does not punish either nations or individuals beyond their deserts.—External privileges, instead of benefitting those who neglect the obedience of faith, will immensely enhance their guilt and punishment.—The Lord will cast off any professing people, who dishonour him by their crimes, and who persecute his servants: but he will never desert his cause on earth.—When sinners disregard the invitations and exhortations of God's ministers, they are constrained to denounce his awful vengeance. Then resentment will be awakened in the hearts of the proud and rebellious, and faith and patience will be peculiarly requisite: but the servants of the Lord will overcome all, "by the blood of the "Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."—It is inconceivable what wickedness some men have lived to commit, who yet have not only been spared, but pardoned: (*Notes, Dan.* iv:) such transgressors cannot forgive themselves, but would live and die covered with shame and self-abhorrence for all their crimes.—Whether the Lord bear long with presumptuous offenders, or whether he more speedily cut them off in their sins; all those who persist in forsaking him, and in refusing to walk in his ways, must perish: and the wickedness of the parent often occasions the destruction of the children. It is well, however, when the removal of the ungodly makes way for better characters: yet those who, *instigated by any corrupt passion*, execute deserved vengeance upon wicked men, will bring deserved vengeance upon themselves also.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1, 2. Josiah was seated on the throne by those, who brought his father's murderers to justice, and who doubtless were friends to the family of David: for "the people of the land," must be understood to mean, at least, a majority of the elders and great men assembling, and, with the approbation of the people, declaring to whom the right of succeeding to the throne belonged. It may be supposed, that some of the nobles were concerned in the conspiracy against Amon, or favoured the cause. (*Note,* xxi. 20—24.) We may therefore conclude that the persons, entrusted with Josiah's education, were at least averse to idolatry, and favourable to the worship of JEHOVAH. Perhaps his mother was a pious person, and instilled good principles into his tender mind. By the blessing of God, however, on the means used, he was very early brought under religious impressions, and set about the work of publick reformation: and the event of his succession when a child was widely different from that of Manasseh. (*Notes,* xxi. 1—3.) For his character was most excellent: he copied the faith, zeal, and piety of his ancestor David, and kept the middle path, without diverging to any of those extremes to which human nature is prone. (*Notes,* xviii. 3. 5, 6.) And had the people as cordially concurred in his reformation, as he entered upon and persevered in it, blessed effects would have followed: but they were given up to the most infatuated idolatry and wickedness, and his efforts only served to evince the incurable wickedness of that generation, (*Notes, Jer.* iii. 6—11. vi. 27—30. *Ez.* xxiv. 12, 13.)—We can obtain but a superficial knowledge of the state of Judah from these com-

g 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—8.

3 ¶ And it came to pass [g] in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,

h 1 Chr. vi. 13. ix. 11. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9—18. i xii. 4. 8—11. 2 Chr. xxiv. 8—12. Mark xii. 41, 42. j 1 Chr. ix. 19. xxvi. 13—19. 2 Chr. viii. 14. Neh. xi. 19. Ps. lxxxiv. 10. * Heb. *threshold.*

4 Go up to [h] Hilkiah the high priest, that he may [i] sum the silver *which is* brought into the house of the LORD, which [j] the keepers of the [*] door have gathered of the people:

k xii. 11—14.

5 And let them [k] deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work, which *is* in the

l xii. 5. 2 Chr. xxiv. 7. 12, 13. 27. Ezra iii. 7.

house of the LORD, [l] to repair the breaches of the house,

6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

m xii. 15. 2 Chr. xxiv. 14.

7 Howbeit, [m] there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because [n] they dealt faithfully.

n Ex. xxxvi. 5, 6. Neh. vii. 2. Prov. xxviii. 20. Luke xvi. 10—12. 1 Cor. iv. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21. 2 Tim. ii. 2. 3 John 5.

8 ¶ And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, [o] I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

o Deut. xxxi. 24—26. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 14, 15.

9 And [p] Shaphan [q] the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have [r] gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

p 3. 12. xxv. 22. Jer. xxvi. 24. xxix. 3. xxxvi. 10—12. xxxix. 14. xl. 11. xli. 2. Ez. viii. 11. q *See on* xviii. 18. r Heb. *melted.*

10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And [r] Shaphan read it before [s] the king.

r Deut. xxxi. 9—13. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 18. Neh. viii. 1—7. 14, 15. xiii. 1. Jer. xxxvi. 21. s Deut. xvii. 18—20. Jer. xiii. 18. xxii. 1, 2.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, [t] that he rent his clothes.

t 2 Chr. xxxiv. 19. Jer. xxxvi. 24. Joel ii. 13. Jon. iii. 6, 7.

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pendious historical records, unless we compare them with the writings of the contemporary prophets.

V. 3—7. Josiah began to seek the Lord in the eighth year of his reign, and to attempt a publick reformation in the twelfth; so that considerable progress had before been made in destroying the idols, which filled Judah and Jerusalem to an almost inconceivable degree: but in his eighteenth year he proceeded to reinstate the temple and its worship in their former splendour, and the principal reformation in his reign was effected at this time. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxxiv. 3—7.)—The money was collected by voluntary contributions, as in the time of Jehoash: but the Levites proved more active and faithful, than the priests had then been; and the workmen were no less worthy of confidence. (*Notes*, xii. 4—15. 2 *Chr.* xxxiv. 8—13.)

V. 8—11. The enquiries and controversies, which this account of finding the book of the law has occasioned, seem to have been quite unnecessary. If it were conceded, that no other complete copy existed in all the world, at the time when this book was found, it would not *in the smallest degree* invalidate the authenticity of that part of holy writ: because all the succeeding writers of the Scriptures, with Christ himself and his apostles, have given the sanction of their testimony to its divine original. All the cavils and objections therefore of infidels, grounded upon this circumstance, mean nothing; except they are intended to demonstrate their embittered enmity to the sacred Scriptures.—It is highly probable, that copies of the law were at that time very scarce, through the idolatry of the former reigns, and the lamentable ungodliness of the people. It may also be reasonably conjectured, that the priests had made abstracts from it, of the outlines of their worship, without specifying particulars, or inserting the solemn sanctions annexed to each of them. This would spare them the trouble of transcribing, or studying, or reading to the people, the whole book; and, as these abstracts would come into common use, few people would look any further. But had not a universal traditional recollection of the law, and in general of its contents, prevailed in the nation; how could the book, when found, have obtained proper and implicit credit as the word of God by Moses? In the dark ages of popery this was precisely the case: the liturgies and rituals contained a few selected portions of Scripture; and not only were the *people* kept in the dark as to the entire contents of the Bible, but few even of the *priests* had ever read it through, and numbers of these had never seen a complete copy of it. The same naturally becomes the case still, (notwithstanding the multiplication of copies of the Bible by the art of printing, and its publick allowance in the vulgar tongue, and the commendable pains bestowed by pious persons to disperse them;) whenever any set of men become strenuous for one part of religion in preference to the rest. They, who are the oracles of each party, insert in their writings those portions of Scripture, which are supposed to inculcate the doctrines for which they contend; but keep out of sight, perhaps without design, those passages which as strongly declare, what they undervalue, overlook, or are prejudiced against. And these writings form the religion of the zealous friends of that party, while the rest of the Scripture is comparatively neglected or forgotten. Indeed we all are disposed to have favourite passages of Scripture, to which we are more attentive than to the rest; so that without great care we shall be led into this error.—And may it not be hinted with propriety, that some text-books, which were well designed, are yet capable of a dangerous abuse? I mean those books, which give a text of Scripture for every day, with pious observations upon it. Many read these in family-worship, instead of the Bible itself; and others, it is likely, do the same in their closets: but numbers are thus undesignedly led to substitute a part for the whole; the abstract with an exposition, instead of the

12 And [n] the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and [x] Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and [y] Achbor the son of [*] Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying,

13 Go ye, [z] enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah concerning the words of this book *that is* found: for [a] great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, [b] because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all *that which is* written concerning us.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah [c] the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of [d] Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the [†] wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the [‡] college;) and they communed with her.

15 And she said unto them, [e] Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, [f] Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* [g] all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read.

17 Because they [h] have forsaken me,

n xix. 2, 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 19—21. Is. xxxvii. 1—4.
x *See on* 9.—Jer. xxvi. 22. 24.
y 2 Chr. xxxiv. 20. *Abdon.*
* Or, *Micah.*
z iii. 11. 1 Kings xxii. 7, 8. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14. Ps. xxv. 14. Prov. iii. 6. Jer. xxi. 1, 2. xxxvii. 17. Ez. xiv. 3, 4. xx. 1—3. Am. iii. 7.
a Ex xx. 5. Deut. iv. 23—27. xxix. 23—28. xxxi. 17, 18. Neh. viii. 8, 9. ix. 3. Dan. ix. 5, 6. Rom. iii. 20. iv. 15. vii. 9.
b 2 Chr. xxix. 6. xxxiv. 21. Ps. cvi. 6. Jer. xvi. 12. xliv. 17. Lam. v. 7. Dan. ix. 8. 10.
c Ex. xv. 20. Judg. iv. 4. Mic. vi. 4. Luke i. 41, &c. ii. 36. Acts xxi. 9. 1 Cor. xi. 5.
d 2 Chr. xxxiv. 22. *Tikvath. Hasrah.*
† Heb. *garments.* 2 Kings x. 22. Neh. vii. 72.
‡ Or, *second part.*
e i. 6. 16. Jer. xxiii. 28.
f xx. 17. xxi. 12. 13. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 24, 25.
g xxv. 1—4. Lev. xxvi. 15, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—23. xxx. 17, 18. xxxi. 16—18. xxxii. 15—26. Josh. xxiii. 13. 15. Dan. ix. 11—14.
h Ex. xxxii. 34. Deut. xxix. 24—28. xxxii. 15—19. Judg. ii. 12—14. iii. 7, 8. x. 6, 7. 10—14. 1 Kings ix. 6—9. Ps. cvi. 35—42. Jer. ii. 11—13. 27, 28.

book of the law: whereas "all Scripture is given by in- "spiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for re- "proof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly fur- "nished unto all good works." (*Note, 2 Tim.* iii. 14—17.) The proper use of such books is to suggest subjects for pious meditations and ejaculations, in the intervals of conversation and business.—The book, which Hilkiah found, seems to have been the original book of the law, deposited by Moses at the side of the ark; (*Note, Deut.* xxxi. 26;) but which in those distracted times had been removed, either for concealment, lest it should be destroyed by the idolaters, or in contempt by those who were turning every thing into confusion. Some argue that this circumstance occasioned Josiah's consternation: but he certainly acted like a man who had never seen the law before; and this most likely was the case, though there might be copies dispersed among his subjects. It is probable his reformation had hitherto been conducted by such abstracts, as have been mentioned, or by traditional knowledge. If the kings of Judah had observed the rule of transcribing the law with their own hands, very salutary effects might have been produced; but it seems to have been entirely neglected, as well as the command to read the law publickly to the people, every year at the feast of tabernacles. (*Notes, Deut.* xvii. 18. xxxi. 9—13. *Neh.* viii. 1—18. ix. 3.)—It is supposed that the portion, which was first read to Josiah, was the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Deuteronomy: and these were doubtless well suited to convince him, that the guilt and danger of his people was much greater than he had apprehended, and to induce the expressions of fear, sorrow, and humiliation, which he shewed. We may conclude, that he afterwards conducted his reformation with more exactness; as he now wrought by rule, and was aware of the imminent danger to which he and his subjects were exposed.

V. 12, 13. Very little is recorded concerning the high priests, as active instruments in reformation, and reviving true religion. Hilkiah indeed seems to have been a man of good character; though it is likely, not well acquainted with the divine law. (*Marg. Ref.*) Josiah, however, never proposed enquiring of the Lord, by him and the breast-plate of judgment; nor did Hilkiah object, when sent with others to enquire of a prophetess. Either he was ignorant, that to enquire of God was one distinguishing part of his office; or he humbly thought himself unworthy to perform it: or this method of enquiry was considered as obsolete; having fallen into disuse, perhaps, from the too general want of true piety in the high priests, who had been superseded in this respect by the prophets raised up in constant succession. (*Note,* xix. 2.)—*Ahikam.* (12) *Note, Jer.* xxvi. 24.

V. 14. *Huldah,* &c.] Jeremiah and Zephaniah prophesied at this time; but perhaps being young, and newly entered on their work, they were of inferior note; or they were elsewhere employed. (*Notes, Jer.* i. 1—3. *Zeph.* i. 1.) —The ordinary ministry, both under the Old and New Testament, is confined to *men:* but the Lord is not bound by those restrictions which he imposes upon us: and he has often conferred on *women* the spirit of prophecy. (*Marg. Ref.* c.—*Notes,* 1 *Cor.* xiv. 34, 35. 1 *Tim.* ii. 11—14.)—Huldah was doubtless a person of eminent piety, and well known to be a prophetess. She was a married woman, and her husband being keeper of the wardrobe, might make her better known to Josiah, who perhaps had before this consulted her.—Whether the word rendered "the "college" means an institution at Jerusalem, in some respects similar to the schools of the prophets in Israel; or whether it only denotes, according to the marginal reading, the part of the city in which she lived, is not agreed. The latter opinion, however, seems most probable, as the same word (הַמִּשְׁנֶה) is in the next chapter translated "of the "second order." (*Note,* xxiii. 4.)

V. 15—20. The sentence denounced concerning the desolations of Jerusalem was irrevocable: but as Josiah acted in a manner which shewed, that he was a man of a broken heart and a tender conscience, a true penitent and a real believer, he would be spared the anguish of witnessing those dire calamities. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xxi. 27—29. *Is.* lvii. 15, 16. lxvi. 1, 2. *Jer.* xxxvi. 20—25. *Ez.* ix. 3, 4.) Though he was slain in battle, yet he died in peace with God, and went to glory. As he was not forty years old when he died, and the total destruction of Jerusalem took place within twenty-three years after, he might have lived to

i Ps. cxv. 4—8. Is. ii. 8, 9. xliv. 17—20. xlvi. 5—8. Mic. v. 13.
k Deut. xxxii. 22. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Is. xxxiii. 14. Jer. vii. 20. xvii. 27. Ez. xx. 47, 48. Zeph. i. 18.
l 2 Chr. xxxiv. 26—28.
m Is. iii. 10. Mal. iii. 16, 17.
n 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. Ps. li. 17. cxix. 120. Is. xlvi. 12. lvii. 15. lxvi. 2. 5. Jer. xxxvi. 24, 29—32. Ez. ix. 4. Rom. ii. 4, 5. Jam. iv. 6—10.
o Ex. x. 3. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. 1 Kings xxi. 29. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. Mic. vi. 8. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all [i] the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and [k] shall not be quenched.

18 But to [l] the king of Judah, which sent you to enquire of the LORD, [m] thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *As touching* the words which thou hast heard;

19 Because [n] thine heart was tender and thou hast [o] humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become [p] a desolation, and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and [q] wept before me; [r] I also have heard *thee*, saith the LORD.

20 Behold therefore, [s] I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be [t] gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

p Lev. xxvi. 31. 32. Deut. xxix. 23. Jer. xxvi. 6. xliv. 22.
q Num. xxv. 6. Judg. ii. 4, 5. xx. 26. Ezra ix. 3, 4. x. 1. Neh. viii. 9. Ps. cxix. 136. Jer. ix. 1. xiii. 17. xiv. 17. Luke xix. 41.
r Rom. ix. 2, 3. xix. 20. xx. 5.
s Gen. xxv. 8. Deut. xxxi. 16. 1 Chr. xvii. 11. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 28.
t xxiii. 29, 30. Ps. xxxvii. 37. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Jer. xxii. 10. 15, 16.

that time, according to the ordinary course of nature. But as his piety and zeal could not avail to prevent that catastrophe, he was mercifully "taken away from the evil to "come." (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Is.* lvii. 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

Those who have been favoured, in their tender years, with prudent and pious instructors, have very great cause for gratitude: for that circumstance is immediately ordered in Providence, without their even *appearing* to choose it for themselves, and frequently in opposition to their inclinations; yet it commonly proves the means of determining both the comfort and usefulness, and the happy close, of their future lives.—The Lord frequently demonstrates the sovereignty of his grace, by raising up the brightest ornaments of his church from the most degenerate families.—It is a peculiar favour to be brought to seek and serve God in early life, and to be led to copy closely the best examples.—It is incumbent on us to keep the narrow way, and to avoid the extremes, which are found on the right and on the left: and great watchfulness is requisite so to shun self-righteous pride, as to keep clear of antinomian abuse of the gospel. In escaping from superstition, we are in danger of running into inexpedient indulgence, or irreverence to things sacred. Fierce and contentious zeal, in some men, leads others to soothe themselves in lukewarmness, indolence, and timidity: and in numberless ways, when avoiding one evil, we are prone to run into another; or so to attend to one part of religion, as to neglect others, and thus to mar that proportion and symmetry, which are its peculiar ornament. But if, with all our circumspection, we are kept from great and mischievous mistakes; we must give all the praise to him, who leads his people "in the midst of the paths of judg-"ment." (*Prov.* viii. 20.)—The interests and passions of men raise up so many obstructions, that publick reformations commonly move heavily; and can only be effected by perseverance, gradually, and as the zealous reformers obtain influence, and establish their characters by "patient "continuance in well-doing."—Yet, in the worst of times, we meet with examples of liberality, fidelity, and integrity, which are worthy of praise and imitation.—The prevalence of impiety, infidelity, superstition, or licentiousness, renders the word of God a neglected book; and that neglect reciprocally augments these evils. And when *professed* ministers grow careless, selfish, or superstitious, the people of course become generally ignorant of the sacred oracles: and far more, when they employ their influence, and exert their authority, to keep the Scriptures, as translated into the language of their several countries, out of the hands of the common people; and to discountenance the study of them; and when they endeavour to obstruct those who would circulate, and encourage the study of, the oracles of God. Alas! that this stigma of popery should disgrace so many rulers and teachers of our protestant church! But whenever the clergy in general, and those of superior authority and reputation in particular, shall make it their great business, to call the attention of the people to the Scriptures, and to bring them acquainted with the whole of them; their conduct will have a most extensive effect, in preventing the influx of vice, and in promoting true knowledge and genuine piety. "For the "word of God is quick and powerful;" and, being "sharper than any two-edged sword," it penetrates the heart and conscience with irresistible energy. (*Notes, Jer.* xxiii. 28, 29. *Heb.* iv. 12, 13.) By the holy law is the knowledge of sin, and by the blessed gospel is the knowledge of salvation. When the former is understood, in its strictness, extent, excellency, and awful sanction, the sinner perceives his guilt, is convinced that the great wrath of the Lord is kindled against him for his transgressions; and begins to enquire, "What must I do to be saved?" This excites his attentive regard to the ministry and ministers of the gospel; who point out to him "Jesus Christ, "as the end of the law for righteousness, unto every one "that believeth." And when the sinner has been taught to trust and love the Saviour, he will thenceforth walk in newness of life.—The scarcity of the written word did not *excuse* Israel's degeneracy and idolatry, because it was the *effect* of it; "the people loved to have it so;" but the abundance of Bibles, with which this land is favoured, will exceedingly aggravate the guilt of our national impiety, infidelity, and licentiousness: for what greater contempt of God can we shew, than to refuse to read his word, when put into our hands; or, reading it, to refuse to believe and obey it?

V. 12—20.

The ministers of religion must communicate to the people whatever they have learned respecting the will of God, whether alarming or encouraging: otherwise they do not

CHAP. XXIII.

Josiah reads the law in a solemn assembly gathered for that and similar purposes, 1, 2. He enters into covenant with God; and abolishes idolatry in Judah, 3—14. He burns men's bones on the altar at Bethel; fulfils the prediction of the prophet sent to Jeroboam; destroys the high places in Samaria, and slays the priests, 15—20. He celebrates a solemn passover, 21—23. He puts away wizards, &c. 24: and excels all his predecessors, 25. The wrath of God against Judah is yet unappeased, 26—28. Josiah is slain in battle by Pharaoh-necho, and succeeded by Jehoahaz, 29, 30; who reigns wickedly three months, is led away prisoner by Pharaoh into Egypt, and succeeded by Jehoiakim, 31—34; who taxes the land for Pharaoh's tribute, and reigns wickedly, 35—37.

[a] AND [a] the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

[a] Deut. xxxi. 28. 2 Sam. vi. 1. 2 Chr. xxix. 20. xxx. 2. xxxiv. 29, 30.

2 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, [*] both [b] small and great: and [c] he read in their ears all the words of [d] the book of the covenant *which was* found in the house of the LORD.

3 And the king [e] stood by a pillar, and [f] made a covenant before the LORD, [g] to walk after the LORD, and to keep [h] his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, [i] with all *their* heart and all *their* soul, to perform the words of this covenant *that were* written in this book. [j] And all the people stood to the covenant.

[*] Heb. *from small even unto great.*
[b] Gen. xix. 11. 1 Sam. v. 9. xxx. 2. 2 Chr. xv. 13. Esth. i. 5. Job iii. 19. Ps. cxv. 13. Acts xxvi. 22. Rev. xx. 12.
[c] Deut. xxxi. 10—13. 2 Chr. xvii. 9. Neh. viii. 1—8. ix. 3. xiii. 1.
[d] xxii. 8. Deut. xxxi. 26. 1 Kings viii. 9.
[e] xi. 14. 17. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13. xxxiv. 31, 32.
[f] Ex. xxiv. 7, 8. Deut. v. 1—3. xxix. 1. 10—15. Josh. xxiv. 25. 2 Chr. xv. 12—14. xxiii. 16. xxix. 10. Ezra x. 3. Neh. ix. 38. x. 28, &c. Jer. l. 5. Heb. viii. 6—13. xii. 24. xiii. 20.
[g] Deut. viii. 19.
[h] Deut. iv. 45. v. 1. vi. 1. Ps. xix. 7—9.
[i] Deut. vi. 5. x. 12. xi. 13. Matt. xxii. 36, 37.
[j] Ex. xxiv. 3. Josh. xxiv. 24. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 32, 33. Ec. viii. 2. Jer. iv. 2.

"declare his whole counsel," nor "keep themselves pure "from the blood of all men."—Kings and rulers, being personally as much concerned as their subjects to humble themselves before God, to know his will and to seek his salvation; and their conduct being of still greater importance to others; those who minister before them in sacred things, should especially instruct them in the whole of divine revelation: and they are guilty of the basest and most cruel unfaithfulness, to them and to millions, if from regard to their own safety or emolument, they keep back offensive truths.—Those princes who are acquainted with able and faithful servants of God, and who are not deterred by evil counsel from consulting them, and from encouraging them without needless ceremony to speak the whole truth, best consult their own good and that of their subjects.—It is also becoming, when superior stated pastors and rulers of the church discard prejudice and jealousy, respecting those among their inferiors, or of other orders in society, whom God endows with peculiar spiritual gifts for the edifying of his people; when, instead of standing upon character and precedency, and hindering others from regarding their advice, they take the lead in honouring the grace of God in them, and gladly receive their profitable instructions. Such are wise men, and will daily grow wiser; because they are conscious that they have not attained, but need continual accessions to their measure of divine knowledge and grace: but those who are too great or too proud to learn, even from their inferiors, are likely to live and to die without true wisdom.—In communicating his special blessings, the Lord does not restrict himself to age, or sex, or order, or condition in society; but "divideth severally to every one, as he will:" and true sanctity consists in separation from sin, and devotedness to God; and not in seclusion from society, or from that state which he has pronounced honourable.—There are kinds and degrees of guilt, which the Lord will not pardon, either in individuals or nations; and the discovery of men's iniquities will fully demonstrate the justice of his most tremendous vengeance on them. But a tender, broken, and contrite heart, a humble consciousness of having deserved wrath, and an earnest application for mercy, are things which "accompany salvation," and will never be rejected by our gracious Lord and Saviour. (*Note, Heb.* vi. 9, 10.) Whatever persons of this character fear, suffer, or witness, or in what way soever they are removed out of the world, they shall be gathered to the grave in peace, and shall enter into the rest reserved for the people of God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. *Note, Deut.* xxxi. 10—13.—*The prophets.* (2) It may be supposed, that Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Huldah, and others were present on this occasion, encouraging and assisting the king in his pious undertaking: yet it is probable, that the king neither employed them, nor the priests, in reading the law to the elders of the people, at least not exclusively; but that he performed the service personally as the principal reader, though others might be employed in the same manner, in different stations; 'for it is not likely that one man's voice could 'reach so great a multitude.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Acts* ii. 14—21.) The opinion, that he only engaged others to read the law, seems to be taken from modern refinements, and sentiments of royal dignity; and not from facts, good sense, or the examples of pious princes in those days. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 12—22. 1 *Kings* viii. 10—61. *Ec.* i. 1.) For such is human nature, that so trivial a circumstance, as the rank of the reader or speaker, will frequently excite greater attention, than matters of acknowledged superior importance.—Though Josiah was assured that no reformation could prevent the desolations of Jerusalem; yet he would do what he could to prolong her state, to rescue a remnant as brands out of the burning, and to sow good seed, which might afterwards produce a reformation even among the dispersed captives.

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref.*) The prophets, priests, and elders, and through them the whole nation by their representatives, bound themselves at this time, in the most solemn manner, to renounce and abolish every species of idolatry,

4 And the king commanded Hil-
k 1 Chr. xxiv. 4—19. Matt. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 1.
l See on xxii. 4. 1 Chr. xxvi. 1—19.
m xxi. 3. 7. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 3. 7. xxxiv. 3, 4.
n xvii. 16. Judg. ii. 13. 1 Kings xvi. 31. xviii. 19. 26. 40. xix. 18. Is. xxvii. 9. Jer. vii. 9.
o 2 Sam. xv. 23. John xviii. 1. Cedron.
p 1 Kings xii. 29. Hos. iv. 15. Am. iv. 4.
* Heb. caused to cease.
† Heb. Chemarim. Hos. x. 5. marg. Zeph. i. 4, 5.
‡ Or, twelve signs, or, constellations.
q See on xxi. 3, 4. Jer. viii. 1, 2. xliv. 17—19.
r xxi. 7. Judg. iii. 7. 1 Kings xiv. 23. xvi. 33. Jer. xvii. 2.

kiah the high priest, and the [k] priests of the second order, and [l] the keepers of the door, [m] to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels *that were* made for [n] Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burnt them without Jerusalem in the fields of [o] Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto [p] Beth-el.

5 And he [*] put down [†] the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places, in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the [‡] planets, and to [q] all the host of heaven.

6 And he brought out [r] the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron,

s Ex. xxxii. 20. Deut. vii. 25. ix. 21.
t x. 27. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 4.
u Gen. xix. 4, 5. 1 Kings xiv. 24. xv. 12. xxii. 46. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 33. Rom. i. 26, 27.
x Ex. xxxv. 25, 26. Ez. xvi. 16. Hos. ii. 13.
§ Heb. houses.
y Josh. xxi. 17. 1 Kings xv. 22. 1 Chr. vi. 60. Is. x. 29. Zech. xiv. 10.
z Gen. xxi. 31. xxvi. 33. Judg. xx. 1. 1 Kings xix. 3.
a Ez. xliv. 10—14. Mal. ii. 8, 9.
b 1 Sam. ii. 36. Ez. xliv. 29—31.

[s] and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped *it* small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon [t] the graves of the children of the people.

7 And he brake down the houses of [u] the sodomites, that *were* by the house of the LORD, [x] where the women wove [§] hangings for the grove.

8 And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burnt incense, from [y] Geba to [z] Beer-sheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that *were* in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* on a man's left hand at the gate of the city.

9 Nevertheless, [a] the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, [b] but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.

to re-establish the worship of God according to the law, and to serve him in righteousness and true holiness. We learn from the event, that the most of those present, who "stood to the covenant," were hypocritical in the transaction; being induced to concur, in order to please the king, or to avoid his displeasure and the reproach of singularity; or by some transient impression upon their minds. Yet Josiah did well in requiring them thus to engage, as far as they could be prevailed on without compulsion. A great deal of outward wickedness would be prevented; many individuals would receive essential benefit; and in every way the name, worship, and law of God were honoured: while those who acted hypocritically, and violated their engagements by apostasy, were accountable to God for their conduct. (*Notes*, xi. 17—20. *Deut.* xxix. 10—15. *Neh.* x. 1.) Indeed, no effectual means can be used of doing extensive good, which will not eventually prove an occasion of deeper guilt and condemnation to many. (*Notes*, *John* xv. 22—25. 2 *Cor.* ii. 14—17.)—*Pillar.*] (*Marg. Ref.* e.) 'At the entrance of the court 'of the priests, by a marble pillar.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 4. "The priests of the second order" seem to have been the heads of the several courses, which served in rotation, under the person next in succession to the high priesthood, who acted upon emergencies as deputy to the high priest. These were the chief priests mentioned so often in the New Testament. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxiv. 1—19. *Ezra* ii. 36—39.)—Josiah, in his former well-meant attempts for reformation, had probably removed the idols, and abolished the worship of them in Jerusalem: but perhaps, he had supposed, that the vessels and other valuables might be reserved for the use of the temple. Being, however, now more fully instructed in the law of God, he destroyed all these vessels, however costly, by fire: and in his progress through the land, he carried the ashes to Beth-el, the beginning of idolatry to Israel, as established by publick authority; in order to render both the place, and these ashes, contemptible and abominable to the people. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xii. 26—33. xiii. 1—10.)

V. 5. *Chemarim*, the name of these priests, (*marg.*) is supposed to be derived from the *black* garments which they wore, and by which they were distinguished from the priests of JEHOVAH, who wore garments of white linen. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xxviii. 40, 41. *Hos.* x. 5, 6. *Zeph.* i. 4.)

Planets.] מַזָּלוֹת. (*Marg.*) Different opinions are held concerning the meaning of this word, which is found here only.

V. 6. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Ex.* xxxii. 20.—*The graves*, &c.] The graves of the worshippers of these idols are meant. This was another expedient, to render these idols and the idolaters alike vile and abominable to the spectators.

V. 7. *Note*, xxi. 7, 8, *v.* 7.—*Hangings*, &c.] It is supposed that these hangings were intended for tents, in which the devotees of the demons perpetrated the most detestable species of lewdness, as a part of their religion, and as near as possible to the house of the Lord itself! This was even worse than making that holy place a den of thieves. (*Notes*, *Ez.* viii. 7—14. *Matt.* xxi. 12, 13. *P. O.* 12—16.)

V. 8. It is probable that these high places were defiled, by casting the bones or dead bodies of men into them. Thus the people in general would be preserved from going thither, when they had so expressly been declared abominable; though presumptuous persons should rebuild them. —Josiah shewed his impartiality, when he destroyed those high places at the gates of the city, which seem to have been erected under the patronage of a considerable person, entitled "the governor of the city."

From Geba, &c.] (*Marg. Ref.* y, z.) The northern and southern borders of the kingdom of Judah.

V. 9. It does not appear that these priests had been

10 And he defiled [c] Topheth, which *is* in [d] the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man [e] might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

11 And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to [f] the sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the [*] chamberlain, which *was* in the suburbs, and burnt the chariots of the sun with fire.

12 And the altars that *were* [g] on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars [h] which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and [†] brake *them* down from thence, and [‡] cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

13 And the high places that *were* before Jerusalem, which *were* on the right hand of [§] the mount of corruption, which [j] Solomon the king of Israel had builded for [k] Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for [l] Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for [m] Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.

14 And [n] he brake in pieces the [‖] images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with [o] the bones of men.

15 ¶ Moreover, [p] the altar that *was* at Beth-el, *and* the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burnt the high place, *and* [q] stamped *it* small to powder, and burnt the grove.

16 And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that *were* there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and [r] burnt *them* upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

17 Then he said, What title *is* that that I see? And the men of the city told him, [s] *It is* the sepulchre of the man of God which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.

18 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones [‖] alone, with [t] the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.

19 And all [u] the houses also of the high places that *were* in [x] the cities of Samaria, which [y] the kings of Israel had made [z] to provoke *the* LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.

20 And [a] he [*] slew all the priests of the high places that *were* there upon

[c] Is. xxx. 33. Jer. vii. 31, 32. xix. 6. 11—13. *Tophet.*
[d] Josh. xv. 8. 2 Chr. xxviii 3. xxxiii. 6. Jer. xix. 2. xxxii. 35 Matt. v. 22. *Gr.*
[e] xvi. 3. xvii 17. xxi. 6. Lev. xviii. 21. Deut. xviii. 10. Jer. xxxii. 35. Ez. xvi. 21. xx. 26. 31. xxiii. 37—39.
[f] 5. 2 Chr. xiv. 5. xxxiv. 4. *marg.* Ez. viii. 16.
[*] Or, *eunuch*, or, *officer.*
[g] Deut. xxii. 8. Jer. xix. 13. Zeph. i. 5.
[h] xxi. 5. 21, 22. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 5. 15.
[†] Or, *ran from thence.*
[‡] *See on* 6.
[§] That is, the mount of olives.
[j] 1 Kings xi. 7, 8. Neh. xiii. 26.
[k] Judg. ii. 13. x. 6. 1 Sam. vii. 4. xii. 10. 1 Kings xi. 5. 33.
[l] Num. xxi. 29. Judg. xi. 24. Jer. xlviii. 7. 13. 46.
[m] Zeph. i. 5. *Malcham.*
[n] Ex. xxiii. 24. Num. xxxiii. 52. Deut. vii. 5. 25, 26. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3, 4.
[‖] Heb. *statues.*
[o] 16. Num. xix. 16. 18. Jer. viii. 1, 2. Ez. xxxix. 15—16. Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.
[p] x. 31. 1 Kings xii. 28—33. xiv. 16. xv. 30. xxi. 22.
[q] *See on* 6.
[r] 1 Kings xiii. 1, 2. 32. Matt. xxiv. 35. John x. 35.
[s] 1 Kings xiii. 1. 30.
[‖] Heb. *to escape.*
[t] 1 Kings xiii. 1. —22. 31.
[u] xvii. 9. 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 32.
[x] 2 Chr. xxx. 6—11. xxxi. 1. xxxiv. 6.
[y] viii. 18. 1 Kings xvi. 33. Mic. vi. 16.
[z] xvii. 16—18. xxi. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Jer. vii. 18, 19. Ez. viii. 17, 18.
[a] x. 25. xi. 18. Ex. xxii. 20. Deut. xiii. 5. 1 Kings xviii. 40. Zech. xiii. 2, 3.
[*] Or, *sacrificed.*
1 Kings xiii. 2. Is. xxxiv. 6.

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guilty of idolatry, but of irregularly and illegally worshipping JEHOVAH in the high places, instead of at the temple. To deter others from this inveterate practice, they were excluded from their sacred functions; but not put to death, or deprived of their maintenance, though it is uncertain what portions were allotted them. (*Notes, Lev.* xxi. 17—24. *Ez.* xliv. 10—16.)

V. 10. *Notes, Lev.* xviii. 21. xx. 2—5.—*Tophath*, &c.] This place derived its name from a word, which signifies *a drum:* because they used to drown the cries of the children, who there passed through the fire, or were burned in it, by the sound of drums. (*Notes, Is.* xxx. 33. *Jer.* vii. 32, 33.)

V. 11. The worshippers of the sun represented that luminary, by a man seated in a chariot drawn by swift and furious horses; and therefore they dedicated to him horses and chariots. The kings of Judah had imitated this custom, and kept the horses of the sun at the entrance of the temple: and a person, who, as it seems, was very honourably provided for, was employed to take care of them! But Josiah took away the horses and burned the chariots.

V. 12—14. Manasseh, after his repentance, had removed the altars from the courts of the Lord: but it is probable that Amon had replaced or rebuilt them, and they retained the name of their original deviser. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxxiii. 15—17. 21—25.) The high places which Solomon had built, had doubtless been in part at least demolished: but the idolatrous kings had rebuilt or repaired them, and dedicated them to the same idols, and called them by Solomon's name; perhaps glorying that they copied the example of so illustrious a prince. (*Marg. Ref.* —*Note*, 1 *Kings* xi. 1—8.) The sacred writer seems to call the hill on which these high places were erected, and which is supposed to have been the mount of Olives, "the mount "of corruption," because of the abominations there committed. All these, as well as the altars, which had been made on the flat roofs of their houses, for more retired idolatrous worship, Josiah cleared away entirely, and used every method of rendering the places, where idolatry had been committed, contemptible and vile.

V. 15—20. Josiah had evidently some authority over a great part of the country, which the ten tribes had occu-

the altars, and burnt men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

21 ¶ And the king commanded all the people, saying, [b] Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, [c] as *it is* written in the book of this covenant.

22 Surely [d] there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days [e] of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;

23 But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *wherein* this passover was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem.

24 Moreover, [f] the *workers with* familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the [*] images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, [g] that he might perform the words of the law, which were written in [h] the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25 And [i] like unto him was there no king before him, [j] that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, [k] according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there *any* like him.

26 [l] Notwithstanding, the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the [†] provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.

27 And the LORD said, [m] I will remove Judah also [n] out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, [o] My name shall be there.

b 2 Chr. xxxv. 1, &c.
c Ex. xii. 3, &c. Lev. xxiii. 5—8. Num. ix. 2—5. xxviii. 16—25. Deut. xvi. 1—8.
d 2 Chr. xxxv. 18, 19.
e 2 Chr. xxx. 1—3. 13—20. xxxv. 3—17.
f xxi. 3. 6. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3—7. Is. viii. 19. xix. 3. Acts xvi. 16—18.
* Or, *teraphim*. Gen. xxxi. 19. Judg. xvii. 5. xviii. 17, 18. Hos. iii. 4.
g Lev. xix. 31. xx. 27. Deut. xviii. 10—12. Is. viii. 20. Rom. iii. 20. Jam. i. 25.
h xxii. 8—13. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 14—19.
i xviii. 5.
j 8. Deut. iv. 29. vi. 5. 1 Kings ii. 4. xv. 5. Jer. xxix. 13.
k Neh. x. 29. Mal. iv. 4. John i. 17. vii. 19.
l xxi. 11—13. xxii. 16, 17. xxiv. 3, 4. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Jer. iii. 7—10. xv. 1—4.
† Heb. *angers*.
m xvii. 18. 20. xviii. 11. xxiv. 3. xxv. 11. Deut. xxix. 27, 28. Ez. xxiii. 32—35.
n Ps. li. 11. Jer. xxxi. 37. xxxiii. 24. Lam. ii. 7.
o *See on* xxi. 4. 7. 1 Kings viii. 29. ix. 3.

pied; (2 *Chr.* xxxiv. 6;) but it is not certain, whether this was by grant from the king of Assyria, or by the willing subjection of the inhabitants: the former, however, appears the more probable. (*Note*, 29, 30.) On this occasion he exactly accomplished the prediction of the man of God concerning him, delivered about three hundred and sixty years before: and though *he* may be supposed to have designed that accomplishment; yet so wicked a man as his father could have had no such intentions, in giving his son the name of *Josiah*. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xiii. 2. 23—32.)—It seems that many Israelites had collected together in several parts of the land; and especially, that the idolatrous priests had resorted to Beth-el to renew their old idolatry. (*Notes*, xvii. 24—28.) These Josiah put to death, perhaps with others from the land of Judah who were notoriously guilty. By burning men's bones upon their altars he endeavoured to render their idolatry detestable to all the inhabitants; that they might be induced to join themselves to the Jews in the worship of God at Jerusalem: for nothing was so polluting by the ceremonial law, as a dead human body, or any part of one. (*Note*, *Num.* xix. 11.)—It has been justly observed, that if Josiah had entertained the same notions of the sanctity of relicks, which have so long prevailed among professed Christians; he would have bestowed at least as much pains in honouring the bones of the old prophet from Judah, as he did in disgracing those of the idolatrous priests. But he thought it enough to let the bones of the man of God lie quietly in his grave.

V. 21—23. Having made all necessary preparation, Josiah proceeded to lead the attention of the people to their solemn feasts: and this first passover was celebrated with extraordinary zeal and exactness, and by immense multitudes; so that in all respects it exceeded every passover which had been observed from the days of Joshua. It must be supposed, that in the reigns of the idolatrous kings, this and the other sacred festivals were often entirely neglected: yet, under the judges, and during the reign of the pious kings, they were observed; but in no instance, with such regularity and zeal, and by so great numbers as at this time. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxx. xxxv.)

V. 24. (*Marg. Ref.*) The whole narrative marks the care with which this pious prince had studied "the book "of the law," after it was found; the diligent investigation which he made to detect and destroy every thing forbidden in it; and the exactness, as well as earnestness, with which his reformation was conducted. Had the princes and people been as sincere and zealous as their king, the happiest effects would have followed. (*Notes*, *Jer.* iii. 6—11. *Zeph.* i. 5—8.)

V. 25. Hezekiah excelled all the kings of Judah for entire *confidence in God;* and Josiah surpassed all others *in zeal for reformation, and in an unblemished life*, being attentive to obey the precepts, and promote the glory of God, with his whole heart and soul. (*Note*, xviii. 5, 6. 2 *Chr.* xxxi. 20, 21.) 'Hezekiah himself was not so 'exact, and did not make such a thorough search as he 'did after all idolatrous practices.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 26, 27. Josiah lived above thirteen years after this great reformation, and to the end retained the people in the external worship of God: (2 *Chr.* xxxiv. 33:) but in general they relapsed *secretly* into many of their former idolatries and iniquities; and, as a collective body, they were not greatly amended in the sight of a heart-searching God.—They had *heartily* concurred in the idolatries and crimes of Manasseh, but they had not imitated his repentance: on the other hand they had *hypocritically* joined in Josiah's reformation, and were ripe, upon his removal, to join the apostasy of his sons. (*Note*, 25.) Manasseh's wickedness therefore was accounted *national*, and filled up their measure of iniquity; whereas Josiah's piety was *personal*, and the hypocrisy and apostasy of the people aggravated their guilt and hastened their ruin. (*Notes*, xxi. 13—16. xxii. 15—20. xxiv. 3, 4.) But though the Lord did

28 Now [p] the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

29 ¶ In his days [q] Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he [r] slew him at [s] Megiddo when [t] he had seen him.

30 And [u] his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And [v] the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

31 ¶ [w] Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [x] Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

32 And [y] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

33 And Pharaoh-nechoh [z] put him in bands at [a] Riblah, in the land of Hamath, [*] that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and [†] put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

34 And Pharaoh-nechoh made [b] Eliakim the son of Josiah king, in the room of Josiah his father, and [c] turned his name to [‡] Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and [d] he came to Egypt, and died there.

35 And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he [e] taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he

[p] See 1 Kings xiv. 20.
[q] 35, 34. 2 Chr. xxxv. 20—24. Jer. xlvi. 2.
[r] Ec. viii. 14. ix. 1, 2. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Rom. xi. 33.
[s] Jg. 27. Judg. i. 27. v. 19. 1 Kings iv. 12. Zech. xii. 11. *Megiddon.* Rev. xvi. 16. *Armageddon.*
[t] xiv. 8. 11.
[u] ix. 28. 1 Kings xxii. 33—38.
[v] xiv. 21. xxi. 24. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 1, 2
[w] 1 Chr. iii. 15. Jer. xxii. 11. *Shallum.*
[x] xxiv. 18.
[y] xxi. 2—7. 21, 22.
[z] 2 Chr. xxxvi. 3, 4. Ez. xix. 3, 4.
[a] xxv. 6. Jer. xxxix. 5, 6. lii. 9, 10. 26.
[*] Or, *because he reigned.*
[†] Heb. *set a mulct upon the land.* xviii. 14.
[b] 2 Chr. xxxvi. 3, 4.
[c] xxiv. 17. Dan. i. 7.
[‡] Called *Jakim,* Matt. i. 11.
[d] Jer. xxii. 11, 12. Ez. xix. 3, 4.
[e] xv. 19, 20.

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not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath, so as to spare Jerusalem from desolation, and the Jews from captivity; yet this event proved a kind of crisis in their disease: and while the wicked perished in vast numbers, the remnant was purified; and Josiah's reformation probably had a very happy effect, in raising up many persons to join this small remnant, which proved the precious seed of their future church and nation.

V. 29, 30. Nabopollazar, king of Babylon, assisted by the Medes, is supposed, before this time, to have conquered the Assyrians and destroyed Nineveh. Thus he became king of Assyria also: and some learned men are of opinion, that after Manasseh was freed from captivity, the kings of Judah reigned over the country formerly possessed by the ten tribes, as tributaries and allies to the kings of Babylon.—Josiah might therefore consider himself as under engagements to the king of Assyria, as well as unwilling that the contending parties should march their armies through his country: he however lost his life in the attempt. Megiddo was situated in the lot of Manasseh, in a northern part of the land: (*Judg.* i. 27:) but at this time it seems to have been under Josiah's government. Perhaps Josiah disguised himself, that the king of Egypt might not know him; but he, having discovered him, singled him out for slaughter. When he had received his mortal wound, he was carried out of the battle, and he died by the way to Jerusalem. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxxv. 20—24.)—It has commonly been observed that our young king Edward VI. greatly resembled Josiah. He gave indeed singular evidence of wisdom and piety far beyond his years: but he was taken away at the age, when Josiah first began to seek the Lord; and we can only conjecture what he would have been and done, if he had been spared to reach the age at which Josiah was slain.—The people of the land placed Jehoahaz, or Shallum, the second son of Josiah on the throne in preference to his elder brother Jehoiakim: (*Note,* xxii. 1, 2:) probably, because he was deemed to be of a more active and martial temper. And to confirm their irregular proceedings, they anointed him, as if he had been immediately appointed by God: (*Note,* 1 *Kings* i. 38, 39, *v.* 39:) but alas! the season of the Lord's graciously giving them pious kings to reign over them was elapsed, and all Josiah's sons proved wicked, impolitick, and unsuccessful. As Zedekiah was no more than twenty-one years old, when he was made king, after Jehoiakim had reigned eleven years, and Jeconiah his son a short time; (xxiv. 18;) he of course was younger than Jehoahaz, though mentioned before him in Chronicles. (1 *Chr.* iii. 15.)

Josiah went against him. (29) 'Being afraid he intended 'to invade his country in his passage, or to divert him 'from his expedition against the Babylonians, with whom 'he was in league: it is likely the latter was the reason.' *Bp. Patrick.—Pharaoh-necho*: ... *Megiddo.*] 'Whom 'Herodotus ... calls Νεκως' (*Necos*) 'and mentions the 'fight which he had with the Syrians εν Μαγδολω' (*Magdolum*). *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 33. Jehoahaz had assumed the regal authority without Pharaoh's consent, and perhaps attempted to continue the war against him; which appears probable, because he was bound at Riblah, at the northern extremity of the promised land. Pharaoh, by some means, took him prisoner, deposed him, and sent him bound into Egypt, where he ended his days: (*Notes, Jer.* xxii. 10—12. *Ez.* xix. 2—9:) and the land was put under tribute, in token of its subjection to the king of Egypt. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 34. "Jehoiakim" means the same as "Eliakim;" except that the latter is compounded with the word translated GOD, the former with a part of the name JEHOVAH. Pharaoh seems not to have wished Jehoiakim to renounce his religion; but chose to distinguish him, as the ruler of that people, who professed to worship JEHOVAH.—Hitherto the kingdom of Judah had descended in a direct line from father to son: and this is the first instance of one brother succeeding another. (*Preface,* 1 *Kings.*)

exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give *it* unto Pharaoh-nechoh.

[f] 1 Chr. iii. 15. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 5. Jer. i. 3. 36 [f] Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.

[g] Jer. xxii. 13—17. xxvi. 20—23. xxxvi. 23—26. 31. Ez. xix. 5—9. 37 And [g] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to [h] all that his fathers had done.

[h] 2 Chr. xxviii. 22—25. xxxiii. 4—10. 22, 23.

V. 37. In the prophecy of Jeremiah the extreme wickedness of Jehoiakim is fully shewn. (*Notes, Jer.* xxvi. xxxvi.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Nothing ought to discourage our endeavours to promote a revival of true religion. If declining churches and nations cannot be rescued from impending judgments, a few individuals may be snatched as "brands from the burning:" and if ministers, in their several stations, fail of general or abiding usefulness, and have continually the prospect of being removed; many a one may, in the mean time, receive important benefit, and prove the seed of a future revival, even in that very place.—As sinners cannot be preserved from eternal destruction, without repentance; so, degenerate nations cannot be rescued from publick calamities, without general reformation. To effect this it is the interest of princes to promote the knowledge of God in their dominions: and it is no degradation of their dignity, personally to take an active part in such attempts; which will induce numbers of every order in the community to concur.—All external obligations to the service of God may be entered into with a hypocritical, or self-righteous spirit: yet this should not make us object to such engagements ourselves, or averse to propose them; but only make us cautious in what manner we do it, and careful to inculcate the same caution upon others. It is safe to bind ourselves solemnly to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments; because these are previous indispensable duties, (*Note, Num.* xxx. 2,) and some are thus rendered more earnest in attending to them: but the word of God must be the rule and standard in every thing; not only as to the duty itself, but also as to the motive and manner of doing it.—In those nations, which profess to worship God, and which are favoured with the light of revelation, we need only to investigate with diligence, and compare the result of our observations with the word of truth, to discover such enormous and multiplied abominations, as could never have been conceived upon a distant and superficial view, or a judgment formed by other rules. Even in worshipping congregations, an exact scrutiny would commonly bring to light such evils, as before were never suspected: but the most humiliating discoveries will be made, by an exact enquiry into our own hearts and conduct. That man, who previously deemed his behaviour unexceptionable and his heart good, if he can be engaged in diligent self-examination and watchfulness, daily beholding himself in the mirrour of God's word, and for a long time comparing with it his thoughts, intentions, dispositions, words, and actions; will experience increasing convictions of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of his heart, and of the exceeding sinfulness of his whole life. And if he set about amendment, in dependence on the mercy and grace of God in Jesus Christ, and according to the rule of the Bible, he will, as he proceeds, find still more and more to be done; and to the end of his life perceive, that he is very far off from the perfect righteousness of the holy law. Nor are *any* persons disposed to object to this unfavourable statement, but such as are either unacquainted with the rule, or strangers to a serious examination of their conduct by it. (*Note, Jer.* xvii. 9, 10. *P. O. Ez.* viii. *Notes, Rom.* vii. 7—12. *Jam.* i. 22—25.)—Imperfection is stamped upon all human goodness, and the greatest reformations hitherto seen on earth, have left many things unreformed.—The scriptural history may well excite the hatred and disgust of the proud admirers of the human heart and understanding; as it presents to our view a very mortifying picture of the blindness of man's mind, as well as of the perverseness of his will, and the depravity of his affections. But, suppose the appeal made to other histories, or to universal observation and experience:—if the records of Greece and Rome were presented to our view, as a detail of facts, without the varnish of declamation and panegyrick; if the conduct of these celebrated nations, in publick and private life, throughout their term of notoriety, were impartially compared with the just and holy law of God; would not their idolatries and immoralities be found to exceed even those of Israel? (*Note, Rom.* i. 28—32.) Would they not picture human nature as blind and depraved as the Bible does? And do not all the encomiums bestowed on them, arise from man's disposition to "call "good evil, and evil good, to put darkness for light, and "light for darkness?" (*Note, Is.* v. 20.) Pride, ambition, rapacity, cruelty, and revenge, have even been canonized by poets, and orators, and historians: and idolatry, impiety, brutal excess, and unnatural lusts have been called by soft names, and excused, if not vindicated, by these elegant and ingenious antients. Otherwise the conclusion is as irrefragable from the study of profane history, as from the records of God's word, that "the imagination of man's "heart is only evil from his youth:" and that *all the real godliness, or goodness, which has ever been found on earth, has been derived from the new creating Spirit of Jesus Christ.*—Persons of eminence, of whatever kind, have need to be very careful what they sanction: for numbers, in distant ages and nations, may be emboldened to transgress, by acceding to their sentiments, or by imitating their examples: and the reflection, of doing extensive mischief for generations to come, would, in that case, be a painful prerogative of superior talents, rank, or reputation.—In using all our influence decidedly to suppress abuses, and to oppose iniquity, we should shew all allowable tenderness to the persons of men: yet man must not pretend to more mercy than his Maker, by sparing those whom he orders to be punished.—In reducing our conduct, or that of others, to the standard of Scripture, in evident and important matters, no allowance must be made for customary, reputable, ancient, or fashionable abuses: difficulties also must be encountered, hardships endured, self-denial exercised, and opposition and every worldly interest disregard-

CHAP. XXIV.

Jehoiakim submits to Nebuchadnezzar, but afterwards rebels, 1. God hastens the fulfilment of his predictions against Judah, 2—4. Jehoiakim dies, and is succeeded by Jehoiachin, 5, 6. The king of Babylon prevails against the king of Egypt, 7. Jehoiachin reigns wickedly, 8, 9. Jerusalem is taken; and the king, with his family and treasures, and the sacred vessels, and chief persons of Judah, is carried captive to Babylon, 10—16. Zedekiah is made king, reigns wickedly, and rebels against the king of Babylon, 17—20.

IN [a] his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.

[a] xvii. 5. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6. Jer. xxv. 1. 9. xlvi. 2. Dan. i. 1.

2 And [c] the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of

B. C. 603.
[c] vi. 23. xiii. 20, 21. Deut. xxviii. 49, 50. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Job i. 17. Is. vii. 17. xiii. 5. Jer. xxxv. 11.

ed: no man must be known after the flesh; nor any attention paid to persuasions, complaints, remonstrances, or reproaches; nor even to prejudices, except in matters of subordinate consequence. Therefore courage, constancy, and patience, are requisite for such attempts; and these, when genuine, can only spring from grace and faith, and be given in answer to prayer, without which every undertaking of this kind will be fruitless.—Not only should gross abominations be precluded; but every temptation or occasion of sin should be removed, whatever be the secular loss or expense, if we would effectually glorify God, and do good: and every method should be adopted to fill men's minds with abhorrence of iniquity, and to shew plausible abuses in a contemptible and detestable light: especially where godly people are liable to be seduced into pernicious compliances.

V. 15—37.

The predictions of Scripture may be so long ere they are accomplished, that the expectation of the event may seem to expire; but they will all be punctually fulfilled in their season: and it must give singular encouragement to the pious, when they find themselves evidently employed in bringing about that accomplishment.—Ungodly persons may, even after death, be more respected for their connexion with the servants of God; but the Judge of all will not regard such distinctions.—When gross iniquities are renounced, and a credible profession of faith, repentance, and devotedness to God are made, men may be deemed prepared for the most solemn ordinances of his worship: though no human care or penetration can exclude formal hypocrites; such attendance on the worship of God is externally honourable to him, and useful to numbers: and, as he will know how at last to separate between the tares and the wheat, we must leave them to grow together till the harvest. The scrutinizing eye of the zealous servant of God will continually find many abuses to be rectified; and we must still press forward, both in personal and publick reformation. Those who attempt this with their whole heart, in humility and simplicity, may hope to be useful to others, and shall certainly be accepted themselves; and as there are degrees of excellency among true believers, so they will receive a proportionable recompence. But when the sins of a collective body are come to a crisis, no human endeavours can avert the wrath of God: and when eminent and useful persons are prematurely taken away, it forebodes publick calamities. (*Note, Is.* lvii. 1, 2.) The best of men may be misled into unadvised meddling with matters not properly belonging to them: but if we are habitually living by faith, and walking with God, even should we be taken away in consequence of any indiscretion, it will not prevent our dying in peace, and being received to glory.—Piety is *personal*, the effect of special grace. The children even of the most pious parents inherit original depravity; nor can education, instruction, or example prevent its effects, without *regeneration:* yet abundant encouragement is given to the diligent use of the appointed means of grace, in respect of our children. (*Notes, Gen.* xviii. 17—19. *Prov.* xxii. 6.)—When those who have stood in the gap are removed, judgments often follow like an inundation: and a little time and slender abilities frequently suffice to undo all the external good, which pious men, of excellent capacities, have been labouring, with unremitting endeavours, for a course of years to effect. (*Notes, Ec.* ii. 18—23. ix. 13—18.) Blessed be God, that good work, which he begins by his regenerating Spirit, cannot be disannulled: but, notwithstanding all changes and temptations, shall be "performed unto the day of Jesus "Christ."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. Pharaoh-necho, after Josiah's death, obtained a victory over the king of Babylon, and for some time retained Judea and Syria in subjection. But not long after, Nabopollazar seems to have associated his son Nebuchadnezzar with him in the kingdom, that by him the war with the Egyptians might be conducted with greater vigour. For when Daniel had been *three years* under tuition at Babylon, and had afterwards been introduced to Nebuchadnezzar, he interpreted the dream of that prince in *the second* year of his reign: yet Daniel had been carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar the king. (*Note, Dan.* ii. 1.) Two distinct dates respecting the beginning of his reign must therefore be admitted; and it appears that he was made king two or three years before his father died. —Nebuchadnezzar having obtained decisive advantages against the Egyptians, attacked Jehoiakim, as an ally of Nechoh, and, having taken him prisoner, he "bound him "in fetters to carry him to Babylon;" (2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 6 7:) but upon his submission he released him, and carried away some of the gold and silver vessels of the temple, and some of the most considerable persons of the land. Among the latter were Daniel and his companions. (*Notes, Dan.* i. 1—7.) This is the first epoch of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity. Nebuchadnezzar left Babylon in the third year of Jehoiakim, and he reduced that prince in his fourth year. After this, Jehoiakim served the king of Babylon three years, and in his eighth year he rebelled against him, about three years before his death. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. It may be supposed, that these nations had been subjected to the king of Babylon; and were encouraged

the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah, to destroy it, [d] according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by [*] his servants the prophets.

3 Surely [e] at the commandment of the LORD came *this* upon Judah, to remove *them* out of his sight, [f] for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did;

4 And also [h] for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, [i] which the LORD would not pardon.

5 Now [j] the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

6 So Jehoiakim [k] slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

7 And [l] the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken, [m] from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

8 ¶ [n] Jehoiachin *was* [o] eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name *was* Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

9 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city [†] was besieged.

11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.

12 And [p] Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his [‡] officers: and the king of Babylon [q] took him in the eighth year of [§] his reign.

13 And [r] he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and [s] cut in pieces all the vessels of gold, [t] which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.

14 And he carried away all [u] Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, *even* ten thou-

d xx. 17. xxi. 12—14. Is. vi. 11, 12. Jer. xxv. 9. xxvi. 6. 20. xxxii. 28. Mic. iii. 12.
* Heb. *the hand of his.*
e xviii. 25. Gen. l. 20. 2 Chr. xxiv. 24. xxv. 16. Is. x. 5, 6. xlv. 7. xlvi. 10, 11. Am. iii. 6.
f xxiii. 26, 27. Lev. xxvi. 33—35. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 63. xxix. 28. Josh. xxiii. 15. Jer. xv. 1—4. Mic. ii. 10.
g xxi. 2—11.
h xxi. 16. Num. xxxv. 33.
i Jer. xv. 1, 2. Lam. iii. 42.
j 2 Chr. xxxvi. 8. Jer. xxii. 13—17. xxvi. xxxvi.
B. C. 599.
k Jer. xxii. 18, 19. xxxvi. 30.
l Jer. xxxvii. 5—7. xlvi. 2.
m Gen. xv. 18. Num. xxxiv. 5. Josh. xv. 4. 1 Kings iv. 21. Is. xxvii. 12.
n 1 Chr. iii. 16. Jer. xxiv. 1. *Jeconiah.* Jer. xxii. 24. 28. xxxvii. 1. *Coniah.* Matt. i. 11, 12. *Jechonias.*
o 2 Chr. xxxvi. 9.
† Heb. *came into siege.* xxv. 2.
p 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10. Jer. xxiv. 1. xxix. 1, 2. xxxviii. 17, 18. Ez. xvii. 12.
‡ Or, *eunuchs.*
q xxv. 27. Jer. lii. 31.
§ *Nebuchadnezzar's.* Jer. xxv. 1. lii. 28.
r xx. 17. Is. xxxix. 6. Jer. xx. 5.
s xxv. 13—15. Ezra i. 7—11. Jer. xxvii. 16—21. xxviii. 3, 4. 6. Dan. v. 2, 3.
t 1 Kings vii. 48—50. 2 Chr. iv. 7—22.
u 2 Chr. xxxvi. 9, 10. Jer. xxiv. 1—5. lii. 28. Ez. i. 1, 2.

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by him to attack the revolted Jews, while he was otherwise employed. But the Lord's secret disposal of their hearts to these attempts alone is noticed. It is probable that Jehoiakim was harassed by them during the remainder of his days; and perhaps he was at last slain in some sally against them, when they approached Jerusalem; and so left unburied, or otherwise very disgracefully treated. But some think, that *after* the transactions here recorded, Nebuchadnezzar carried him to Babylon, and at length put him to death, and treated his dead body most ignominiously. (*Note, Jer.* xxii. 13—19. xxxvi. 30, 31.)

V. 3, 4. Manasseh's idolatry became a national sin, as publickly enforced by persecution, which filled Jerusalem with the innocent blood of those who refused compliance. The chief men of Judah were involved in this guilt, and had neither repented, nor been brought to justice for it: thus, accumulated and atrocious murders remained unpunished, as a load of guilt upon the land; (*Notes, Num.* xxxv. 31—34. *Deut.* xxi. 1—9. *Ez.* xxii. 3—5. 24—28;) and both the princes and people were in general more disposed to imitate Manasseh's idolatries and persecutions, than his repentance. Therefore, though the Lord had pardoned the personal wickedness of penitent Manasseh, he would not pardon the unrepented national guilt, of which he had been the occasion, and in some sense the author. (*Note,* xxiii. 26, 27. *2 Chr.* xxxiii. 11—19.)

Out of his sight. (3) Out of that land, in which his worship had been established, and the special tokens of his gracious presence so wonderfully vouchsafed. (*Notes, Deut.* xi. 12. *Ps.* li. 11.)

Would not pardon. (4) לֹא־אָבָה יְקֹוָק. The Lord in his wisdom and righteousness, did not see good to pardon this national guilt, in those circumstances; but judged it proper to inflict condign punishment for it: but the personal sins of such as repented and sought mercy, were pardoned notwithstanding this determination. (*Notes, Ez.* xviii. 3, 4. 19—32.)

V. 6. As Jehoiakim was "buried with the burial of an "ass;" the expression, "slept with his fathers," can only mean that he died, without determining what became either of his soul or body. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* 2.)

V. 7. The king of Egypt having been driven back into his own land, and confined there; the kings of Judah were left entirely at the mercy of Nebuchadnezzar: so that policy, as well as their most solemn engagements, demanded their peaceable submission, and their resignation to the correcting hand of God in that dispensation: (*Notes, Ez.* xvii. 2—21.)

V. 8—16. Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, seems to have mounted the throne on the death of his father, without waiting for the king of Babylon's consent: but it was like going on board a sinking ship. He had just time enough to manifest his evil disposition, and was then attacked by the king of Babylon: who, probably, was provoked by

sand captives, and all the [v] craftsmen and smiths: none remained save [x] the poorest sort of the people of the land.

15 And [y] he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his [*] officers, and the mighty of the land, *those* carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.

16 And all the men of might, *even* [z] seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all *that were* strong *and* apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

17 ¶ And [a] the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, [b] his father's brother, king in his stead, and [c] changed his name to Zedekiah.

18 Zedekiah *was* twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [d] Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

19 And [e] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

20 For [f] through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that [g] Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

v 1 Sam. xiii. 19—22.
x xxv. 12. Jer. xxxix. 10. xl. 7. lii. 16. Ez. xvii. 14.
y *See on* 8.—Esth. ii. 6. Jer. xxii. 24—28.
* Or, *eunuchs.*
z Jer. xxix. 2. lii. 28.
a 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10, 11. Jer. xxxvii. 1. lii. 1.
b 1 Chr. iii. 15, 16.
c xxiii. 34. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 4.
d xxiii. 31.
e xxiii. 37. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 12. Jer. xxiv. 8. xxxvii. xxxviii. Ez. xxi. 25.
f xxii. 17. Ex. ix. 14—17. Deut. ii. 30. Is. xix. 11—14. 1 Cor. i. 20. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11.
g 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13. Jer. xxvii. 12—15. xxxviii. 17—21. Ez. xvii. 15—20.

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his thus assuming the authority, and suspected him of designing to revolt: so that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, first by his captains, and then personally. And either by surrender, or upon some deceitful engagement, Jeconiah went forth to him, and was carried captive to Babylon. After all the depredations, to which the temple had been exposed, some of the vessels that Solomon had made, remained in the treasuries of the temple: but all, except what were in immediate use, seem at this time to have been seized, and some of them cut in pieces, and sent to Babylon. And those, afterwards mentioned, might be such as had been before this carried away, or such as were found at the complete destruction of the temple and city. (xxv. 14, 15. *Ezra* i. 7—11. *Jer.* xxviii. 3. 6. *Dan.* v. 1—4.) It is no where said, what became of the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat: but in some way these were destroyed; for all allow, that there was no ark in the temple built after the captivity; and it is not improbable, that at this time the gold of the ark, &c. was cut off, and taken away. This event took place in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (12), and forms a second epoch to be regarded in computing the duration of the captivity. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 21. *Ezra* i. 1—4. *Dan.* i. 1, 2.)—The chief and the most useful of the people were carried to Babylon, that the land might be reduced to absolute dependence on Nebuchadnezzar. Seven thousand soldiers, one thousand craftsmen and smiths, and two thousand persons of superior rank, may make up the sum total ten thousand. Some learned men, however, suppose, that there were ten thousand carried captive from Jerusalem alone, besides a thousand craftsmen and smiths; and also seven thousand from the rest of the land.—Jeremiah speaks of three thousand and twenty-three, who seem to have been carried away the year before, out of the open country. (*Note, Jer.* lii. 24—30.) Among the rest Ezekiel was at this time made a captive. (*Note, Ez.* i. 1—3.)

V. 17. Jehoiachin was succeeded by his uncle, the youngest son of Josiah.—"Mattaniah" signifies *the gift of JEHOVAH:* "Zedekiah," *the righteousness of JEHOVAH:* and the king of Babylon, by giving him this name, meant either an appeal to the justice of God against him, if he violated his engagements; or to refer to the judgments, which he had heard were denounced against Jerusalem by a righteous God.

V. 20. 'God was so highly displeased with this wicked 'people, that he permitted Zedekiah to break his faith 'with Nebuchadnezzar, and to rebel against him, forget-'ting for what cause he changed his name.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xvii. 4. 2 *Sam.* xvii. 7—14, *v.* 14. xxiv. 1, 2. 2 *Chr.* xxv. 14—16. *Is.* xix. 11—15. *Ez.* xvii. 3—21. xxi. 25—27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

When the Lord leaves men to the blindness of their own minds, and to the lusts of their own hearts; some are infatuated to adopt and obstinately persist in the most destructive measures; and others are hurried on by ambition, avarice, or resentment, to execute upon them the vengeance which had been predicted.—Multiplied murders, sanctioned by authority, and persevered in with impunity, form a species of national wickedness which the Lord will not pardon; especially when false religion is established by law, and persecuting statutes are enacted or revived, and executed against his true worshippers: and when this is not merely the act of a few oppressors, but the people in general "love to have it so." Yet, even this may be endured by the long-suffering of the Lord for many generations; till the whole accumulated load falls upon a devoted people, with direful destruction.—Blessed be God, there is no degree or kind of personal guilt, which he will not pardon to the true penitent; for it is "impossible to "renew unto repentance" such as have committed "the "sin unto death." (*Notes, Heb.* vi. 4—6. 1 *John* v. 14—18.) But it is very distressing for those, who have obtained forgiveness of their own transgressions, to reflect that they have been the guilty occasions to others, by their examples, influence, or persuasions, of those sins, which, being continued in, the Lord will not pardon; and of which they have no power to bring them to repent. The good Lord preserve us from sin and temptation, and above all from being tempters to others! And may this reflection stir up young persons to seek and serve God without delay, lest they should do that mischief, which, if they themselves

CHAP. XXV.

Jerusalem is besieged and taken; Zedekiah flees, and is made prisoner; his sons are slain, his eyes are put out, and he is carried in chains to Babylon, 1—7. The temple, palaces, and city are burned, the walls are broken down, and the remnant of the people led captive, except a small number of the poor, 8—12. The residue of the sacred vessels and treasures are carried away, 13—17. The nobles are slain at Riblah, 18—21. Gedaliah, who is left governor, being treacherously slain, the rest flee into Egypt, 22—26. After many years, Evil-merodach shews great kindness to Jehoiachin, 27—30.

a 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17. Jer. xxxiv. 2, 3. xxxix. 1. lii. 4, 5. Ez. xxiv. 1, 2.
b xxiv. 1. 10. 1 Chr. vi. 15. Jer. xxvii. 8.—xxxii. 28. xliii. 10. li. 34. Ez. xxvi. 7. *Nebuchadrezzar.* Dan. iv. 1, &c.
c Is. xxix. 3. Jer. xxxii. 24. Ez. iv. 1—3. xxi. 22—24. Luke xix. 43, 44.
B. C. 588.
d Jer. xxxix. 2. lii 6. Zech. viii. 19.

1 AND it came to pass, [a] in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* [b] Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and [c] pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

2 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

3 And on [d] the ninth *day* of the *fourth* month [e] the famine prevailed in the city, and [f] there was no bread for the people of the land.

e Lev. xxvi. 26. Deut. xxviii. 52, 53. Lam. iv. 4—10. Ez. iv. 9—17. v. 10. 12. vii. 15. xiv. 21.
f Jer. xxxvii. 21. xxxviii. 2.

4 And [g] the city was broken up, and all the men of war [h] *fled* by night, by the way of the gate, between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees *were* against the city round about:) [i] and *the king* went the way toward the plain.

g Jer. v. 10. xxxix. 2, 3. lii. 6, 7. Ez. xxxiii. 21.
h Lev. xxvi. 17. 36. Deut. xxviii. 25. xxxii. 24, 25. 30. Jer. xxxix. 4—7.
i 5. Ez. xii. 12.

5 And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, [j] and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him.

j Is. xxx. 16. Jer. xxiv. 8. xxxix. 5. lii. 8. Am. ii. 14—16.

6 So [k] they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to [l] Riblah; and they [*] gave judgment upon him.

k 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Jer. xxi. 7. xxxiv. 21, 22. xxxviii. 23. Lam. iv. 19, 20. Ez. xvii. 20, 21. xxi. 25—27.
l *See on* xxiii. 33.
* Heb. *spake judgment with him.*

7 And [m] they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, [n] and [†] put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and [o] bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

m Gen. xxi. 16. xliv. 34. Deut. xxviii. 34. Jer. xxii. 30. xxxix. 6, 7. lii. 10, 11.
n Jer. xxxii. 4, 5. xxxiv. 3. Ez. xii. 13.
† Heb. *made blind.*
o Judg. xvi. 21. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 6. Ps. cvii. 10, 11. cxlix. 8. Ez. vii. 27, xvii. 16—20.

should live to repent, they will never be able to undo.—When God arises to judgment all resistance will be ineffectual; and the folly, as well as the wickedness, of every worldly dependence, will be manifest: but his justice will never appear in its full glory, till that day, when "he "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and "will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* iv. 3—5.) In the mean time, we are incompetent judges of the divine procedures; and ought to wait with silent patience.—Wicked men soon discover the temper of their hearts, and give evidence of what they would do if they were spared: therefore the Lord often cuts them off, to prevent further mischief; and thus hinders them from "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath." But when their power is taken away, and their lives are spared, though in poverty and misery, it may be an infinite mercy to their souls. (*Notes*, xxv. 27—30. *Jer.* xxiv. 4—7.)

V. 8—20.

The gradual approach of divine judgments affords sinners space for repentance, and believers leisure to prepare for properly meeting the calamity: but it only evinces the desperate obduracy and obstinacy of those, who are not deterred from their sins by all which they witness or experience.—God delights in his ordinances, so long as they prove means of grace to those who are favoured with them; but he abhors them, when they degenerate into a lifeless form: and that, which to the carnal eye appears most glorious in religious worship, is often in his account a vile abomination.—Wicked men become curses to each other; and the nearer their intimacy or relation, the greater will be the anguish of those who sin and perish together.—External pre-eminence, in times of publick calamity, often gives the precedency in suffering; but riches, dignity, authority, and superior abilities, will assuredly increase the sinner's condemnation; for to whom much is given, of him will the more be required. Let us then neither envy nor covet such precarious advantages, but be warned to improve every talent entrusted to us. Let us in these awful events contemplate the truth of the scripture, and "flee from the wrath to come;" embrace and plead the precious promises of God; and by patient continuance in well doing, wait for the Saviour's mercy unto eternal life!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—5. Jerusalem was so fortified by nature and art, that notwithstanding the enfeebled state of the inhabitants, and Nebuchadnezzar's great power and military skill, it could not be taken till the besieged were incapacitated by famine to make any further resistance. (*Notes, Lam.* iv. 10. 12.) In the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah, we shall have an opportunity of more fully considering the circumstances of this catastrophe, and indeed the whole of this compendious history: it suffices in this place to observe, that the obstinacy, impiety, and misery of the besieged were alike great, and almost unparalleled. (*Notes, Jer.* xxxvii. xxxviii. xxxix. 1—10.)—The king and his remaining forces endeavoured to escape by some private gate, which the enemy had not observed, or did not guard: but his attendants were dispersed, and he was taken prisoner. (*Notes, Lam.* iv. 20. *Ez.* xii. 1—16.)

V. 6, 7. Nebuchadnezzar, having placed Zedekiah on the throne, and made him engage to be faithful to him, tried and condemned him as a traitor, in the presence of his ministers and counsellors: (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxxvi. 13. *Jer.* xxxix. 1—10. *Ez.* xvii. 15—21. xxi. 25—27:) and, having slain his sons in his sight, as the last spectacle which he should ever behold, and which might ever after

8 ¶ And [p] in the fifth month, on the seventh *day* of the month, which *is* [q] the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came [r] Nebuzar-adan [*] captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

9 And [s] he burnt the house of the LORD, and [t] the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great *man's* house, burnt he with fire.

10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that *were with* the captain of the guard, [u] brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

11 Now [x] the rest of the people *that were* left in the city, and the [†] fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away.

12 But the captain of the guard [y] left of the poor of the land, *to be* vinedressers and husbandmen.

13 ¶ And [z] the [a] pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the [b] bases, and the brazen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon.

14 And [c] the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass, wherewith they ministered, took they away.

15 And the fire-pans, and the bowls, [d] *and* such things as *were* of gold, *in* gold, and of silver, *in* silver, the captain of the guard took away.

16 The two pillars, [‡] one sea, and the bases, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; [e] the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

17 The height of the [f] one pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and the chapiter upon it *was* brass; and the height of the chapiter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.

18 ¶ And the captain of the guard took [g] Seraiah the chief priest, and [h] Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the [§] door.

19 And out of the city he took an [‖] officer that was set over the men of war, and [i] five men of them that [*] were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and the [†] principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land, and threescore men of the people of the land *that were* found in the city:

20 And Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard took these, [j] and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah.

21 And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. [k] So Judah was carried away out of their land.

p Jer. lii. 12—14. Zech. viii. 19
q xxiv. 12.
r Jer. xxxix. 9—14. xl. 1—4. lii. 12—16 Lam. iv. 12.
* Or, *chief marshal.*
s 2 Chr. xxxvi. 19. Ps. lxxiv. 3—7. lxxix. 1. Is. lxiv. 11. Jer. vii. 14. xxvi. 9. Lam. i. 10. ii. 7. Mic. iii. 12. Luke xxi. 6. Acts vi. 13, 14.
t Jer. xxxiv. 22. xxxvii. 8. 10. xxxix. 8. lii. 13. Am. ii. 5.
u Neh. i. 3. Jer. v. 10. xxxix. 8. lii. 14.
x Jer. xv. 1, 2. xxix. 2. lii. 15. Ez. v. 2. xii. 15, 16. xxii. 15, 16.
† Heb. *fallen away.*
y xxiv. 14. Jer. xxxix. 10. xl. 7. Ez. xxxiii. 24.
z xx. 17. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 18. Jer. xxvii. 19—22. lii. 17—20. Lam. i. 10.
a 1 Kings vii. 15. 21. 41. 2 Chr. iv. 12, 13.
b 1 Kings vii. 23—45. 2 Chr. iv. 2—6. 14—16.
c Ex. xxvii. 3. xxxviii. 3. 1 Kings vii. 48—50. 2 Chr. iv. 20—22. xxiv. 14.
d Ex. xxxvii. 23. Num. vii. 13, 14. 1 Kings vii. 48—51. 2 Chr. xxiv. 14. Ezra i. 9—11. Dan. v. 2, 3.
‡ Heb. *the one sea.*
e 1 Kings vii. 47.
f 1 Kings vii. 16. Jer. lii. 21—23.
g 1 Chr. vi. 14. Ezra vii. 1. Jer. lii. 24.
h Jer. xxi. 1. xxix. 25. 29.
§ Heb. *threshold.*
‖ Or, *eunuch.*
i Jer. lii. 25.
* Heb. *saw the king's face.* Esth. i. 14.
† Or, *scribe of the captain of the host.*
j Jer. lii. 26, 27. Lam. iv. 16.
k xvii. 20. xxiii. 27. Lev. xxvi. 33—35. Deut. iv. 26. xxviii. 36. 64. Jer. xxiv. 9, 10. xxv. 9—11. Am. v. 27.

haunt his affrighted imagination, he put out his eyes, and sent him in chains to Babylon. (*Notes, Jer.* xxxii. 4, 5, *v.* 5. xxxiv. 1—5. xxxviii. 1—6. 20—23. *Ez.* xii. 8—16.) Here he ended his life, probably not long after; for no more is recorded concerning him. Zedekiah left daughters at Jerusalem, who went down with Johanan to Egypt, and doubtless died there. (*Jer.* xli. 10. xliii. 6.)

V. 8—10. Nebuzar-adan seems to have arrived at Jerusalem on the seventh day of the month, but he began to execute his commission on the *tenth*. (*Jer.* lii. 12.)—The king of Babylon, enraged at the long and obstinate defence, which the Jews had made, determined that this city should be no more inhabited, to cause him or his successors so much trouble and expense in future. (*Notes, Ezra* iv. 12—24.) He therefore gave orders to level the city with the ground, without sparing even the temple, either for its sanctity, antiquity, or magnificence! Thus he performed the words both of the later prophets, and likewise the predictions of Moses. This is computed to have been four hundred and twenty-four years, from the time when Solomon laid the foundations of the temple. Josephus informs us, that the second temple was destroyed by the Romans, on the same day of the same month.

V. 12. *Note, 22—26.*

V. 13—17. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Kings* vii. 13—51. *Jer.* lii. 17—23.) By this it appears, that Nebuchadnezzar did not purpose wholly to desolate the land; but by destroying Jerusalem to deprive the nation of the power of resistance, and so to continue in it a feeble company of men to cultivate the earth.—But his design, in this respect, was defeated, that the purpose and predictions of God might be accomplished. It is not known what became of the ark; but it was not afterwards found. (*Notes,* xxiv. 6—16. *Ezra* i. 7—11. *Hag.* ii. 6—9.)

Without weight. (16) The quantity of brass was so great, that its weight was not ascertained. (1 *Kings* vii. 47.)

V. 18—21. *Marg. Ref.—Five.* (19) *Seven* men are mentioned by Jeremiah; (*Note, Jer.* lii. 24—27;) but perhaps five were of superior rank to the others; or were more distinguished as the favourites and counsellors of Zedekiah. All these persons were put to death as accessaries to his rebellion.

22 ¶ And *as for* [1] the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made [m] Gedaliah, the son of [n] Ahikam the son of Shaphan, ruler.

23 And [o] when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

24 And Gedaliah [p] sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, [q] and it shall be well with you.

25 But it came to pass [r] in the seventh month, that [s] Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed [*] royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.

26 And [t] all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

27 ¶ And [u] it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* Evil-merodach [x] king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did [y] lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison;

28 And he spake [†] kindly to him, and set his throne above [z] the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon;

29 And [a] changed his prison-garments: and [b] he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.

30 And his allowance *was* a continual allowance given him of the king, [c] a daily rate for every day, [d] all the days of his life.

1 Jer. xl. 5, 6.
m 25. Jer. xxxix. 14. xli. 2.
n xxii. 12. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 20. Jer. xxvi. 24.
o Jer. xl. 7, 8. 11, 12.
p 2 Sam. xiv. 11. xix. 23. Jer. xl. 9, 10. Ez. xxxiii. 24—29.
q Jer. xl. 9. xlii. 6.
r Zech. vii. 5. viii. 19.
s Jer. xl. 15, 16. xli. 1—15.
* Heb. *of the kingdom.* xi. 1.
t Jer. xli. 16—18. xliii. 4—22. xliii. 5—7. B. C. 562.
u Jer. xxiv. 5, 6. lii. 31—34.
x Prov. xxi. 1.
y Gen. xl. 13, 20.
† Heb. *good things with him.*
z Jer. xxvii. 6—11. Dan. ii. 37. v. 18, 19.
a xxiv. 12. Gen. xli. 14. 42. Esth. iv. 4. viii. 15. Is. lxi. 3. Zech. iii. 4. Luke xv. 22.
b 2 Sam. ix. 7.
c Neh. xi. 23. xii. 47. Dan. i. 5. Matt. vi. 11. Luke xi. 3. Acts vi. 1.
d Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.

V. 22—26. Nebuchadnezzar intended to preserve some inhabitants in the land; but it was the Lord's purpose that it should be desolated. (12. *Notes, Jer.* xxv. 8—10.)—Ishmael, being of the royal family, could not endure to see any shadow of authority possessed by another, while he was excluded; and therefore he murdered Gedaliah, who seems to have been a wise and good man. His father Ahikam had been Jeremiah's protector; and the prophet had by choice joined his company. (*Notes, Jer.* xxvi. 24. xl. 6.)—After this event, the Jews, rejecting the word of the Lord by Jeremiah, fled into Egypt, for fear of the resentment of the king of Babylon; and there they either miserably perished, or were lost among the natives, and thus God performed his purpose and predictions of desolating the country, contrary to the intentions of the instruments, which he had hitherto employed. (*Notes, Jer.* xxxix—xlii.) The small numbers, mentioned in all the accounts of these events, lead the mind to a most melancholy reflection on the multitudes who must have perished, and been driven into other lands, by the distresses of the Jews, previous to this catastrophe.

V. 27—30. It is recorded that Nebuchadnezzar, after his recovery from the miraculous insanity with which he had been visited, committed his son to prison for maladministration during that period; (*Notes, Dan.* iv. 28—37;) and that there he contracted an acquaintance with Jehoiachin. God had foretold, that the captives at Babylon would be more favoured, than those who remained at Jerusalem: and thus Jehoiachin was at length more favoured than Zedekiah. (*Notes, Jer.* xxiv.)—Many captive or tributary kings abode at Babylon, but Jehoiachin was treated with greater kindness and respect than any of them, either out of personal affection, or from regard to the ancient race of the kings of Judah. (*Note, Jer.* lii. 31.)—As Evil-merodach reigned but two years, it is probable Jehoiachin did not live long after this. (*Note, Ezra* i. 1—4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

If repeated warnings and afflictions leave the sinner's heart more obdurate than before, it is an evidence that his ruin is at hand. (*Note, Prov.* xxix. 1.)—Those advantages, which inspire confidence in the ways of wickedness, will eventually aggravate the possessor's misery: for no power can resist, no craftiness can elude, those whom God appoints to be the executioners of his vengeance.—If rebellion against earthly princes deserve penalties so severe, as by common consent have, in all ages and nations, been inflicted upon those who were guilty of that crime: who can estimate what or how much punishment is due to rebellion against our Creator, Benefactor, and Sovereign!—Precious as our eyes are to us, they may possibly be reserved to witness such scenes, as may make us wish, that they had been previously closed, in darkness or in death. But surely no sight can be so distressing, as the misery of our children, when occasioned by our own misconduct!—God over-rules, and imperceptibly guides, even the anger and the resentment of men to execute his righteous purposes for his own glory. In the day of his indignation, he utterly disregards populous cities, magnificent palaces,

and fertile countries: nay, he permits his avowed enemies to destroy his sanctuaries, to prevent the administration of his ordinances, and even to extinguish the very light of his gospel, in those places, where these inestimable advantages have long been despised, neglected, or perverted. But he will still preserve his true religion, though perhaps among the poor and despised alone.—As the Lord "spared "not the angels, that sinned;" as he has doomed the whole race of fallen men to the grave, and all unbelievers to hell; and as "he spared not his own Son, but delivered "him up for us all;" we need not wonder at any desolation or miseries which, for sin, he may see good to bring upon guilty nations and churches.

V. 22—30.

The secret working of Providence disappoints the politick or humane purposes, of such as purpose to spare those whom God intends to destroy: and, while some are left to their ungoverned passions, and others to their groundless fears and infatuated devices, "his counsel shall stand, and "he will do all his pleasure."—No state of misery on earth can be called absolutely hopeless or comfortless. In hell alone this blackness of darkness is to be found for ever. During our most dismal and tedious nights of adversity, we may hope for the cheerful dawning of prosperous days; especially, if our afflictions lead us to repentance: for God has all hearts in his hands, and, as he sees good, can incline them to kindness.—The believer in this world is, as it were, imprisoned with sins, temptations, and tribulations, sometimes for many a tedious year: but death, as the servant of Jesus Christ, comes for his enlargement. Then, the prison-door is opened, his fetters are loosed, his prison-garments changed for the robes of salvation and glory; his head is lifted up, and his throne advanced above the chief of the kings of the earth; and he shall be eternally feasted upon the fulness of joy, which is to be found in the presence and favour of the Almighty. Indeed, even here, the Saviour grants to the trembling, distressed, and enslaved sinner, who comes and trusts in him, a blessed release from condemnation and bondage: he bestows on him liberty, change of raiment, royal immunities, and heavenly provisions, day by day; and these are intended as earnests and foretastes of those "pleasures, "which are at his right hand for evermore." In short, sin alone can hurt us, and Jesus alone can do good to sinners. May God help us to believe; and to wait, in patient hope, for the blessed season, when, being made more than conquerors by his grace, we shall "sit down with the Saviour "upon his throne, even as he hath overcome, and hath sat "down with the Father upon his throne!"

THE FIRST BOOK

OF THE

CHRONICLES.

IT is generally agreed, that the books of the Chronicles were compiled by Ezra, after the Babylonish captivity; and that they consist of extracts from the publick records of the Jews, and the writings of preceding prophets. Some passages appear to have been inserted in the very words of the original record, which was written before the captivity; and a few names seem to have been added to the genealogies, after the death of Ezra. (1 *Chr.* iii. 19—24.) The original name is (דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים) *The words of the days,* which signifies *Journals,* or *Annals;* and it is not improperly rendered *Chronicles,* or *Records of the times.* Anciently, the whole formed but one book in the Hebrew Bible; but the Septuagint divide it into two, and call them *The Books of things which had been left out:* yet this is less proper than the original name; for there are many *repetitions* of facts before recorded, as well as further historical information. These repetitions, however, must not be deemed superfluous; for most of them in some degree, and some of them exceedingly, elucidate the preceding history: and the few, that seem not wanted in this respect, are suited to connect the whole into one narration, without referring to other books; which would be peculiarly useful, when copies of the whole Scriptures were both scarce and expensive.—In the genealogies there are several *literal* or *verbal* variations, from those found in other parts of Scripture: but it is evident, that many persons had more than one name, and were called by one or the other indiscriminately; and the spelling and pronunciation, in most languages, change considerably in a course of years. Some variations in the numerals have already been noted; and we are sometimes constrained to allow, that, probably, a trivial error of the transcriber has taken place: but there is no variation, which in the least interferes with our faith or practice, or weakens the external or internal evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scripture in general, or of these books in particular.—It was evidently a principal design of the sacred writer, in these records, to bring into one view, and comprise in a narrow compass, whatever immediately related to the nation of Israel, to each of the twelve tribes, and to the family of David, with reference to the settlement in the land after the captivity; and to ascertain the descent of the promised Messiah: and in both these respects, the genealogies would be very useful. Until Christ came, all the genealogies of that nation were preserved correct and authentick: but since that period, the Jews have none which can be depended on. The types were then fulfilled in the great Antitype; the kingdom and priesthood were permanently united in his person; and the nation soon forfeited their peculiar temporal advantages, by rejecting their King: and as their genealogies were no further needful, they were left to be involved in oblivion or uncertainty.—Many things might be very plain and useful to the ancient Jews, which appear obscure and uninteresting to us. Should it be allowed, that a small part of the Scripture was profitable to the church in some ages and places, but not at all in others, it would be no impeachment of the divine wisdom and goodness: and if we cannot understand or get any benefit from certain portions; it is more reasonable to blame our own dulness, than, so much as in thought, to censure them as useless.—The first book commences with genealogies from Adam, till long after the captivity; many of which are collected from other parts of Scripture. The advancement of David to the throne upon Saul's death, is next related: and a much fuller account is given of his internal government of the kingdom; especially, in the regulation concerning the priests and Levites, in the service of the sanctuary; the preparation that he made for the building of the temple; and the exhortations to Solomon his successor, and to the elders of Israel with which he closed his days, than in the preceding histories. And the sacred writer seems to have dwelt on these subjects the more fully, in order to stir up a holy emulation in his contemporaries, in restoring the worship at the temple to its ancient order and purity. So that in this book, "the man after God's "own heart" shines much brighter, than in the second book of Samuel, and the beginning of the first of Kings.—The genealogies, given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, may be supposed to refer in many respects to those in this book. And when it is said that Zacharias was "of the course of Abia," the reference is still more indisputable. (xxiv. 10. *Luke* i. 5.)—The prophecies contained in it coincide indeed with those in the second of Samuel and in the Psalms; and therefore cannot be adduced as full proofs of its divine inspiration: but the sentiments which pervade it are perfectly scriptural; and we are sure it formed a part of the Jewish Scriptures, when our Saviour and his apostles appealed to them, as "The oracles of God."

CHAP. I.

The genealogy, from Adam to Noah and his sons, 1—4. The sons of Japheth, 5—7: of Ham, 8—16; and of Shem, 17—23. A genealogy from Shem to Abraham and his sons, 24—28. The sons of Ishmael, 29—31: and of Keturah, 32, 33. The posterity of Abraham by Esau, 34—37. The sons of Seir, 38—42. The kings and dukes of Edom, 43—54.

ADAM, [a] Sheth, [b] Enosh,
2 [c] Kenan, [d] Mahalaleel, [e] Jered,
3 [f] Henoch, [g] Methuselah, [h] Lamech,
4 [i] Noah, [k] Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

5 ¶ The [l] sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

6 And the sons of Gomer; [m] Ashchenaz, and * Riphath, and Togarmah.

7 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and [n] Tarshish, [o] Kittim, and † Dodanim.

8 ¶ The [p] sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, [q] Put, and Canaan.

9 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

10 And [r] Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be mighty upon the earth.

11 And [s] Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,

12 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and [t] Caphthorim.

13 And [u] Canaan begat Zidon his first-born, and [x] Heth,

14 The [y] Jebusite also, and [z] the Amorite, and [a] the Girgashite,

15 And [b] the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

16 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the [c] Hamathite.

17 ¶ The [d] sons of Shem; [e] Elam, and [f] Asshur, and Arphaxad, and [g] Lud, and [h] Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and [i] Meshech.

18 And Arphaxad begat [j] Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber.

19 And unto [k] Eber were born two sons: the name of the one *was* ‡ Peleg, (because in his days the earth was divided,) and his brother's name *was* Joktan.

20 And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and [l] Hazermaveth, and Jerah,

21 Hadoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah,

22 And [m] Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

23 And [n] Ophir, and [o] Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan.

24 ¶ [p] Shem, Arphaxad, [q] Shelah,
25 [r] Eber, [s] Peleg, [t] Reu,
26 [u] Serug, [x] Nahor, [y] Terah,
27 [z] Abram, the same *is* Abraham.

28 ¶ The sons of Abraham; [a] Isaac, and [b] Ishmael.

29 ¶ These *are* their generations: [c] The firstborn of Ishmael, [d] Nebaioth; then [e] Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

a Gen. iv. 25, 26. v. 3. 8. Luke iii. 38. *Seth.*
b Gen. v. 9—11. Luke iii. 38. *Enos.*
c Gen. v. 12—14. Luke iii. 37. *Cainan.*
d Gen. v. 15—17. Luke iii. 37. *Maleleel.*
e Gen. v. 18—20. Luke iii. 37. *Jared.*
f Gen. v. 21—24. Heb. xi. 5. Jude 14. *Enoch.*
g Gen. v. 25—27. Luke iii. 37. *Mathusala.*
h Gen. v. 28—31. Luke iii. 36. B. C. 2348.
i Gen. v. 32. vi. 8, 9. vii. 1. ix. 29. Is. liv. 9, 10. Ez. xiv. 14. Matt. xxiv. 37, 38. Luke iii. 36. xvii. 26, 27. *Noe.* Heb. xi. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 5.
k Gen. v. 32. vi. 10. ix. 18.
l Gen. x. 1—5. Ez. xxvii. 13. xxxviii. 2, 3. 6. xxxix. 1.
m Gen. x. 3. *Ashkenaz.*
* Or, *Diphath*, as in some copies.
n Ps. lxxii. 10. Is. lxvi. 19.
o Num. xxiv. 24. Is. xxiii. 1. 12. Jer. ii. 10. Ez. xxvii. 6. Dan. xi. 30. *Chittim.*
† Or, *Rodanim*, as in some copies.
p Gen. x. 6, 7.
q Gen. x. 6. *Phut.*
r Gen. x. 8—12. Mic. v. 6.
s Gen. x. 13, 14.
t Deut. ii. 23. Jer. xlvii. 4. Am. ix. 7.
u Gen. ix. 22. 25, 26. x. 15—19. *Sidon.*
x Gen. xxiii. 3. 5. 20. xxvii. 46. xlix. 30—32. Ex. xxiii. 28. Josh. ix. 1. 2 Sam. xi. 6.
y Gen. xv. 21. Ex. xxxiii. 2. xxxiv. 11. Judg. i. 21. xix. 11. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Zech. ix. 7.
z Gen. xlviii. 22. Num. xxi. 21—32. Deut. xx. 17. Josh. iii. 10. xxiv. 15. 2 Sam. xxi. 2. 2 Kings xxi. 11. Am. ii. 9.
a Gen. xv. 21. Deut. vii. 1. Josh. iii. 10. Neh. ix. 8.
b Ex. iii. 8. 17. xiii. 5. 1 Kings ix. 20.
c Num. xxxiv. 8. 1 Kings viii. 65.
d Gen. x. 22—32. xi. 10.
e Gen. xiv. 1. Is. xi. 11. xxi. 2. xxii. 6. Jer. xxv. 25. Ez. xxxii. 24. Dan. viii. 2.
f Num. xxiv. 22—24. Ezra iv. 2. Ps. lxxxiii. 8. *Assur.* Ez. xxvii. 23. xxxii. 22. Hos. xiv. 3.
g Is. lxvi. 19. Ez. xxvii. 10.
h Num. xxiii. 7.
i Gen. x. 23. *Mash.*
j Gen. x. 24. xi. 12—15. *Salah.*
k Gen. x. 21. 25. xi. 16, 17. Num. xxiv. 24.
‡ That is, *Division.*
l Gen. x. 26, 27. *Hazarmaveth.*
m Gen. x. 28. *Obal.*
n Gen. x. 29. 1 Kings ix. 28. x. 11. 1 Chr. xxix. 4. Job xxii. 24. Ps. xlv. 9. Is. xiii. 12.
o Gen. ii. 11. xxv. 18. 1 Sam. xv. 7.
p Gen. xi. 10—26.
q Luke iii. 35. *Sala.*
r Luke iii. 35. *Heber.*
s Luke iii. 35. *Phalec.*
t Luke iii. 35. *Ragau.*
u Luke iii. 35. *Saruch.*
x Luke iii. 34. *Nachor.*
y Luke iii. 34. *Thara.*
z Gen. xi. 27—32. xvii. 5. Josh. xxiv. 2. Neh. ix. 7. 3—5. 12.
a Gen. xvii. 19—21. xxi. 3—5. 12.
b Gen. xvi. 11—16. xxi. 9, 10.
c Gen. xxv. 12—16. xxviii. 9. *Nebajoth.* Is. lx. 7.
d Gen. e Ps. cxx. 4. Cant. i. 5. Is. xxi. 17.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. This chapter consists wholly of extracts, and abridgments of genealogies, from the book of Genesis: though several names are spelt differently, and some are changed. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The original of Israel, and indeed of the whole human race, is in these verses derived from the first man, whom God created; and this rational account may be considered, as an intended refutation of all the fabulous, obscure, and absurd pretensions, advanced in this respect, by many pagan nations. (*Notes, Gen.* i. 1. 26—28. ii. 4. 7. v. 1, 2.) 'No book in the 'world shews the original propagation of mankind, but 'only the holy scriptures. They who were ignorant of 'them, having nothing of true antiquity, devised senseless 'fables of their descent, they knew not how, nor from 'whom.... This was the peculiar glory of the Jewish nation, 'that they alone were able to derive their pedigree from 'the first man that God created; of which no other nation 'could boast, or make a shadow of pretence.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5—23. (*Notes, Gen.* ix. 24—29. x.) This short review, of the peopling of the earth by the sons of Noah, might be intended to intimate, that we are all of one blood and nature, though of different families.

V. 24—27. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen.* xi. 10—32. xvii. 5, 6.) 'Shem... was the most eminent of Noah's sons, whom 'he solemnly blessed; the Messiah being to spring from 'him. (*Gen.* ix. 26.) For from Adam the promise of the 'Messiah was translated to Seth; and from Seth to Shem; 'from Shem to Eber; from whom the Hebrew nation, 'some think, derived their name; and had this precious 'promise committed to their trust, above all other nations 'in the world.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Gen.* xi. 6—9.)

V. 28—33. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen.* xvi. 12. xvii. 18—21. xxi. 20, 21. xxv. 1—6. 16. 18.

30 Mishma, and [f] Dumah, Massa,
[*] Or, *Hadar.* Gen. xxv. 15. * Hadad, and Tema,
31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.

[g] Gen. xxv. 1—4. B. C. 1853. 32 ¶ Now [g] the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and
[h] Gen. xxxvii. 28. Ex. ii. 15, 16. Num. xxii. 4—7. xxv. 6. xxxi. 2, Judg. vi. 1—6. [h] Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; [i] Sheba, and
[i] 1 Kings x. 1. Job vi. 19. Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. Is. lx. 6. [j] Is. xxi. 13. Jer. xxv. 23. xlix. 8. Ez. xxv. 13. xxvii. 20. [j] Dedan.

[k] Is. lx. 6. 33 And the sons of Midian; [k] Ephah, and Epher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these *are* the sons of Keturah.

[l] Gen. xxi. 2, 3. Matt. i. 2. Luke iii. 34. Acts vii. 8. 34 ¶ And [l] Abraham begat Isaac. [m] The sons of Isaac; Esau, and [n] Israel.
[m] Gen. xxv. 24—28. Mal. i. 2—4. Rom. ix. 10—13. [n] Gen. xxxii. 28. 35 The [o] sons of Esau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

[o] Gen. xxxvi. 4, 5. 9, 10. [p] 53. Gen. xxxvi. 11—15. Jer. xlix. 7. 20. Am. i. 12. Ob. 9. Hab. iii. 3. [q] Gen. xxxvi. 15. *Zepho.* 36 The sons of Eliphaz; [p] Teman, and Omar, [q] Zephi, and Gatan, Kenaz, and Timna, and Amalek.

37 The sons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

[r] Gen. xxxvi. 20. 29, 30. 38 ¶ And [r] the sons of Seir; Lotan, and [s] Shobal, and Zibeon, and
[s] Gen. xxxvi. 21. *Ezer.* Anah, and Dishon, and [s] Ezar and Dishan.

[t] Deut. ii. 12. 22. 39 And the sons of Lotan; [t] Hori, and [u] Homam: and Timna *was* Lotan's sister.
[u] Gen. xxxvi. 22. *Heman.*

[v] Gen. xxxvi. 23. *Alvan—Shepho.* 40 The sons of Shobal; [v] Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. And the sons of Zibeon;
[x] Gen. xxxvi. 24. *Ajah.* [x] Aiah, and Anah.

[y] Gen. xxxvi. 25. 41 The sons of Anah; [y] Dishon.
[z] Gen. xxxvi. 26. *Hemdan.* And the sons of Dishon; [z] Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

42 The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and
[a] Gen. xxxvi. 27. *Zaavan—Achan.* [a] Zavan, *and* Jakan. The sons of
[b] Gen. xxxvi. 28. Lam. iv. 21. Dishan; [b] Uz, and Aran.

43 ¶ Now these *are* [c] the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before *any* king reigned over the children of Israel; Bela the son of Beor: and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah.
[c] Gen. xxxvi. 31—39. xlix. 10. Num. xxiv. 17—19.

44 And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of [d] Bozrah reigned in his stead.
[d] Is. xxxiv. 6. lxiii. 1. Jer. xlix. 13. Am. i. 12. Mic ii. 12.

45 And when Jobab was dead, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead.

46 And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad, which smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith.

47 And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

48 And when Samlah was dead, [e] Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.
[e] Gen. xxxvi. 37. *Saul.*

49 And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

50 And when Baal-hanan was dead, Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* [f] Pai; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.
[f] Gen. xxxvi. 39 *Pau.*

51 Hadad died also. And the dukes of Edom were; Duke Timnah, duke [g] Aliah, duke Jetheth,
[g] Gen. xxxvi. 40. *Alvah.*

52 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

53 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

54 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram. [h] These *are* the dukes of Edom.
[h] Gen. xxxvi. 41—43.

V. 34—37. *Notes, Gen.* xxv. 20—34. xxxvi. 1—19.—*Timna, and Amalek.* (36) Timna was concubine to Eliphaz, and mother of Amalek. (*Gen.* xxxvi. 12.) The words here, therefore, seem to mean, *Of Timna, Amalek* (39).

V. 38—42. *Notes, Gen.* xxxvi. 20. 24.

V. 43—54. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen.* xxxvi. 31—43.) When the sacred historian had given the genealogy of Abraham, the father of the faithful; he briefly mentions Abraham's descendants by Ishmael, by Keturah, and by Esau, with some coincident matters: but he speedily leaves these subjects, to confine himself to the chosen people of God, and the line of the Saviour; in comparison with whom, the nations most renowned for arts or arms seem entirely disregarded.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As we are descended from that "one man, by whom "sin and death entered into the world;" so we all resemble and imitate him: and this should remind us how sinful and frail we are; and excite us to repent, to valuc the Saviour, to despair of happiness in this miserable world, to seek those things which are above, and habitually to prepare to meet death, who is, to all unbelievers, "the "king of terrors." For, as an invincible conqueror, he has already transmitted the bodies of innumerable millions to the grave, and their souls to the tribunal of God and to the eternal world; and is even now ready to deal with us in like manner. (*Note, Rom.* v. 20, 21.) But while we

CHAP. II.

The sons of Israel, 1, 2: of Judah, 3—12: of Jesse, 13—17: of Caleb, the son of Hezron, 18—20: of Hezron, by the daughter of Machir, 21—24: and of Jerahmeel, Hezron's son, 25—33. The posterity of Shesham, by his daughter, 34—41. Another branch of Caleb's posterity, 42—49. The sons of Caleb, the son of Hur, 50—54. The families of the Kenites, 55.

THESE *are* the sons of [*] Israel; [b] Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun,

2 Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin; Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

3 The sons of Judah; [c] Er, and Onan, and Shelah: *which* three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua, the Canaanitess. And Er the first-born of Judah was evil in the sight of the LORD, and he slew him.

4 And [d] Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him [e] Pharez and [f] Zerah. All the sons of Judah *were* five.

5 The sons of Pharez; [g] Hezron, and Hamul.

6 And the sons of Zerah; [h] Zimri, and [i] Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all.

7 And the sons of [k] Carmi; [l] Achar the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing [m] accursed.

8 And the sons of Ethan; Azariah.

9 The sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him; [n] Jerahmeel, and [o] Ram, and [p] Chelubai.

10 And Ram begat [q] Amminadab, and Amminadab begat [r] Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah;

11 And Nahshon begat [s] Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,

12 And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat [t] Jesse,

13 ¶ And Jesse begat [u] his first-born [v] Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and [x] Shimma the third,

14 Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,

15 Ozem the sixth, [y] David the seventh:

16 Whose sisters *were* Zeruiah, and Abigail. And [z] the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three.

17 And Abigail bare [a] Amasa: and the father of Amasa *was* [b] Jether the Ishmaelite.

* Or, *Jacob.* Gen. xxxii. 28. xlix. 2.
b Gen. xxix. 32—35. xxx. 5—24. xxxv. 18. 23—26. xlvi. 8, &c. xlix. 4—28. Ex. i. 2—4. Num. i. 5—15. xiii. 4—15 xxvi. 5, &c. Rev. vii. 5—8.
c ix. 5. Gen. xxxviii. 2—10. xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 19, 20.
d Gen. xxxviii. 13—30. Ruth iv. 12. Matt. i. 3. *Thamar.*
e ix. 4 Num xxvi. 21. Ruth iv. 18. Neh. xi. 4. *Perez.* Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Phares.*
f ix. 6. Num. xxvi. 13. 20. Neh. xi. 24. Matt. i. 3. *Zara.*
g Gen. xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 21. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Esrom.*
h Josh. vii. 1. 17, 18. *Zabdi.*
i 1 Kings iv. 31. *Darda.*
k iv. 1. 1 Josh. vii. 1—5. *Achan.*
m Deut. vii. 26 xiii. 17. Josh. vi. 18. vii. 11—15. xxii. 20.
n 25—33.
o Ruth iv. 19. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Aram.*
p 18, 19. 24. 42. *Caleb.*
q Ruth iv. 20. Matt. i. 4. Luke iii. 33. *Aminadab.*
r Num. i. 7. ii. 3. vii. 12. 17. x. 14. Ruth iv. 20. Matt. i. 4. Luke iii. 32. *Naasson.*
s Ruth iv. 21. Matt. i. 4, 5. Luke iii. 32. *Salmon—Booz.*
t x. 14. Ruth iv. 22. 1 Sam. xvii. 1. Is. xi. 1. 10. Matt. i. 5. Luke iii. 32. Acts xiii. 22. Rom. xv. 12. B. C. 1090.
u 1 Sam. xvi. 6. xvii. 13. 28.
v xxvii. 18. *Elihu.*
x xx. 7. *Shimea.* 1 Sam. xvi. 9. *Shammah.*
y 1 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. xvii. 12—14.
z 1 Sam. xxvi. 6. 2 Sam. ii. 18—23. iii. 39. xvi. 9—11. xix. 22.
a 2 Sam. xvii. 25. xix. 13. xx. 4—12. 1 Kings ii. 5. 32.
b 2 Sam. xvii. 25. *Ithra an Israelite.*

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are spared, we should regard every human being, as a brother, a fellow-sinner, and a fellow-sufferer, without respect to climate, complexion, party, character, or even personal injuries: and, with expanded benevolence and compassion we should aim to alleviate misery, to increase comfort, to promote peace, and to be instrumental to the salvation of men, by our example, prayers, and the improvement of our several talents.—Short is our passage through time into eternity:—we are no sooner born, than we begin to die; and all earthly distinctions will speedily be reduced to a level, as the rough weed, the green blade, and the gaudy flower fall before the indiscriminating scythe! May we then be distinguished as the Lord's people, who are his portion, and whom he delights to honour and bless.—The inconceivable multitudes of the human race, which have peopled or shall people the earth through successive generations, will ere long assemble before the judgment-seat of Christ, and be divided as easily, and as certainly, "as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the "goats:" then the wicked "shall go away into everlast-"ing punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." May we then so "look for these things, as to give dili-"gence that we may be found of him in peace, without "spot and blameless!"

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. *Notes Gen.* xxix. 32—35. xxx. 1—24. xxxii. 28. xxxv. 17, 18.

V. 3, 4. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxviii.) The descendants of Judah are first mentioned; for that tribe (like him who was to spring from it) was in all respects to have the pre-eminence. (*Notes, Gen.* xlix. 8—10.)—*Shelah.* (3) *Note,* iv. 21.

V. 5, 6. *Marg. Ref.—The sons of Zerah,* &c. (6) It is uncertain, whether Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, the sons of Mahol, of whom we read, (1 *Kings* iv. 31,) were remote and eminent descendants of Zerah; or whether different persons, bearing nearly the same names, are there intended.

V. 7. (*Notes, Josh.* vii. 1. 10—24.) Achan, who sinned in the accursed thing, is here called *Achar,* or *the troubler;* with reference to Joshua's words to him. (*Note, Josh.* vii. 25, 26.) Carmi is said in Joshua to be the son of Zabdi, who is here called Zimri (6).—The genealogies of Judah are very copious: because David, the progenitor of the Messiah, was of that tribe; and the whole nation of the Jews, to this day, is composed of such as either descended from Judah, or incorporated with those who did. (*Note, 2 Kings* xvi. 6.)

V. 8. "Sons" here signifies *descendants.* These might be numerous, though but one son is mentioned.

V. 9—12. Hezron, the son of Pharez (5). (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ruth* iv. 17—22.)

V. 15. Jesse had eight sons; (1 *Sam.* xvi. 10;) but it is probable, that one died before David came to the throne. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. Jether is generally supposed to have been an

B. C. 1470.
c 9. *Chelubai.* 42.
18 ¶ And [c] Caleb the son of Hezron begat *children* of Azubah *his* wife, and of Jerioth: her sons *are* these; Jesher, and Shobab, and Ardon.

19 And when Azubah was dead,
d 24. 50. iv. 4. Mic. v. 2. *Ephratah.*
Caleb took unto him [d] Ephrath, which bare him Hur.

20 And Hur begat Uri, and Uri
e Ex. xxxi. 2. xxxvi. 1, 2. xxxvii. 1. xxxviii. 22. 2 Chr. i. 5.
begat [e] Bezaleel.

21 And afterwards Hezron went in
f Gen. l. 23. Num. xxvi. 29. xxvii. 1. xxxii. 39, 40. Deut. iii. 15.
to the daughter of [f] Machir, the father of Gilead, whom he [*] married when he *was* threescore years old, and she bare him Segub.
* Heb. *took.*

22 And Segub begat
g Num. xxxii. 41. Deut. iii. 14. Josh. xiii. 30.
[g] Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead.

h Josh. xiii. 13.
23 And he took [h] Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath and the towns thereof, *even* threescore cities: all these *belonged to* the sons of Machir the father of Gilead.

24 And after that Hezron was dead
i 9. 18, 19. 1 Sam. xxx. 14.
j iv. 5.
in [i] Caleb-ephratah, then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him [j] Ashur, the father
k 2 Sam. xiv. 2. Am. i. 1.
of [k] Tekoa.

l 9.
25 ¶ And the sons of [l] Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were Ram, the first-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, *and* Ahijah.

26 Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name *was* Atarah, she *was* the mother of Onam.

m 25.
27 And the sons of [m] Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker.

28 And the sons of [n] Onam were
n 26.
Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur.

29 And the name of the wife of Abishur *was* Abihail; and she bare him Ahban, and Molid.

30 And the sons of [o] Nadab; Seled,
o 28.
and Appaim: but Seled died without children.

31 And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And
p 34, 35.
[p] the children of Sheshan; Ahlai.

32 And the sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai; Jethur, and Jonathan: and Jethur died without children.

33 And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

34 ¶ Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters: and Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Jarha.

35 And
q 31.
[q] Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, and she bare him Attai.

36 And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat
r xi. 41.
[r] Zabad,

37 And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed,

38 And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah,

39 And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah,

40 And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum,

41 And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.

Ishmaelite by birth, but an *Israelite* by religion. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 25.)

V. 18—20. This Caleb, or Chelubai (9), was not the same as Caleb the son of Jephunneh, whose posterity is afterwards mentioned. (iv. 15.) He must have lived some time before Israel left Egypt; as Bezaleel, who was the principal person employed in constructing the tabernacle, was his great grandson; the son of Uri, the son of Hur, the son of Caleb. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Ex.* xxxi. 1—5.)

V. 21. "The father of Gilead" means, the prince of Gilead, or the father of a large portion of the inhabitants. The term occurs frequently in this sense, throughout the subsequent genealogies; as the reader will readily perceive by consulting the marginal references. (*Notes*, 42—53.)

V. 22. Jair was descended by his father from Judah, and properly belonged to that tribe: but Hezron, his grandfather, married a wife of the tribe of Manasseh; and Jair, as descended from her, united himself to that tribe, and at length inherited among them. (*Note*, *Num.* xxxii. 41.)

V. 23. Jair seems to have taken Geshur, Aram, and some other places, from those who before possessed them. (*Num.* xxxii. 39—42. *Deut.* iii. 14. *Josh.* xiii. 29—32.)

V. 24. Ashur was the posthumous son of Hezron, by Abiah, whom he married in his old age (21). But he became a man of consequence; and his descendants principally peopled, or ruled over, Tekoa.

V. 25—33. Nothing further is recorded of the persons mentioned in these verses. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 34—41. It does not appear that Sheshan had more than one daughter, whom he gave in marriage to his servant, an Egyptian; who, it is probable, was a proselyte to the true religion, and had been faithful to him. But, as a numerous progeny might spring from this one daughter, the plural number is used, as it was before observed to be in the case of sons. (*Note*, 8.)

42 ¶ Now the sons of [s] Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, *were* Mesha [t] his first-born, which *was* the father of [u] Ziph: and the sons of Mareshah, [x] the father of Hebron.

43 And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.

44 And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkoam; and Rekem begat Shammai.

45 And the son of Shammai *was* Maon: and Maon *was* the father of [y] Beth-zur.

46 And Ephah, [z] Caleb's concubine, bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez.

47 And the sons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph.

48 Maachah, Caleb's [a] concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah.

49 She bare also Shaaph [b] the father of [c] Madmannah, Sheva the father of Macbenah, and the father of [d] Gibea: and the daughter of Caleb *was* Achsa.

50 ¶ These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the first-born [e] of Ephratah; Shobal the father of [f] Kirjath-jearim;

51 Salma [g] the father of [h] Beth-lehem, Hareph the father of Beth-gader.

52 And Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had sons; [*] Haroeh, *and* [†] half of the Manahethites.

53 And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the [i] Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites: of them came [k] the Zareathites, and the Eshtaulites.

54 The sons of Salma; [l] Beth-lehem, and the [m] Netophathites, [‡] Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, the Zorites.

55 And the families of [n] the scribes which dwelt at [o] Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, *and* Suchathites. These *are* [p] the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of [q] Rechab.

s 9. *Chelubai.* 18, 19. 24.
t Gen. xlix. 3. Ex. iv. 22, 23. Rom. viii, 29. Heb. xii. 23.
u Josh. xv. 24. 1 Sam. xxiii. 19. xxvi. 1.
x 23, 24. 45. 49. 52. viii. 29. Ezra ii. 21—35. Neh. vii. 25—38.
y Josh. xv. 58.
z 18, 19. 48.
a 43. Gen. xxv. 5, 6.
b *See on* 42.
c Josh. xv. 31. Is. x. 31. *Madmenah.*
d Josh. xv. 57. 2 Sam. xxi. 6. *Gibeah.*
e 19, 20. *Ephrath.*
f 53. xiii. 5, 6. Josh. xv. 9. 60. 1 Sam. vii. 1.
g iv. 4.
h Gen. xxxv. 19 Ruth. i. 19. ii. 4. iv. 11. Matt. ii. 1. 6. John vii. 42.
* Or, *Reaiah.* iv. 2.
† Or, *half of the Menuchites,* or, *Hatsi-hammenuchoth.*
i xi. 40. 2 Sam. xxiii. 38.
k Josh. xv. 33. xix. 41. Judg. xiii. 2. 25. xvi. 31.
l 51.
m xi. 30. 2 Sam. xxiii. 29. Ezra ii. 22. Neh. vii. 26. xii. 28.
‡ Or, *Atarites,* or, *crowns of the house of Joab.* Josh. xvi. 2.
n Ezra vii. 6. Jer. viii. 8.
o iv. 9, 10.
p Judg. i. 16. iv. 11. 1 Sam. xv. 6.
q 2 Kings x. 15. Jer. xxxv. 2—9. 19.

V. 42—49. This Caleb, being the brother of Jerahmeel, was the same person of whom we read before. His children by Azubah and by Ephrath, had been enumerated: (*Note*, 18—20:) so that "Mesha, his first-born," seems to have been born to him by another wife, whom he married before either Azubah or Ephrath.—The Jews, when they returned from the captivity, were principally of the tribe of Judah: and so these genealogies might be exceedingly useful to them. No doubt they were extracted from ancient publick records of allowed authenticity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

The cities, of which these persons are said to have been fathers, were all situated in Judah; and this confirms the preceding interpretation. (*Note*, 21.)

Achsa. (49) "Caleb the son of Jephunneh" had a daughter called Achsa, who was married to Othniel, at the time when Joshua completed the division of the land. (*Notes, Josh.* xv. 16—19.) But Caleb the son of Hezron lived some ages before: (*Note*, 18—20:) and his daughter Achsa was a different person.

V. 50. Caleb, here spoken of, was the grandson of him before mentioned, and brother to Uri, the father of Bezaleel; the same as erected the tabernacle. (9. 18, 19. 42.)

V. 52, 53. The inhabitants of these cities consisted in general of Shobal's descendants; or they were the principal persons among them. This seems to be equivalent to the phrase, "the father of Ziph, of Beth-lehem, &c." (42, 43.)

V. 54. The word, rendered "the house of Joab," seems to be a proper name, *Beth-joab;* for a place, not a family, is evidently meant.—'Beth-joab; so these words, we 'translate "the house of Joab" should be rendered; 'for he is not speaking of Joab's family, but of Caleb's.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 55. *The Kenites,* &c.] (*Notes, Judg.* i. 16. iv. 11. *Jer.* xxxv. 1—7. 18, 19.) It seems that some of the Kenites, the posterity of Hobab, incorporated with Judah, and became expert in writing, and eminent in their knowledge of the law of God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No length of time will expunge the guilt or infamy of those, who do evil in the sight of the Lord, are troublers of his people, and die in their sins. But, as the Saviour was pleased to assume human nature, by descent through so many a heinous transgressor, and thus to be "made in "the likeness of sinful flesh," as well as a sacrifice for sin, all manner of wickedness shall be purged away from those who believe in his name.—Frequently the last become first, and the first last; and atrocious sinners have in every age been transformed into the most eminent believers.—Difficulties, blemishes, and disgraces in the beginnings of life, or on the entrance of any undertaking; and remarkable blots in the origin of families; have often proved as foils to the lustre, success, or eminence, with which they were afterwards favoured. In the same wise, righteous, and merciful sovereignty, the Lord advances or depresses the branches of families; prospers or renders unsuccessful our temporal pursuits; replenishes or diminishes our households, and renders them a comfort or a trial to us. Submission to his will is our duty and wisdom; but it is the privilege of the true believer alone to maintain this happy frame of mind. In Christ, however, there is nei

CHAP. III.

The sons of David, 1—9. His line to Zedekiah, 10—16. The sons and successors of Jeconiah, 17—24.

a 2 Sam. iii. 2—5. NOW these were [a] the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; b 2 Sam. xiii. 1. 29. the first-born, [b] Amnon, of [c] Ahinoam c 1 Sam. xxv. 43. xxvii. 3. the [d] Jezreelitess; the second, [e] Daniel, d Josh. xv. 56. e 2 Sam. iii. 3. *Chileab.* f 1 Sam. xxv. 39 —42. [f] of Abigail the Carmelitess.

g 2 Sam. xiii. 1. 20—28. 38. xviii. 14. 18. 33. xix. 4 —10. 2 The third, [g] Absalom the son of Maachah, the daughter of Talmai king of [h] Geshur; the fourth, [i] Adonijah the son of Haggith;

h ii. 23. Josh. xiii. 13. 2 Sam. xiv. 23. 32. xv. 8. i 2 Sam. iii. 4. 1 Kings i. 5. ii. 24, 25. 3 The fifth, Shephatiah, of Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by [j] Eglah his wife.

j 2 Sam. iii. 5. 4 *These* six were born unto him in

k 2 Sam. ii. 11. v. 4, 5. 1 Kings ii. 11. Hebron; and [k] there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years.

l xiv. 4. 2 Sam. v. 14. *Shammuah.* m 2 Sam. vii. 2—4. xii. 1—15. Luke iii. 31. n xxviii. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. o 2 Sam. xi. 3. *Bath-sheba.* Matt. i. 6. p 2 Sam. xi. 3. *Eliam.* q xiv. 5. 2 Sam. v. 15. *Elishua.* r xiv. 5. *Elpalet.* s 2 Sam. v. 15, 16. 5 And these were born unto him in Jerusalem; [l] Shimea, and Shobab, and [m] Nathan, and [n] Solomon, four, of [o] Bathshua the daughter of [p] Ammiel:

6 Ibhar also, and [q] Elishama, and [r] Eliphelet,

7 And [s] Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

8 And Elishama, and [t] Eliada, and [u] Eliphelet, nine.

t xiv. 7. *Beeliada.* u xiv. 7. 2 Sam. v. 16. *Eliphalet.* x 2 Sam. v. 13. y 2 Sam. xiii. 1—20. z 1 Kings xi. 43. xiv. 31. Matt. i. 7. *Roboam.* a 1 Kings xv. 1. *Abijam.* 2 Chr. xiii. 1. *Abijah.* b 1 Kings xv. 8. 2 Chr. xiv. 1. c 1 Kings xv. 24. 2 Chr. xvii. 1. Matt. i. 8. *Josaphat.* d 1 Kings xxii. 50. 2 Chr. xxi. 1. *Jehoram.* e 2 Kings viii. 24. 2 Chr. xxi. 17. *Jehoahaz.* xxii. 1 6 *Azariah.* f 2 Kings xi. 21. 2 Chr. xxiv. 1. g 2 Kings xiv. 1. 2 Chr. xxv. 1. h 2 Kings xiv. 21. 2 Chr. xxvi. 1. *Uzziah.* Matt. i. 8, 9. *Ozias.* i 2 Kings xv. 5. 32. 2 Chr. xxvii. 1. Matt i. 9. *Joatham.* k 2 Kings xvi. 1. 2 Chr. xxviii. 1 —8. Matt. i. 9. *Achaz.* l 2 Kings xviii. 1. 2 Chr. xxix. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Ezekias.* m 2 Kings xxi. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 1. Matt. i. 10. *Manasses.* n 2 Kings xxi. 19. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 20, 21. o 2 Kings xxii. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1. Matt. i. 10, 11.

9 *These were* all the sons of David, beside the sons [x] of the concubines, and [y] Tamar their sister.

10 ¶ And Solomon's son *was* [z] Rehoboam; [a] Abia his son, [b] Asa his son, [c] Jehoshaphat his son,

11 [d] Joram his son, [e] Ahaziah his son, [f] Joash his son,

12 [g] Amaziah his son, [h] Azariah his son, [i] Jotham his son,

13 [k] Ahaz his son, [l] Hezekiah his son, [m] Manasseh his son,

14 [n] Amon his son, [o] Josiah his son.

15 And the sons of Josiah *were*, the first-born Johanan, the second [p] Jehoiakim, the third [q] Zedekiah, the fourth [r] Shallum.

16 And the sons of Jehoiakim; [s] Jeconiah his son, [t] Zedekiah his son.

17 And the sons of Jeconiah, Assir; [u] Salathiel his son,

18 Malchiram also, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.

Josias. p 2 Kings xxiii. 34. *Eliakim.* 2 Chr. xxxvi. 5. Jer. xxii. 18. xxiv. 17, 18. *Mattaniah.* 2 Chr. xxxvi. 11. r 2 Kings xxiii. 30. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 1. *Jehoahaz.* Jer. xxii. 11. s 2 Kings xxiv. 8. xxv. 27. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 9. *Jehoiachin.* Jer. xxii. 24. 28. *Coniah.* Matt. i. 11. *Jechonias.* t 15. u Ezra iii. 2. 8. v. 2. *Shealtiel.* Matt. i. 12.

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ther bond nor free, neither male nor female, neither Jew nor Gentile: all who come to him are equally welcome to his salvation; all are equally privileged, in proportion to their faith, love, and devotedness to him: and it is a peculiar favour for poor strangers to be made "scribes well "instructed in the kingdom of God," and to be fitted also for usefulness to others. In short, the whole, that is truly valuable, consists in the favour, peace, and image of God; and a life spent to his glory, and in promoting the welfare of our fellow-creatures.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—9. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* iii. 1—5. v. 13—16.) David's other sons by Bathshua, or Bath-sheba, are mentioned before Solomon, though younger than he; because the genealogy is resumed from him. Probably David called one of them Nathan, out of respect to the prophet of that name, whom he loved the better for his faithful reproof. Mary the mother of Jesus was descended from Nathan, not from Solomon. (*Notes, Luke* iii. 23—38.) The two sons, which are here mentioned, more than in Samuel, probably died young; as there are two called Elishama, and two Eliphelet. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It seems that David had children by his concubines, whose names are no where recorded.

V. 10—15. (*Marg. Ref.*) Johanan seems to have died young. Shallum is also called Jehoahaz. He was older than Zedekiah, though mentioned after him. (*Note, 2 Kings* xxiii. 29, 30, *v.* 30.)

V. 16. As the sons of Jeconiah are enumerated in the next verses, and as Zedekiah, a son of Jeconiah, is not elsewhere mentioned, it is thought by learned men, that "his son" here means *his successor.*

V. 17, 18. Many commentators take it for granted, that Salathiel, or Shealtiel, actually descended from Nathan, and was only the adoptive son of Jeconiah; that Solomon's line was extinct; and that Joseph, the husband of Mary, sprang from Nathan, as well as she. They ground this sentiment on these reasons: Jeremiah is supposed to have pronounced Jeconiah childless; but perhaps a satisfactory solution of that difficulty may be adduced. (*Note, Jer.* xxii. 28—30.) Again, it is argued, that St. Luke mentions Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel, in the genealogy of Mary. But to this it may be answered, that it is scarcely the shadow of an argument to say, because a father and son are of the same names in one genealogy, as they are in another, therefore they were the same persons, when no other part of the genealogy supports, or can possibly accord with, the conclusion. Salathiel, the father of Zorobabel, mentioned by St. Luke, was "the son of Rhesa, "the son of Joanna, the son of Judah;" this Salathiel was the "son of Assir, the son of Jeconiah."—'Rhesa, '(*Luke* iii. 27,) ... is not found among the eight children, 'that are here reckoned up.' *Bp. Patrick.* Matthew says, Jeconiah *begat* Salathiel; and it will be harsh to interpret

19 And the sons of Pedaiah *were*
x Ezra ii. 2. iii. 2. Hag. i. 12—14. ii. 2. 4. Zech. iv. 6—9. Matt. i. 12, 13. *Zorubabel.* x Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister:
20 And Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hesadiah, Jushab-hesed, five.
21 And the sons of Hananiah;
y Neh. x. 22. y Peletiah, and Jesaiah; the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnon, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah.
B. C. 430. 22 And the sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah: and the sons of Shemaiah;
z Ezra viii. 2. z Hattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.
23 And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and
* Or, *Hiskijahu.* * Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.
24 And the sons of Elioenai *were* Hodaiah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Delaiah, and Anani, seven.

CHAP. IV.

The posterity of Judah, in the line of Hezron, Carmi, and Hur, 1—4. The posterity of Ashur, Hezron's son, 5—8. Jabez, and his prayer, 9, 10. Other descendants of Judah by Pharez, 11—20. The posterity of Shelah, Judah's son, 21—23. The sons of Simeon and their cities, 24—38. They conquer Gedor and the Amalekites, 39—43.

THE sons of Judah; a Pharez, Hezron, and b Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal.
a ii. 5. Gen. xxxviii. 29. xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 20, 21. Ruth iv. 18. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33.—*Phares. Esrom.*
b ii. 9. *Chelubai.* ii. 18. *Caleb.* B. C. 1500.
2 And c Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath, and Jahath begat Ahumai and Lahad. These *are* the families of the d Zorathites.
c ii. 52. *Haroeh.*
d ii. 53, 54. Josh. xv. 33. Judg. xiii. 25.
3 And these *were of* the father of e Etam: Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister *was* Hazelelponi.
e Judg. xv. 11. 2 Chr. xi. 6.
4 And Penuel the father of f Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These *are* the sons of g Hur, the first-born of Ephratah, the father of Beth-lehem.
f 18. 39. Josh. xv. 36.
g ii. 19. 50.
5 ¶ And h Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.
h *See on* ii. 24.
6 And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These *were* the sons of Naarah.

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this of mere adoption, or of less than being his progenitor; and here are several other sons, or descendants, of Jeconiah mentioned, who cannot all have been adopted. Upon the whole it scarcely admits of a doubt, that the line from Solomon to Joseph was uninterrupted; and that the two families met in Jesus, the real son of Mary, and the supposed and legal son of Joseph. (*Notes, Matt.* i. 2—17. *Luke* iii. 23—38.)

V. 19—24. Perhaps Pedaiah was Salathiel's son, Jeconiah's grandson, and Zerubbabel's father: but, being of small note, his name is omitted in the other genealogies, which is a common case. Nothing is known except the names of the persons afterwards mentioned; but several of them must have lived a long time after the captivity, perhaps later than the days of Ezra. St. Matthew evidently deduces the line of Joseph from a different branch of the same stock: that is, from another branch of Zerubbabel's descendants. (*Matt.* i. 13—16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In the large families of wise, eminent, and pious men, many persons prove too insignificant to attract our notice, and others so vicious as to excite our grief and indignation. They therefore, who have no children, may hence learn submission to the will of God: for if, by that appointment, they are destitute of some comforts, they are also exempted from a variety of anxieties and trials. And those, to whom God has given children, may learn to bring up their offspring for him to the best of their power, recommending them to his care and blessing: nor should they indulge the hope of much comfort from them, any more than seek great things for them, in this vain and vexatious world. Yet, upon the whole, the attentive and accurate observer will perceive that the posterity of the righteous enjoy advantages, sometimes for many generations, in consequence of the piety of their progenitors: so that this is the best way of laying up an inheritance for our beloved offspring. —Nothing more distinguishes the real believer from the slave of sin, than the manner in which each of them behaves towards a faithful reprover: the former, upon reflection, will love and revere him as his best friend; the latter will habitually hate him as his enemy. (5. 2 *Sam.* xii. 1—7. 13. 1 *Kings* xxi. 20. xxii. 8. *Ps.* cxli. 5.) But all our gratitude to the instruments of our mercies should be ultimately directed to the glory of God: and all the prosperity of ourselves and our families will eventually terminate in misery, unless it centre in union with the Son of David, the King of Israel, and the Saviour of sinners.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. *Carmi* seems to mean the same person before called Chelubai, and Caleb. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, ii. 18—20. 42—49, *v.* 42.)

V. 2—4. The Zorathites were the inhabitants of Zorah: but they in general descended from Shobal, or were subject to him. "The father of Etam," seems to imply, that the persons spoken of were the sons of one, who was lord of Etam, and progenitor of its principal inhabitants.—Hur appears to have been the grandfather of Salma, who before was called the father of Beth-lehem. (*Note*, ii. 52, 53.)

V. 5—8. *Marg. Ref.*

h Gen. xxxiv. 19. Is. xliii. 4. Acts xvii. 11.
* That is, *Sorrowful.*
k vii. 23. Gen. iii. 16. xxxv. 18. 1 Sam. iv. 21.
l xvi. 8. Gen. xli. 8. Job xii. 4. Ps. lv. 16. xcix. 6. cxvi. 2—4. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Rom. x. 12—14. 1 Cor. i. 2.
m Gen. xxxii. 28. xxxiii. 20. 1 Sam. i. 17. Is. xli. 17.
† Heb. *If thou wilt, &c.* Luke xix. 42.
n Gen. xii. 2. xxxii. 26. Ps. lxxii. 17. Acts iii. 26. Eph. i. 3.
o Josh. xvii. 14—18. Judg. i. 27—36. Prov. x. 22.
p Ps. cxix. 173. Is. xli. 10. John x. 28.
q Gen. xlviii. 16. Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Matt. vi. 13. Rom. xii. 9. xvi. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 18.
‡ Heb. *do me.*
r Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. li. 8. 12. Matt. xxvi. 75. John xxi. 17. 2 Cor. ii. 1—7. Eph. iv. 30. Rev. iii. 19.
s 1 Kings iii. 7—13. Job xxii. 27, 28. Ps. xxi. 4. lxv. 2. lxvi. 19, 20. cxvi. 1, 2. Matt. vii. 7—11. Eph. iii. 20.
§ Or, *the city of Nahash.*
t Josh. xv. 17. Judg. i. 13. iii. 9—11.
‖ Or, *Hathath* and *Meonathai*, who *begat.*

7 And the sons of Helah *were* Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan.

8 And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.

9 ¶ And Jabez was [l]more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name *Jabez, saying, Because [k] I bare him with sorrow.

10 And Jabez [l]called on [m]the God of Israel, saying, [†] Oh, that thou wouldest [n]bless me indeed, and [o]enlarge my coast, and that [p]thine hand might be with me, and that [q]thou wouldest [‡] keep *me* from evil, [r]that it may not grieve me! And [s]God granted him that which he requested.

11 ¶ And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which *was* the father of Eshton.

12 And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah, the father of [§]Ir-nahash. These *are* the men of Rechah.

13 And the sons of [t]Kenaz; Othniel, and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; [‖]Hathath.

14 And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the *valley of [†]Charashim; for they were craftsmen.

15 And the sons of [u]Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of Elah, even [‡]Kenez.

16 And the sons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel.

17 And the sons of Ezra *were*, Jether, and Mered, and Epher, and Jalon: and she bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah the father of [v]Eshtemoa.

18 And his wife [§] Jehudijah bare Jered [x]the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of [y]Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these *are* the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.

19 And the sons of *his* wife [‖]Hodiah the sister of Naham, the father of [z]Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite.

20 And the sons of Shimon *were* Amnon and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were* Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth.

* Or, inhabitants *of the valley.*
† That is, *craftsmen.* 2 Kings xxiv. 14. Neh. xi. 35.
u Num. xiii. 6. 30. xiv. 6—10. 24. 30. Josh. xiv. 6—14. xv. 13—20. Judg. i. 12—14.
‡ Or, *Uknaz.*
v 19. vi. 57. Josh. xv. 50. *Eshtemoh.* xxi. 14. 1 Sam. xxx. 28.
§ Or, *the Jewess.*
x 4. 39. Josh. xv. 58.
y Josh. xv. 34, 35. 48. *Socoh.*
‖ Or, *Jehudijah.* 18.
z Josh. xv. 44. 1 Sam. xxiii. 1, &c.

V. 9, 10. Nothing is recorded concerning the parentage or family of this remarkable person: but, as he was eminent for valour, success, wisdom, or piety, it is probable, that the Jews did not want information concerning him. It must be supposed, that he lived soon after Israel took possession of Canaan; and when they were greatly straitened by the remains of the ancient inhabitants. His mother, having suffered much, in her pregnancy or travail, called him "Jabez," or, *Sorrowful;* (*marg.*) but her sorrow was emphatically turned into joy, if she lived to see how eminent and excellent a man he proved. His achievements are not recorded; but his prayers are, for our instruction and imitation. He was a genuine son of Jacob, who wrestled, and so prevailed with God, refusing to depart without a blessing, and on that account was surnamed Israel. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxii. 24—30.) From a full heart, Jabez earnestly intreated the God of Israel to "bless "him indeed;" and neither to send him away without a blessing, nor merely to bless him, like Esau, with temporal blessings. (*Note, Gen.* xxvii. 38.) He seems to have been constrained to fight against the Canaanites: but he conducted the war with faith and prayer; and he intreated the Lord to be with him, and both to enlarge his coast, and to preserve him from disastrous events, which might occasion grief unto him.—Believers, under the Old Testament, saw, in the land of Canaan, a type of heaven; in their wars was represented the conflict of God's people with their enemies; and every clause of his prayer may be applied to, and doubtless was intended for, more noble and spiritual blessings. Accordingly, the Lord heard and granted his requests, and thus he became honourable, as well as prosperous, in Israel.—The Jews think that Jabez was an eminent Doctor of the law, and that "the Scribes "which dwelt at Jabez" were his disciples. (ii. 55.)—This instructive example, in the midst of genealogies, to us so abstruse, seems like the fragrant rose, surrounded by thorns; or as refreshing streams in the desert: and it appears a recompence intended for the careful student of God's word, who diligently and reverently examines the whole, comparing one part with another, without disregarding or undervaluing any.

Grieve me. (10) עִצֵּבִי. The verb from which his name Jabez was derived, and the noun translated *sorrow* (9).

V. 13. Kenaz is supposed to have been the son of Chelub. (11. *Notes, Josh.* xv. 16, 17, *v.* 17. *Judg.* iii. 9, 10, *v.* 9.)

V. 14. *Craftsmen.*] (*Marg.*) Smiths, carpenters, and other artificers, may be included under this general term. (*Note,* 22, 23.)

V. 17, 18. *Ezra* seems to have been the person before called *Asareel* (16), or, as some think, his son.

She bare. (17) That is, Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh bare to Mered (18): for these appear to have been Ezra's grandsons. Many think that Pharaoh was the name of an Israelite; yet it is not impossible that Mered might marry a daughter of an Egyptian king, by some of his concubines.—*Father of,* &c.] *Notes,* ii. 21. 42—49, *v.* 49.

V. 20. Shimon is supposed to have been another son

21 ¶ The sons of [a] Shelah the son of Judah *were*, Er the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea.

22 And Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab, and Jashubilehem. And *these are* ancient things.

23 These *were* [b] the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges; there they dwelt with the king for his work.

24 ¶ The sons of Simeon *were*, [c] Nemuel, and Jamin, [d] Jarib, [e] Zerah, *and* Shaul:

25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.

26 And the sons of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son.

27 And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply [*] like to the children of Judah.

28 And they dwelt at [f] Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-shual,

29 And at [g] Bilhah, and at Ezem, and at Tolad,

30 And at [h] Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at [i] Ziklag,

31 And at Beth-marcaboth, [j] and Hazarsusim, and at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim. These *were* their cities unto the reign of David.

32 And their villages *were* [k] Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities:

33 And all their villages that *were* round about the same cities, unto [l] Baal. These *were* their habitations, and [*] their genealogy.

34 And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah,

35 And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel.

36 And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohaiah, and Asaiah, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah,

37 And Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah:

38 These [‡] mentioned by *their* names *were* princes in their families: and the house of their fathers increased greatly.

39 And they went to the entrance of [m] Gedor, *even* unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.

40 And they found fat pasture and good, and [n] the land *was* wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for *they* of [o] Ham had dwelt there of old.

41 And [p] these written by name came in the days of [q] Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: because *there was* [r] pasture there for their flocks.

42 And *some* of them, *even* of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men,

a ii. 3. ix. 5. Gen. xxxviii. 5. xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 20 Neh. xi. 5. *Shiloni.*

b 14. Ps. lxxxi. 6.

c Gen. xlvi. 10. Ex. vi. 15. *Jemuel.*

d Num. xxvi. 12—14. *Jachin.*

e Gen. xlvi. 10. *Zohar.*

* Heb. *unto.* Num. ii. 4. 18. xxvi. 14. 22.

f Josh. xv. 28, 29. xix. 2, 3. 9.

g Josh. xix. 3, 4. *Balah-Ezem-Eltolad.*

h Josh. xix. 4. *Bethul.*

i xii. 1. Josh. xv. 31. xix. 5. 1 Sam. xxvii. 6. xxx. 1. Neh. xi. 28.

j Josh. xix. 5, 6. *Hazar-susah. Beth-lebaoth. Sharuhen.*

k Josh. xix. 7. *Ether. Remmon.*

l Josh. xix. 8. *Baalath-beer.*

† Or, *as they divided themselves by nations among them.*

‡ Heb. *coming by names.* v. 24. Gen. vi. 4.

m 4. 18 Josh. xii. 13. *Geder.* xv. 58.

n Judg. xviii. 7—10.

o Gen. ix. 22, &c. x. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 51. cv. 23.

p 33—38.

q 2 Kings xviii. 8. Is. xiv. 28—32.

r Num. xxxii. 1—4.

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of Mered, by Hodiah, or *Jehudijah.* (18, 19.) As the name signifies a *Jewess*, (18, *marg.*) it rather favours the opinion, that Bithiah was not a Jewess, but an Egyptian.

V. 21. The sacred historian had mentioned the descendants of Judah by Zerah; (ii. 6—8;) and having more copiously given the genealogies of Judah's posterity by Pharez, he here mentions briefly a few of the line of Shelah, the son of Judah, by the Canaanitish woman whom he married; and who was his eldest surviving son. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxviii. 4, 5. 11—16. 24. *Neh.* xi. 4—6.)

V. 22, 23. Perhaps these families, in the time of David, or Solomon, when Moab was subjected, had dominion there; but in process of time they were so reduced, as to subsist by the meanest employments. Their honour and dignity "were ancient things;" for at the time when this was written, they were brought very low.—Some think that they remained near Babylon, after the return of Judah from the captivity, "among plants and hedges," for the sake of doing the work of the Persian kings.—It was common in those ages, and still is in many places, for particular trades and professions to be continued in families, through successive generations.

V. 24. The families of Simeon are mentioned next to those of Judah, because their inheritances adjoined to each other. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Josh.* xix. 1—9.)

V. 30, 31. Ziklag was at first given to Simeon: (*Josh.* xix. 5:) but the Philistines took it, and gave it to David; so that from his time it belonged to Judah. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* 1 *Sam.* xxvii. 5, 6.)

V. 34—38. These were eminent men among the Simeonites; and perhaps leaders in that expedition, which is next recorded.

V. 39—43. Part of the Simeonites joined the house of

s Gen. xxxvi. 8, 9. Deut. i. 2.

went to s mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.

t Ex. xvii. 14—16. Deut. xxv. 17—19. 1 Sam. xv. 7, 8. xxx. 17. 2 Sam. viii. 12.

43 And they smote t the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, and

u Deut. xxxiv. 6. Judg. i. 26. 2 Chr. v. 9. Jer. xliv. 6. Matt. xxvii. 8. xxviii. 15.

dwelt there u unto this day.

CHAP. V.

Judah and Joseph preferred before Reuben, who forfeited his birthright, 1, 2. Reuben's descendants; some of whom vanquish the Hagarites, 3—10. The chief men of Gad, and their habitations, 11—17. Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, obtain a victory over the Hagarites, 18—22. The habitations and chief men of that half of Manasseh, 23, 24. The captivity of the two tribes and half, for their sins, 25, 26.

NOW the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, (for a he *was* the first-born; but, b forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, c his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel: d and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

a ii. 1. Gen. xxix. 32. xlvi. 8. xlix. 3. Ex. vi. 14 Num. i. 5. xvi 1. xxvi. 5.

b Gen. xxxv. 22 xlix. 4. Lev. xviii. 8. xx. 11. Deut xxvii. 20. 1 Cor. v. 1.

c Gen. xlviii. 15—22. Deut. xxi. 17.

d Gen. xxv. 23. 1 Sam xvi. 6—11.

e Gen. xlix. 8—10. Num. ii. 3. vii. 12. Judg. i. 2. Ps. lx. 7 cviii. 8.

2 For e Judah prevailed above his

David, when the ten tribes revolted: (*Note, 2 Chr.* xv. 9:) and, being greatly increased in the time of Hezekiah, they dispossessed some of the ancient Canaanites, who still kept possession of a plentiful and peaceful country, fit for the feeding of cattle.—Perhaps this tract belonged to the Simeonites in the division of the land, and at length they got possession of it. Some however think, that a country towards Arabia, without the borders of the promised land, is intended. It seems that the remains of the Amalekites, after the general destruction of them made by Saul and David, had settled near to the Edomites, in mount Seir: but this remnant was extirpated by a small company of Simeonites.—Some think, that the kings of Babylon permitted this part of Simeon to remain unmolested in their possessions, through the captivity, even to the time of Ezra: but perhaps Ezra extracted the words, "unto this "day," from the ancient records without altering them.—*The habitations.* (41) Or the *Meunnim*, or *Maonites.* (Heb.—*Judg.* x. 12. *2 Chr.* xxvi. 7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Children should consider how much their parents, especially their mothers, suffered for them, before they became capable of reflection; and they should endeavour by every means to requite them, as much as possible, by kindness, and by aiming to be a comfort to them, in their whole conduct. But it is basely ungrateful, (though alas! very common,) willingly to cause them still more exquisite and durable anguish, by ill behaviour.—Those events, which at first occasion most sorrow, often terminate in the greatest comfort: we should not therefore yield to despondency, but "hope to the end," and expect to extract good from every apparent evil.—But it is natural for us to record our sorrows rather than our mercies; though, considering our guilt and sinfulness, we may reasonably wonder that the latter are so many, and the former so few.—"The honour, which cometh from God," is introduced by the gifts of wisdom, faith, and piety; and when these are bestowed, men will at length be honourable, whether they be renowned and prosperous, or not.—We go about our proper work in a right manner, when we use lawful and suitable means for success with all assiduity, and seek a blessing on them by fervent prayer.—A confluence of all earthly good things cannot "bless us indeed:" the true felicity, which our hearts should eagerly desire, consists in the favour, image, and presence of God; and we should pray for this, as resolved not to depart without it. The pardon of sin, the gift of righteousness, and the first-fruits of the Spirit, form the beginning of this happiness: but the world, Satan, and indwelling sin, crowd and straiten us on every side, and keep us from the possession of our inheritance. We should then beg of "the God and Fa-"ther of our Lord Jesus Christ" to enlarge our coast, that we may attain to greater holiness, liberty, comfort, and usefulness; and acquire a more decisive victory over our enemies. And if his "hand be with us," if his power be exerted in our cause, we shall be protected, upheld, and enabled to withstand, and to gain ground against, the confederated forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil. We may very properly, with resignation, pray to be kept from the evil of *suffering*, which is grievous to nature; but the evil of *sinning* most affrights and disquiets the spiritually minded: this extorts their bitterest groans and complaints; against this they most earnestly pray, "Lead "us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And, being kept from the burden of a guilty conscience, and the anguish of having dishonoured and offended the God of their salvation, they can the better bear up under other trials, as supported by that "peace of God which passeth "all understanding." Blessed be the Lord, he is ever ready to grant and to exceed our prayers for promised blessings: and we are our own enemies, if we do not ask and expect great things from him, through the Saviour's name.—In this checkered world indeed, there is nothing durable or substantial: but possessing the hope of unchangeable felicity, we may cheerfully acquiesce in the Lord's allotment of our worldly settlements and occupations. Nor is it desirable to advance our children much above our own rank; for those, who at one time have dominion, may at another become dependent on the worst of men for a penurious maintenance: whereas honest labour, in some regular and useful calling, best preserves that mediocrity which is most comfortable, and most advantageous to our spiritual concerns. Let us then adhere to the kingdom of "the Son of David:" for this "Prince of peace" will supply the temporal wants of his people with every thing truly desirable, and make them happy for ever; while his curse will pursue all his enemies to their utter destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. The double portion, which belonged to the first-born, having been forfeited by Reuben, Jacob's eldest son by Leah, was given to Joseph, his eldest son by Rachel, whose descendants had a double portion in Canaan; Jacob having adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, to be, as

brethren, and of him *came* [f] the * chief ruler; but the birthright *was* Joseph's:)

3 The [g] sons, *I say*, of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, *were*, Hanoch, and [h] Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

4 The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,

5 Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son,

6 Beerah his son, whom [i] Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away *captive:* he *was* prince of the Reubenites.

7 And his brethren by their families, [k] when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned, *were* the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,

8 And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of [l] Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt in [m] Aroer, even unto [n] Nebo, and [o] Baal-meon.

9 And eastward he inhabited, unto the entering in of the wilderness from the river Euphrates: [p] because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead.

10 And in the days of Saul they made war with [q] the Hagarites, who fell by their hand: and they dwelt in their tents [†] throughout all the east *land* of Gilead.

11 ¶ And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, [r] in the land of Bashan unto Salcah:

12 Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Bashan.

13 And their brethren, of the house of their fathers *were*, Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven.

14 These *are* the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz:

15 Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers.

16 And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of [s] Sharon, upon their [‡] borders.

17 All these were [t] reckoned by genealogies in the days of [u] Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of [v] Jeroboam king of Israel.

18 ¶ The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of [§] valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, *were* [x] four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.

19 And they [y] made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and [z] Nephish, and Nodab.

20 And [a] they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that *were* with them: for [b] they cried to God in the battle, and he was intreated of them; [c] because they put their trust in him.

21 And they [‖] took away their cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of * men an hundred thousand.

22 For there fell down many slain, because [d] the war *was* of God. And they dwelt in their steads [e] until the captivity.

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his own sons, heads of two distinct tribes. (*Notes, Gen.* xlviii. 5—7. xlix. 3—12. 22—26.)—Yet, as the chief Ruler, or Prince, even the Messiah, of whom David and his royal race were progenitors and types, was to descend from Judah; the genealogy began with him, and not with either Reuben or Joseph. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3—8. Very brief extracts are made from the registers of Reuben, and of several other tribes: because, it is probable, but few persons of these tribes, returned from the captivity to settle in Canaan: and therefore only a few of these tribes were concerned in the genealogies, compared with the numbers of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, of whom the Jews after that event principally consisted. It may be supposed, that Ezra's contemporaries would see the reason, why the persons selected should be named, and not others; though we can assign none.—This chapter contains all that relates to the two tribes and a half, which settled to the east of Jordan. (*Notes, Num.* xxxii. *Josh.* xxii.)

V. 9. The inheritance of Reuben extended to the borders of that desert, which reached even to the Euphrates.

V. 10. *Note*, 18—22.

V. 11—17. (*Marg. Ref.*) Part of the genealogies of Gad, whence these extracts were taken, seems to have been made during the time, that Jeroboam the second reigned over Israel, and the rest when Jotham reigned in Judah.

V. 18—22. The Hagarites were the descendants of Hagar, or the Ishmaelites properly so called; (*Marg. Ref.*

23 ¶ And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land; they increased from Bashan, unto [f] Baal-hermon and Senir, and unto [g] mount Hermon.

24 And these *were* the heads of the house of their fathers, even Epher, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, [*] mighty men of valour, famous men *and* heads of the house of their fathers.

25 And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and [h] went a whoring [i] after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them.

26 And the God of Israel [k] stirred up the spirit of [l] Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of [m] Tilgath-pilneser, king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, [n] and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.

f Josh. xiii. 29—31.
g Deut. iii. 8, 9. iv. 48. Josh. xiii. 11. Ps. cxxxiii. 3. Cant. iv. 8.
* Heb. *men of names.* iv. 38.
h Judg. ii. 17. viii. 33. 2 Kings xvii. 7, &c. Hos. i. 2. ix. 1. Rev. xvii. 5.
i Judg. ii. 12. 2 Chr. xxv. 14, 15. Ps. cvi. 34—39.
k 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Ezra i. 5. Is. x. 5, 6. xiii. 2—6.
l 2 Kings xv. 19.
m *See on* 6.—2 Kings xv. 29. xvi. 7. *Tiglath-pilezer.*
n 2 Kings xvii. 6. xviii. 11. xix. 12. Is. xxxvii. 12.

19.) and, being a nation of plunderers, they would not fail to give their neighbours just cause of making war upon them. (*Note, Gen.* xvi. 12.) But, indeed, "the war was of God" (22), undertaken in his fear, and in dependence on him, and was approved and succeeded by him: so that the victors and their descendants dwelt in the country thus acquired, till they were carried captive by the Assyrians. If this was the same war, as was before mentioned (10), the two tribes and half tribe beyond Jordan might be left, during a part of Saul's reign, to defend themselves: but some think that these tribes were numbered by genealogies, in the days of Jeroboam and Jotham, in order to make war against the Hagarites (17). They, however, acted in concert and with vigour, and with faith and prayer, against these formidable enemies. But especially it is noted, that they trusted in God, and called upon him in the battle, in the first onset of which the Hagarites, probably, obtained some advantage; and their success accorded to their faith. —The multitude of the prisoners may give an idea of the superiority in numbers of the enemy, and of the slaughter which was made.—The Ishmaelites have always been remarkable for the numbers of camels, which they take with them in their expeditions.—When we read of this conduct and success of these Israelites, we are ready to say, "Oh, "that there had" always "been such an heart in them!" but the conclusion of the chapter gives us a different view of their character and condition.

V. 25, 26. The Manassites, with the Reubenites and Gadites, forsook God, to worship idols; and the nation of Israel generally did the same: yet, the two tribes and a half seem to have been more early and entirely corrupted, than the other tribes.—Their progenitors had hastily desired a settlement to the east of Jordan; and now these tribes were carried captive before the rest of Israel. (*Notes, Num.* xxxii. 1—5. 29. 2 *Kings* xv. 19, 20. 29.) But they were placed in the same regions by Pul and Tilgath-pilneser, to which Shalmaneser afterwards carried the other tribes. (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* xvii. 5, 6. xviii. 9—12.)—*Hara* is supposed to be the same as *Media,* or part of it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is profitable to be frequently reminded, that sin degrades men from their excellency, stamps indelible disgrace on their characters, forfeits their advantages, and entails manifold losses on their posterity. But, the Lord punishes none above their deserts; and, as he sees good, he confers unmerited favours on mankind.—They, who are related to our chief Ruler of the tribe of Judah, as his true disciples and subjects, are far more favoured, than those who have a two-fold, or ten-fold, portion of perishing riches. Let us seek and choose this better portion; and leave the children of this world to contend about their gilded baubles, without envying, coveting, or interfering. We need not in that case fear wanting any thing truly good for us, "for our Father knoweth what things we have need "of:" when our families increase, he will increase our provision; and it is our privilege to cast our care on him, and to keep in the path of duty.—Happy is that people who live together in harmony, who readily assist each other; who strenuously oppose the common enemies of their souls; and who acknowledge God in all their ways, but are especially earnest in times of trial and temptation. Such persons will assuredly be heard and helped; their warfare is of God, their enemies will be trodden down, their victory is certain, and their triumphs will be glorious. —And let it be carefully noticed, that all genuine and warranted trust in God will be expressed by earnest prayer; and this in part distinguishes it from a presumptuous confidence, and an indolent reliance, which often subsist without application to him, or habitual prayer; and are especially maintained by lifeless forms, and inefficacious notions.—Those who rebel against the Lord, and apostatize from him, must eventually be ruined: especially, such as desert his worship and reject his salvation, for the sake of those idols which are set up either in temples, or in the hearts of the avaricious, the sensual, or the ambitious. It will little avail them, to have their names inserted in the genealogies of honourable families, or recorded as famous in the page of history, while they are rejected by God, and excluded from his kingdom.—We should consider, that those actions, which are vain, foolish, and wicked in man, may be permitted and made use of by the Lord in justice, wisdom, and goodness. From him the renowned ravagers of the earth derive their power and courage: and they are employed as his executioners, and classed with pestilences, earthquakes, and famines; being equally dreadful and fatal to mankind. Nor should we forget, that they, whose inordinate desire of earthly objects draws them to a distance from the ordinances of God, are assuredly preparing for their own correction, or destruction.

CHAP. VI.

The sons of Levi, by Aaron, to Eleazar, 1—3. The line of Eleazar to the captivity, 4—15. The families of Levi, 16—19. The sons of Gershom, 20, 21: of Kohath, 22—28: of Merari, 29, 30. The singers appointed by David, 31—48. The office of Aaron and his sons, 49. Aaron's line to Ahimaaz, 50—53. The cities of the priests and Levites, 54—81.

B. C. 1700.

THE [a] sons of Levi; [b] Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

2 And [c] the sons of Kohath; [d] Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

3 And the children of Amram; [e] Aaron, and Moses, and [f] Miriam. The sons also of Aaron; [g] Nadab and Abihu, [h] Eleazar and Ithamar.

4 Eleazar begat [i] Phinehas, Phinehas begat [j] Abishua,

5 And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi,

6 And Uzzi begat Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begat Meraioth,

7 Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,

B. C. 1100.

8 And [k] Ahitub begat [l] Zadok, and Zadok begat [m] Ahimaaz,

9 And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan,

B. C. 760.

10 And Johanan begat Azariah, (he *it is* that [n] executed the priest's office in *the temple, that [o] Solomon built in Jerusalem,)

11 Azariah begat [p] Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,

12 And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat [q] Shallum,

B. C. 588.

13 And Shallum begat [r] Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah,

14 And Azariah begat [s] Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak.

15 And [t] Jehozadak went *into captivity*, [u] when the LORD carried away Judah and Jerusalem [x] by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

16 ¶ The sons of Levi; [y] Gershom, Kohath and Merari.

17 And these *be* the names of [z] the sons of Gershom; Libni, and [a] Shimei.

18 And the sons of Kohath *were* [b] Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

19 The sons of Merari; [c] Mahli, and Mushi. And these *are* the families of the Levites, according to their fathers.

20 Of Gershom; [d] Libni, his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son,

21 [e] Joah his son, Iddo his son, [f] Zerah his son, [g] Jeaterai his son.

22 The sons of Kohath; [h] Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,

23 Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son,

24 Tahath his son, [i] Uriel his son, Uzziah his son, and Shaul his son.

B. C. 1100.

25 And the sons of [k] Elkanah; Amasai, and Ahimoth.

26 *As for* Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; [l] Zophai his son, and [m] Nahath his son,

27 [n] Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, [o] Elkanah his son.

28 And the sons of Samuel; the first-born [p] Vashni, and Abiah.

29 The sons of Merari; [q] Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son.

30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

a xxiii. 6. Gen. xlvi. 11. Ex. vi. 16. Num. iii. 17. xxvi. 57.
b 16, 17. 20. *Gershom.*
c xxiii. 12. Ex. vi. 18. 21—24.
d 22. *Amminadab.*
e xxiii. 13. Ex. vi. 20.
f Ex. ii. 4. 7. xv. 20. Mic. vi. 4.
g xxiv. 1, 2. Ex. vi. 23. xxiv. 1. xxviii. 1. Lev. x. 1. 12.
h xxiv. 3—6.
i 5 i. ix. 20. Ex. vi. 25. Num. xxv. 6—11. xxxi. 6. Josh. xxii. 13. 30—32. xxiv. 33. Judg. xx. 28. Ezra viii. 2. Ps. cvi. 30, 31.
j Ezra vii. 1—5.
k 2 Sam. viii. 17. 2 Sam. xv. 35. xvii. 15. xx. 25. 1 Kings i. 8. 34. 44. ii. 35.
l 2 Sam. xv. 27. 36. xvii. 17. 20. xviii. 19. 22. 27—29.
m 2 Sam. xv. 27. 36. xvii. 17. 20. xviii. 19. 22. 27—29.
n 2 Chr. xxvi. 17—20.
* Heb. *the house.*
o 1 Kings vi. vii. 2 Chr. iii. iv.
p Ezra vii. 3.
q ix. 11. Neh. xi. 11. *Meshullam.*
r 2 Kings xxii. 12—14. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 14—20. xxxv. 8.
s 2 Kings xxv. 18. Ezra vii. 1. Neh. xi. 11. Jer. iii. 24—27. Zech. vi. 11.
t Ezra v. 2. *Jozadak.* Hag. i. 1. 12. 14. ii. 2. *Josedech.*
u 2 Kings xxv. 21. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17—21. Jer. xxxix. 9. lii. 12—15. 28.
x Ex. iv. 13. 2 Kings xiv. 27. Acts xiv. 27. Rom. xv. 18.
B. C. 1700.
y 1. Ex. vi. 16. *Gershon.*
z xxiii. 7. Num. iii. 18. 21.
a Ex. vi. 17. *Shimi.*
b 2; 3. xxiii. 12.
c xxiii. 21. xxiv. 26. Ex. vi. 19. *Mahali.* Num. iii. 20. xxvi. 57, 58.
d 17.
e 42. *Ethan.*
f 41. *Adaiah.*
g 41. *Ethni.*
h 2. 18. Ex. vi. 2.. 24. *Izhar.*
i 36. *Zephaniah. Azariah. Joel.*
B. C. 1100.
k 35, 36. Ex. vi. 24.
l 35. 1 Sam. i. 1. *Zuph.*
m 34. *Toah.* 1 Sam. i. 1. *Tohu.*
n 34. *Eliel.* 1 Sam. i. 1. *Elihu.*
o 1 Sam. i. 1. 19, 20.
p 33. 1 Sam. viii. 2. *Joel.*
q 19. Num. iii. 33.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—3. *Notes, Ex.* vi. 14—20. *Lev.* x. 1, 2.

V. 4—15. These verses contain the line of Eleazar, Aaron's eldest surviving son after the death of Nadab and Abihu, to the Babylonish captivity: but all the persons mentioned were not high priests, for Ithamar's posterity enjoyed that dignity for some time. (*Notes,* xxiv. 1—4. 1 *Sam.* ii. 30. 35, 36. 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27. 35.)—"He ... "that executed the priest's office in the temple that Solo- "mon built," (an intimation that the writer lived when the second temple was built or building,) is supposed to have been Azariah, who vigorously opposed Uzziah's presumptuous attempt to burn incense. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxvi. 16—23.) His father Johanan is thought by some to have been the same as Jehoiada, the firm friend to religion and the family of David, during Athaliah's usurpation. (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* xi, xii. 2 *Chr.* xxiii, xxiv.) Otherwise Jehoida is not mentioned.—Urijah, who basely obeyed idolatrous Ahaz, is not named in this catalogue, and perhaps several others are omitted. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It is wonderful, that so little is recorded of the high priests, when the office is represented in the law, and by St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, as of a peculiar sanctity and importance.

V. 16—30. The principal persons, who presided over the three families of Levi, till the time of David, seem to be mentioned in these verses.—The marginal references

31 ¶ And these *are they,* [r] whom David set over the service of song in the house of the LORD, [s] after that the ark had rest.

32 And [t] they ministered, before the dwelling-place of the tabernacle of the congregation, with singing, [u] until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem: [v] and *then* they [*] waited on their office according to their order.

33 And these *are* they that waited, with their children. Of the sons of the Kohathites: [x] Heman a singer, the son of [y] Joel, the son of [z] Shemuel,

34 The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of [a] Eliel, the son of [b] Toah,

35 The son of [c] Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai,

36 The son of Elkanah, the son of [d] Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah,

37 The son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of [e] Ebiasaph, the son of [f] Korah,

38 The son of [g] Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.

39 And his brother [h] Asaph, (who stood on his right hand,) *even* Asaph, the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea,

40 The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchiah,

41 The son of [i] Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of [k] Adaiah,

42 The son of [l] Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei,

43 The son of [m] Jahath, the son of [n] Gershom, the son of Levi.

44 And their brethren, the sons of Merari, *stood* on the left hand. [o] Ethan the son of [p] Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch,

45 The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah,

46 The son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer,

47 The son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of [q] Merari, the son of Levi.

48 Their [r] brethren also the Levites *were* appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

49 ¶ But [s] Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on the altar of incense, *and were appointed* for all the work of the *place* most holy, and to [t] make an atonement for Israel, according to all that [u] Moses the servant of God had commanded.

50 And these *are* the sons of Aaron; [v] Eleazar his son, [x] Phinehas his son, Abishua his son,

51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son,

52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son,

B. C. 1047.
r xv. 16—22. 27. xxv. 1—31.
s xvi. 1. 2 Sam. vi. 17. Ps. cxxxii. 8. 14.
t xvi. 4—6. 37—42. Ps. lxviii. 24, 25.
u 10. 1 Kings viii. 6—13.
v ix. 33. xxv. 8—31. 2 Chr. xxix. 25—30. xxxi. 2. xxxv. 15. Ezra iii. 10, 11. vi. 18. Neh. xi. 17—23. xii. 27, 28. 45—47. Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 2. cxxxv. 1—3.
* Heb. *stood.*
x xv. 17. 19. xvi. 41, 42. xxv. 1—5. 2 Chr. v. 12. xxix. 14. Ps. lxxxviii. *title.*
y 28. *Vashni.*
z 28. 1 Sam. i. 20. 28. *Samuel.*
a 27. *Eliab.*
b 26. *Nahath.*
c 26. *Zophai.*
d 24. *Shaul, Uzziah, Uriel.*
e Ex. vi. 21—24. *Abiasaph.*
f Num. xvi. 1, &c. xxvi. 10, 11. Ps. xlii. xliv. xlv. xlix. lxxxiv. lxxxv. *titles.*
g Num. iii. 19. *Izehar.* xvi. 1.
h xv. 17—19. xvi. 7. xxv. 2. xxvi. 1. 2 Chr. v. 12. xx. 14. xxix. 13. 30. xxxv. 15. Ezra ii. 41. iii. 10. Neh. vii. 44. xi. 17. 22. xii. 35. 46. Ps. l. lxxiii.—lxxxiii. *titles.*
i 21 *Jeaterai.*
k 21. *Iddo.*
l 21. *Joah.*
m 20.
n 1. 16, 17. 20. xxiii. 6. Gen. xlvi. 11. Ex. vi. 16. Num. iii. 17. *Gershon.*
o xxv. 1. 3. 6. *Jeduthun.* Ps. lxxxix. *title.*
p xv. 17. *Kushaiah.*
q xxiii. 21. 28. Ex. vi. 19. Num. iii. 20. 33—36. iv. 42. vii. 8. x. 17. Josh. xxi. 7. 34—40.
r xxiii. 2, &c. xxv. xxvi. Num. iii. iv. viii. 5—26. xvi. 9, 10. xviii.
B. C. 1490.
s Ex. xxvii. 1—8. xxx. 1—7. Lev. i. 5. 7, 8. viii. ix. x. xxi. xxii. Num. xvi. 16—50. xvii. Deut. xviii. 1—8. Heb. vii. 11—14.
t Ex. xxix. 33. 36, 37. xxx. 10—16. Lev. iv. 20. Num. xv. 25. xvi. 46. Job xxxiii. 24. *marg.*
u Deut. xxxiv. 5. Josh. i. 1.
v 3—9. xxiv. 1. Ex. vi. 23. xxviii. 1. Lev. x. 16. Num. iii. 4. 32. xx. 26—28. xxvii. 22. Ezra vii. 1—5. viii. 33.
x *See on* 4.—ix. 20

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contain the variation in the names given to the same persons, in different parts of sacred history, as far as it can be ascertained; and nearly the whole, that is at present known concerning them, may be learned by carefully consulting them.—Samuel the son of Elkanah (27. 33, 34) was not a priest, but descended from Izhar, Aaron's uncle: yet, as a prophet, he sacrificed personally, and not by the ministration of the priests, as some have conjectured. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* vii. 9. ix. 12—14. xvi. 1—5.)

V. 31, 32. After the tabernacle had been made stationary, and the Levites had greatly multiplied; David formed arrangements for their regular ministering by rotation: and especially a large number of them were employed as singers and musicians, in celebrating the praises of God. (*Notes,* ix. 31—33, *v.* 33. xvi. 4—6. 37—43. xxv, xxvi.) This was settled before the building of the temple, but it was continued afterwards. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 33—38. Heman was grandson to *Samuel,* or *Shemuel,* the prophet and judge of Israel; and probably he was advanced to this office, in honour of his illustrious ancestor. The genealogies of Heman, and Asaph, and Ethan, are carried back to Levi: whence we may infer that their station, as precentors, was considered as both important and honourable.—Heman, mentioned with Ethan of the sons of Zerah, was of the tribe of Judah. (*Notes,* ii. 5, 6. 1 *Kings* iv. 30—34, *v.* 31.)

V. 39—47. *Marg. Ref.*—*His brother Asaph.* (39) As Asaph was of the same tribe with Heman, he is called his brother, though belonging to a different family of that tribe, for he was descended from Gershom; but Heman, from Kohath.

V. 48. 'It is observable, that in all genealogies of the 'Levites, there is not a word said of the sons of Moses 'and their posterity; he having no ambition to prefer them 'to any office, either in church or state!' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Num.* xxvii. 18.) They are indeed mentioned; but as in no respect distinguished from the other Levites. (xxiii. 14—18.)

V. 49—53. *Note,* 4—15

53 [y] Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

54 ¶ Now [z] these *are* their dwelling places, throughout their [a] castles in their coasts, of the sons of Aaron, [b] of the families of the Kohathites: for their's was the lot.

55 And they gave them [c] Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it.

56 But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

57 And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, *namely*, Hebron, [d] *the city* of refuge, and [e] Libnah with her suburbs, and [f] Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs,

58 And [g] Hilen with her suburbs, [h] Debir with her suburbs,

59 And [i] Ashan with her suburbs, and [k] Beth-shemesh with her suburbs:

60 And out of the tribe of Benjamin; [l] Geba with her suburbs, and [m] Alemeth with her suburbs, and [n] Anathoth with her suburbs. All their cities throughout their families *were* thirteen cities.

61 And [o] unto the sons of Kohath, *which were* [p] left of the family of that tribe, *were cities given* out of the half tribe, *namely, out of* the half *tribe* of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities.

62 And to the sons of [q] Gershom throughout their families, out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

63 Unto the sons of [r] Merari *were given* by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

64 And [s] the children of Israel gave [t] to the Levites *these* cities, with their suburbs.

65 And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, [u] these cities which are called by *their* names.

66 And [x] *the residue* of the families of the sons of Kohath, had cities of their coasts, out of the tribe of Ephraim.

67 And they gave unto them, *of* the cities of refuge, [y] Shechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; *they gave* also [z] Gezer with her suburbs,

68 And [a] Jokmeam with her suburbs, and [b] Beth-horon with her suburbs,

69 And [c] Aijalon with her suburbs, and [d] Gath-rimmon with her suburbs:

70 And out of the half tribe of Manasseh; [e] Aner with her suburbs, and [f] Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.

71 Unto the sons of Gershom *were given*, out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, [g] Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, and [h] Ashtaroth with her suburbs:

72 And out of the tribe of Issachar; [i] Kedesh with her suburbs, [k] Daberath with her suburbs,

73 And Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs:

74 And out of the tribe of Asher; [l] Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs,

75 And [m] Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs:

76 And out of the tribe of Naphtali; [n] Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and [o] Hammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.

77 Unto the rest of the children of Merari *were given* out of the tribe of Zebulun, [p] Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs:

78 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan,

y xii. 28. xxiii. 16. xxiv. 3. 31. 1 Sam. ii. 35. 2 Sam. viii. 17. xv. 24—27. 35. 36. xvii. 15—17. xx. 25. 1 Kings i. 8. 26. 34. ii. 35. iv. 4. Ez. xliv. 15.
z Num. xxxv. 1—8. Josh. xxi. 3—8.
a Gen. xxv. 16.
b Josh. xxi. 4, 5.
c Josh. xiv. 13. xv. 13. xxi. 11—13. Judg. i. 20.
d Num. xxxv. 13—15. Josh. xx. 7—9.
e Josh xv. 42. xxi. 13, 14.
f *See on* iv. 17.—Josh. xv. 48.
g Josh. xv. 51. xxi. 15. *Holon.*
h Josh. xii. 13. xv. 49.
i Josh. xxi. 16. *Ain.*
k Josh. xv. 10. xxi 16. 1 Sam. vi. 12—19.
l viii. 6. Josh. xxi. 17.
m Josh. xxi. 18. *Almon.*
n 1 Kings ii. 26. Is. x. 30. Jer. i. 1. xi. 23. xxxvii. 12.
o i, 2. 18. 33.
p 66. Josh. xxi. 4, 5. 20—26.
q 71—76. Josh. xxi. 27—33.
r 77—81. Josh. xxi. 34—40.
s Josh. xxi. 41, 42.
t Num. xxxv. 2—5.
u 57—60.
x 61.
y Gen. xxxv. 4. Josh. xx. 7. xxi. 21.
z Josh. xii. 12. xvi. 3. 10. xxi. 21.
a Josh. xxi. 22. *Kibzaim.*
b Josh. x. 11. xvi. 5. 1 Sam. xiii. 18.
c Josh. x. 12. *Ajalon.* xxi. 24.
d Josh. xxi. 24.
e Josh. xxi. 25. *Tanach. Gath-rimmon.*
f Josh. xvii. 11. *Ibleam.*
g Deut. iv. 43. Josh. xx. 8. xxi. 27.
h Deut. i. 4. Josh. ix. 10. xxi. 27. *Be-eshterah.*
i Josh. xix. 37. xxi. 32. Judg. iv. 9.
k Josh. xxi. 28, 29. *Kishon. Dabe-rah. Jarmuth. Engannim.*
l Josh. xxi. 30. *Mishal.*
m Josh. xxi. 31. *Helkath.*
n Josh. xii. 22. xix. 37. xx. 7. xxi. 32. Judg. iv. 6. *Kadesh-naph-tali.*
o Josh. xxi. 32. *Hammoth-dor. Kartan.*
p Josh. xxi. 34, 35. *Jokneam. Kartah. Dim-nah. Nahalal.*

V. 54—66. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'These things seem to be 'mentioned so often, and with such exactness, that it 'might appear what care was taken by God, for the main-'tenance of his ministers, of all sorts; and for the instruc-'tion of his people, among whom he dispersed the Levites, 'who were peculiarly devoted to this service.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Josh.* xx, xxi.)—Juttah and Gibeon are here omitted. Perhaps they lay in ruins when the book was written: so that only eleven cities from Judah and Benjamin are enumerated; though thirteen were allotted to the priests in the days of Joshua. (*Josh.* xxi. 16, 17. 19.)

V. 67—81. Either some of the cities, or their names, had been changed since the time of Joshua: but, as Mr. Henry observes, Salop and Shrewsbury, Sarum and Salis-

were given them out of the tribe of
q Deut. iv. 43. Josh. xx. 8. xxi. 36. Reuben, q Bezer in the wilderness with
r Josh. xxi. 36, 37. *Jahazah.* her suburbs, and r Jahzah with her suburbs,

79 Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs:

80 And out of the tribe of Gad;
s Josh. xxi. 38, 39. 1 Kings xxii. 3. 2 Kings ix. 1. s Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs,
t Gen. xxxii. 2. Josh. xxi. 38. 2 Sam. xvii. 24. 27. xix. 32. and t Mahanaim with her suburbs,

81 And u Heshbon with her suburbs,
u Num. xxi. 25. xxxii. 37. Deut. ii. 24. Josh. xiii. 26. Neh. ix. 22. Cant. vii. 4. and x Jazer with her suburbs.
x Num. xxxii. 1. 3. Josh. xiii. 25. xxi. 39.

CHAP. VII.

The sons of Issachar, 1—5: of Benjamin, 6—12: of Naphtali, 13: and of Manasseh, 14—19. The sons of Ephraim, of whom some were slain by the men of Gath, 20—22. His sons by Beriah, 23—27. Their habitations, 28, 29. The sons of Asher, 30—40.

B. C. 1700. NOW a the sons of Issachar *were,*
a Gen. xlvi. 13. *Phuvah. Job.* Num. xxvi. 23, 24. *Pua.* Tola, and Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four.

2 And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house, *to wit,* of Tola: *they were* valiant men of might in their generations; b whose number *was* in the days of David two and twenty thousand and six hundred. b xxi. 1—5. xxvii. 1. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—9.

3 And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five: all of them chief men.

4 And c with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, *were* bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand *men:* for they had many wives and sons. c xii. 32.

5 And their brethren among all the families of Issachar *were* valiant men of might, reckoned in all, by their genealogies, fourscore and seven thousand.

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bury, are as different names for the same places, as any in these catalogues; yet those, who live in their vicinity, are not at all confused by them.—Some cities also are here mentioned, as having belonged to Ephraim, which in Joshua are spoken of as cities of Dan: but various changes in such matters would occur in a course of ages.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In the judgment of God, none of the human race are more honourable or valuable, than those who consistently minister in holy things. And though many, who bear this sacred character, render themselves insignificant by their indolence, contemptible by their covetousness, or odious by their profligacy, or bring the divine vengeance upon themselves by offering "strange fire before the Lord:" (*Note, Lev.* x. 1, 2:) yet, instead of that order being despised on these accounts, those who are singularly humble, diligent, disinterested, zealous, and valiant for the truth, ought to be treated with the greater respect; and of this, God himself has condescended to set the example in his holy word.—None of the Lord's people, and especially of his ministers, should be unemployed: they who, through want of ability or change of circumstances, are precluded from one method of glorifying God, should set themselves to devise another. And if they deem nothing, which may conduce to the advancement of true religion, too laborious, mean, disgusting, or discouraging; if they be disposed to be "instant in season, and out of season;" to instruct, or encourage, one, ten, or ten thousand, in publick, or in private, in a cottage, an hospital, a prison, or a palace; in safe and easy, or in difficult and perilous circumstances; if they consider nothing too little to be attended to, and nothing too arduous to be attempted; and if they do all in sincerity, humility, and simplicity of spirit, they cannot long be unoccupied or useless. But, nothing can be a more pleasant and honourable work, than to excite or assist the devotions of the pious, and to lead them to abound in thanksgivings and praises to the Lord.—If a rich inheritance, or the important station of a magistrate or civil governor, could with propriety be quitted for such a service, the enlightened understanding must perceive it to be an honourable and advantageous exchange; for this is the delightful employment of those above, who are arrived at their eternal rest.—They, who have shewn themselves peculiarly disinterested in the cause of God and his people, should be peculiarly considered by their brethren, and their families respected for their sakes. But, though Christians and ministers may be very useful to the church, while "they wait in their offices," none but our great High Priest can make atonement for sin, none can be accepted, save through his atonement and mediation.—While ministers are bound to wait on their ministering, according to the work of their place; the people are equally bound, in their several stations, to strengthen their hands, and to contribute without grudging to their comfortable maintenance: and in every good work, equality and unanimity will render the burden light, and conduce to the comfort of all concerned, as also to render their endeavours more generally useful.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—5. (*Marg. Ref.*) When David numbered the people, (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xxiv. 1—9,) the effective men of Issachar amounted to 87,000: 22,600, of whom descended from Tola his eldest son; but whether the 36,000 (4) were descendants of Tola by Uzzi; and the 22,600, his descendants by Tola's other sons; or whether another of Issachar's sons is intended, does not clearly appear: for Uzzi was the son of Tola and grandson of Issachar. Izrahiah and his five sons are spoken of as five sons of Uzzi (3). If the former be meant, which seems the

B. C. 1700.
d viii. 1, &c. Gen. xlvi. 21. Num. xxvi. 38—41.
e 10, 11.

6 ¶ *The sons* [d] of Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and [e] Jediael, three.

7 And the sons of Bela, Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the house of *their* fathers, mighty men of valour; and [f] were reckoned, by their genealogies, twenty and two thousand and thirty and four.

B. C. 1017.
f xxi. 1—5. 2 Chr. xvii. 17, 18.

8 And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these *are* the sons of Becher.

9 And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *was* twenty thousand and two hundred.

10 The sons also of Jediael; Bilhan: and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and [g] Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

g Judg. iii. 15, &c.

11 All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *were* seventeen thousand and two hundred *soldiers*, fit to go out for war *and* battle.

h 15. Gen. xlvi. 21. *Muppim Huppim.* Num. xxvi. 39. *Shupham. Hupham.*
i 7. *Iri.*
k Num. xxvi. 38. *Ahiram.*

12 [h] Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of [i] Ir, *and* Hushim, the sons of [k] Aher.

l Gen. xlvi. 24. Num. xxvi. 48. *Jahzeel.*
m Gen. xlvi. 24. Num. xxvi. 49. *Shillem.*
n Gen. xxx. 3—8. xxxv 22. xlvi. 25.

13 ¶ The sons of Naphtali; [l] Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and [m] Shallum, [n] the sons of Bilhah.

14 ¶ The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare: (*but* his concubine the Aramitess, bare [o] Machir the father of Gilead: B. C. 1635.

o ii. 21—23. Gen. l. 23. Num. xxvi. 29—34. xxvii. 1. xxxii. 39—42. Deut. iii. 13—15. Josh. xiii. 31. xvii. 1—3. Judg. v. 14.

15 And Machir took to wife *the sister* of [p] Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name *was* Maachah;) and the name of the second *was* Zelophehad: and [q] Zelophehad had daughters.

p 12.
q Num. xxvi. 33. xxvii. 1—11. xxxvi. 1—12.

16 And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh; and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem.

17 And the sons of Ulam; [r] Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.

r 1 Sam. xii. 11.

18 And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and [s] Abiezer, and Mahalah.

s Num. xxvi. 30. *Jeezer.* Judg. vi. 11. 24. 34. viii. 2.

19 And the sons of Shemida were Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam. B. C. 1600.

20 ¶ And [t] the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son,

t Num. xxvi. 35, 36.

21 And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were* born in *that* land slew because they came down to take away their cattle.

22 And Ephraim their father [u] mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.

u Gen. xxxvii. 34.

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more obvious meaning, by far the greatest part of the tribe of Issachar descended from Tola.

V. 6—11. The persons mentioned seem not, strictly speaking, to have been the *sons* of Bela and Becher; but renowned persons among their descendants, or such as were progenitors of those who returned from Babylon. (*Notes*, viii. 1—5. *Gen.* xlvi. 21.)

V. 12. *Aher.*] Aher signifies *another*, and it has been conjectured, that these were Danites, 'the sons of another 'tribe;' especially as Hushim is named as the only son of Dan. (*Gen.* xlvi. 23.) And they suppose, that the name of Dan was not mentioned, because his descendants first established idolatry. But Zebulun, as well as Dan, is here omitted; perhaps, because none of either of these tribes returned at first from Babylon.—Though the Benjamites had been almost destroyed, in the first days of the judges, they soon became numerous and powerful. (*Notes, Judg.* xx. xxi.)

V. 13. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 14, 15. Ashriel was Manasseh's eldest son *by his wife*, who is not named: but a Syrian concubine was the mother of Machir, from whom the whole of that numerous tribe seems to have descended: for Ashriel as the son of Manasseh is not mentioned elsewhere; and Zelophehad "the second" was a descendant of Machir, two generations having intervened between them: for he was the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir. (*Num.* xxvi. 29—33.—*Notes, Num.* xxvii. 1—11. xxxvi. 1—12. *Josh.* xvii. 1—6.)—"Of Asriel the family of the Asrielites." (*Num.* xxvi. 31.) This Asriel was a descendant of Machir by Gilead. Machir married a descendant of Benjamin.

V. 18. Hammoleketh seems to have been the sister of Gilead: though some think she was the sister of Bedan (17).

V. 21, 22. Ezer and Elead seem to have been the sons, or grandsons, of Ephraim, and not his more remote descendants; for it is evident that he was living when they were slain. Some think, that they supposed the time was arrived for the nation to inherit Canaan; and so made an unsuccessful invasion of it. But, it is more likely, that some inhabitants of Gath, who had been natives of Egypt, made an incursion into Goshen, to commit depredations

23 And when he went in to his wife, she conceived, and bare a son, and
x iv. 9. Gen. xxxv. 18. 1 Sam. iv. 21. * That is, *In evil.*
x he called his name * Beriah, because it went evil with his house.

24 (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built
y Josh. xvi. 3. 5. 1 Kings ix. 17. 2 Chr. viii. 5.
y Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.)

25 And Rephah *was* his son, also Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son,

26 Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,

a Num. xiii. 8. 16. *Nun. Oshea.* b Ex. xvii. 9—14. xxiv. 13. xxxii. 17. Num. xi. 28. xiv. 6. xxvii. 18. Deut. xxxi. 23. *Joshua.* Acts vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8. *Jesus.*
27 a Non his son, b Jehoshua his son.

28 ¶ And their possessions and habitations *were,* c Beth-el and the towns thereof, and eastward d Naaran, and westward e Gezer with the † towns thereof; Shechem also, and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof:

c Gen. xxviii. 19. Josh. xvi. 2. Judg. i. 22. d Josh. xvi. 7. *Naarath.* e *See on* vi. 66, 67. † Heb. *daughters.*

29 And by the borders of the children of f Manasseh, g Beth-shean and her towns, h Taanach and her towns, i Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. k In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel.

f Josh. xvii. 7—11. g 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. *Beth-shan.* h Judg. v. 19. 1 Kings iv. 12. i Judg. i. 27. 1 Kings ix. 15. 2 Kings ix. 27. xxiii. 29. 2 Chr. xxxv. 22. Zech. xii. 11. Rev. xvi. 16. k Josh. xvi. xvii. Judg. i. 22—29.

30 ¶ The sons of Asher; l Imnah, and Isuah, and m Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah their sister.

B. C. 1700. l Gen. xlvi. 17. Num. xxvi. 44—46. *Jimnah.* m Gen. xlvi. 17. *Iuai.*

31 And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who *is* the father of Birzavith.

32 And Heber begat Japhlet, and n Shomer, and Hotham, and Shuah their sister.

n 34. *Shamer.*

33 And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath: these *are* the children of Japhlet.

34 And the sons of o Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.

o 32. *Shomer.*

35 And the sons of his brother Helem; Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

36 The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnephar, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,

37 Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and p Ithran, and Beera.

p 38. *Jether.*

38 And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.

39 And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia.

40 All these *were* the children of Asher, heads of *their* father's house, choice *and* mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And q the number, throughout the genealogy of them, that were apt to the war *and* to battle *was* twenty and six thousand men.

B. C. 1017. q xxi. 1—5. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—9.

CHAP. VIII.

The sons and chief men of Benjamin, 1—32. The family of Saul and his descendants by Jonathan, 33—40.

NOW Benjamin begat a Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, and b Aharah the third,

B. C. 1700. a vii. 6—12. Gen. xlvi. 21. b Num. xxvi. 38. *Ahiram.*

2 Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.

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on the cattle of Israel, and slew those who defended them. Thus Ephraim, that was intended to be a very numerous and prosperous tribe, was at first diminished.

V. 24. Some female descendant of Ephraim had affluence, influence, and liberality, to rebuild three cities for her brethren. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25—29. (*Marg. Ref.*) "Rephah was his son" (25), 'that is, the son of Beriah.' ... "Jehoshua" (27), 'for 'whose sake his pedigree seems to be thus largely deduced.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 30—40. *Marg. Ref.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Events frequently occur entirely beyond our expectations, and contrary to probabilities; the dispensations of Providence *seem* to run counter to the promises, in order that their performance may be the more observed and admired; and often a good cause is unsuccessful, while the wicked triumph in the success of their villainy: but the day of judgment will clear up, and rectify, all such *apparent* obliquities in the divine administration.—Those who live long often become like the decaying tree, which stands till all its branches are withered, or broken off one after another. But, though the premature death of our children must necessarily be afflictive, and it behoves us all mutually to comfort each other; yet, we should not mourn as men without hope; for the Lord is able to make up all our losses. Considering our state on earth, we may properly call all our children *Beriah;* (*marg.*) for "man is born to "trouble, as the sparks fly upwards." But the supports, consolations, and prospects, which the gospel brings to believers, are sufficient to counterbalance every evil, and to render both life and death tolerable, if not joyful.—As men readily venture their lives to preserve their cattle or property; surely we should be willing to renounce, venture, and suffer any thing, for the sake of Jesus Christ and his precious salvation.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—5. (*Note,* vii. 7—11.) The tribe of Benjamin adhered to Judah, in the division of the kingdom, and returned with the Jews from Babylon: and, as

3 And the sons of Bela were, [c] Addar, and Gera and Abihud,
4 And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah,
5 And [d] Gera, and [e] Shephuphan, and Huram.
6 And these *are* the sons of [f] Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of [g] Geba, and they removed them to [h] Manahath:
7 And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud.
8 And Shaharaim begat *children* [i] in the country of Moab, after [j] he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara *were* his wives.
9 And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham,
10 And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These *were* his sons, heads of the fathers.
11 And of Hushim he begat Ahitub, and Elpaal.
12 The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built [k] Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof:
13 Beriah also, and [l] Shema, who *were* heads of [m] the fathers of the inhabitants of [n] Aijalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath:
14 And Ahio, Shashak, and Jerimoth,
15 And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader,
16 And Michael, and Ispah, and Joha, the sons of [o] Beriah;
17 And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber,
18 Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal;
19 And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi,
20 And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel,
21 And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of [p] Shimhi;
22 And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel,
23 And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan,
24 And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah,
25 And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the sons of Shashak;
26 And Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah,
27 And Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham.
28 These *were* heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief *men*. These [q] dwelt in Jerusalem.
29 And at Gibeon dwelt [r] the father of Gibeon, whose wife's name *was* Maachah:
30 And his first-born son [s] Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab,
31 And Gedor, and Ahio, and [t] Zacher.
32 And Mikloth begat [u] Shimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them.
33 And [v] Ner begat [x] Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and [y] Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishua, and [z] Abinadab, and [a] Esh-baal.
34 And the son of Jonathan *was* [b] Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat [c] Micah.
35 And the sons of Micah *were*, Pithon, and Melech, and [d] Tarea, and Ahaz.
36 And Ahaz begat [e] Jehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza,

[c] Gen. xlvi. 21. Num. xxvi. 40. *Ard.*
[d] Judg. iii. 15.
[e] vii. 12. *Shuppim.* Num. xxvi. 39. *Shupham.*
[f] vii. 10. Judg. iii. 20, &c. iv. 1.
[g] vi. 60.
[h] ii. 52. 54.
[i] Ruth i. 1.
[j] Gen. xxv. 6.
[k] Ezra ii. 33. Neh. vi. 2. vii. 37. xi. 35.
[l] 21. *Shimhi.*
[m] ii. 49, 50. 52. iv. 4.
[n] Josh. xix. 42. *Ajalon.*
[o] 13.
[p] 13. *Shema.*
[q] Josh. xv. 63. xviii. 28. Judg. i. 21. Neh. xi. 1. 7—9.
[r] ix. 35, 36. *Jehiel.*
[s] ix. 36, 37.
[t] ix. 37. *Zechariah.*
[u] ix. 38. *Shimeam.* B. C. 1200.
[v] ix. 39. 1 Sam. ix. 1. xiv. 50, 51.
[x] 1 Sam. ix. 1. Acts xiii. 21. *Cis.*
[y] 1 Sam. xiv. 49. xxxi. 2.
[z] 1 Sam. xiv. 49. *Ishui.*
[a] 2 Sam. ii. 8. iv. 12. *Ish-bosheth.*
[b] 2 Sam. iv. 4. ix. 6. xix. 24—30. *Mephibosheth.*
[c] 2 Sam. ix. 12. *Micha.*
[d] ix. 41. *Tahrea.*
[e] ix. 42. *Jarah.* B. C. 606.

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the history is about to open with the translation of the kingdom from Saul of that tribe, to David of Judah; we have here a more copious account given of it than of several other tribes. But either some of the sons of Benjamin had several names, or those called his sons were his more remote descendants. Gera, called his son in Genesis, is here mentioned as his grandson by Bela: (*Note, Gen.* xlvi. 21:) but the whole subsequent genealogy is obscure. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—10. Ehud the son of Gera (5), was the judge of Israel, who slew Eglon king of Moab: (*Notes, Judg.* iii. 15—30:) perhaps, in consequence, he acquired dominion over the Moabites, and some of his descendants lived among them. These having many children, removed several of them, and settled them in different places during their own lives.

V. 11—28. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 29—40. There are no genealogies remaining of any of the kings of Israel, after the division of the kingdom. But, we have here not only a genealogy of Saul, but also

37 And Moza begat Binea: [f]Rapha *was* his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son:

38 And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these *were* the sons of Azel.

39 And the sons of Eshek his brother *were*, Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.

40 And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, [g]archers, and had [h]many sons, and sons' sons, an hundred and fifty. All these *are* of the sons of Benjamin.

f ix. 43. *Rephaiah.*

g xii. 2. 2 Chr. xiv. 8.

h Ps. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 3—6.

CHAP. IX.

The original of the genealogies of Israel and Judah, 1. The first settlers in the land after the captivity, 2. The first who dwelt at Jerusalem, of the other tribes, 3—9: and of the priests and Levites, with their charge and service, 10—34. A repeated account of Saul's family, 35—44.

So [a]all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they *were* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, *who* were [b]carried away to Babylon for their transgression.

a Ezra ii. 59. 62, 63. Neh. vii. 5. 64. Matt. i. 1—16. Luke iii. 23—38.

b 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 9, 10. 18—20. Jer. xxxix. 9. lii. 14, 15. Dan. i. 2.

2 ¶ Now [c]the first inhabitants, that *dwelt* in their possessions in their cities, *were* the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and [d]the Nethinims.

c Ezra ii. 70. Neh. vii. 73. xi. 3.

d Josh. ix. 21—27. Ezra ii. 43. 58. viii. 20. Neh. vii. 60. 73. xi. 3. 21.

3 And [e]in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and [f]of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh;

e Neh. xi. 1. 4—9.

f 2 Chr. xi. 16. xxx. 11. 18.

4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of [g]Bani, of the children of [h]Pharez the son of Judah.

g Neh. viii. 7. x. 13.

h ii. 5. iv. 1. Gen. xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 20. Neh. xi. 4. 6. *Perez.*

5 And of the [i]Shilonites; Assaiah the first-born, and his sons.

i Num. xxvi. 20. *Shelanites.* Neh. xi. 5. *Shiloni.*

6 And of the sons of [k]Zerah; Jeuel, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.

k ii. 4. 6. Gen. xxxviii. 30. *Zarah.* Num. xxvi. 20.

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an account of his descendants by Jonathan, and Meribbaal, or *Mephibosheth*, and his son Micah, for several generations. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* ix. 1, 2. xiv. 47—52.) Perhaps David took care to record what passed in his days, and his descendants recorded what came after, in honour of Jonathan, David's covenanted generous friend. (*Marg. Ref.* —*Notes*, ix. 35—44. 2 *Sam.* ix. xvi. 1—4. xix. 24—30.)

'Conradus Pellicanus makes this reflection:—'That hence ' 'we may learn, it is an unnecessary labour scrupulously ' 'to enquire after these things, from which we can reap ' 'no fruit, and of which we may be ignorant without ' 'danger. Especially in the matter of these genealogies, ' 'the reason of which is long since expired, together ' 'with the tribes to which they belong. As for the cer' 'tainty of our belief, which depends upon the authority ' 'of the Holy Scriptures, that stands firm and constant, ' 'though some things, by the length of time, be so ob' 'scure, that they are not now exactly understood; espe' 'cially in the difference we find in the proper names of ' 'persons and places, which without prejudice to the ' 'faith may be neglected.'' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord delights to exalt those who have been abased; and to honour those who adhere to him, and to the King whom he has placed upon his holy hill of Zion, to his chosen people, and to his instituted worship. Numbers of renowned names are now buried in oblivion; but as God honours some of those, who have been faithful and useful in their generation, by recording their names in the sacred Scriptures; so he writes the names of all his people in the book of life. May this be our privilege, however unnoticed in the partial histories of mankind!—Alas! what will it avail those, who perish in an unequal contest with the Almighty, to be admired as men of valour and activity by their fellow-creatures! Let us seek to make our peace with God; and for his sake, and after his example, to forgive our enemies, and shew a decent respect to their memories: and still more to express affection and gratitude to those who have been kind and useful to us, not neglecting the credit and interests of their posterity.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1. This verse seems to be the sacred writer's account of the book, or books, from which he had transcribed the preceding genealogies. Both Israel and Judah had been thus reckoned, or registered; and he had made extracts from the books of the two kingdoms, which had been written before the captivity. (*Note, Neh.* vii. 5, 6.) The ten tribes had been carried into regions at a considerable distance from Babylon: but they were, at the time to which this refers, in general, subject to the kings of Babylon. (2 *Kings* xvii. 6. xviii. 11. xix. 12, 13. *Am.* v. 25—27.)

V. 2. The persons who first, after the captivity, regained possession of their cities and lands, contained among them, not only Jews properly so called, but many Israelites from the other tribes; and also a number of priests, Levites, and Nethinim. (*Notes, Neh.* xi. 1—3.) —The Nethinim were the remainder of the Gibeonites, with others perhaps joined with them, who were *given* as servants to the priests and Levites. The word signifies *given*, or, *dedicated* persons. (*Notes, Josh.* ix. 27. 1 *Kings* ix. 20—22. *Ezra* ii. 55—58. viii. 20.)

V. 3—9. From the subsequent names of the priests and Levites, it is probable, that the sacred writer is speaking of the transactions recorded by Nehemiah; (*Note, Neh.* xi. 4—6;) yet the names here mentioned so differ

7 And of the sons of Benjamin; [l] Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah.

8 And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah.

9 And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men *were* chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.

10 ¶ And of the priests, Jedaiah, and [m] Jehoiarib, and Jachin,

11 And [n] Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, [o] the ruler of the house of God;

12 And Adaiah the son of Jeroham the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiah the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of [p] Meshillemith, the son of [q] Immer;

13 And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; [*] very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

14 And of the Levites; [r] Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of [s] Hashabiah, [t] of the sons of Merari;

15 And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and [u] Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of [v] Zichri, the son of Asaph;

16 And [x] Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, [y] the son of Jeduthun; and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the [z] Netophathites.

17 And [a] the porters *were*, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: [b] Shallum *was* the chief:

18 Who hitherto *waited* in [c] the king's gate eastward; [d] they *were* porters in the companies of the children of Levi.

19 And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of [e] Ebiasaph, the son of [f] Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, *were* over the work of the service, keepers of the [†] gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, *being* [g] over the host of the LORD, *were* [h] keepers of the entry.

20 And [i] Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, *and* [k] the LORD *was* with him.

21 [l] *And* Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah *was* porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

22 All these, *which were* chosen to

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from those in the parallel passage, that it can hardly be supposed the same persons are always meant.—But, in these matters there are difficulties, which are perhaps incapable of a satisfactory solution at this distance of time, though the whole might be plain to those, for whose use it was principally intended.

Uthai, &c. (4) 'Now he sets down their names; and 'first those of the tribe of Judah.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11. "The ruler of the house of God" does not signify the high priest, but "the second priest," who officiated for him when incapacitated; or one of the chief priests, who superintended the affairs of the temple in all ordinary cases. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Neh.* xi. 10—15.)

V. 12—18. Several names seem to be omitted, in the genealogies of these persons, and others introduced, which are elsewhere omitted: but the names are so far the same, as to shew that the transactions recorded by Nehemiah are intended. (*Notes, Neh.* xi. 10—19. xii. 1—11.)

V. 19—21. It has been conjectured that the Jews, upon their return from Babylon, prepared a *tabernacle* for the worship of the Lord, before they had courage or ability to rebuild the temple. But the inspired historian evidently spoke of the times of Nehemiah; and the temple had been finished many years before.—The word *tabernacle* may, therefore, refer to the sanctuary erected by Moses, which the temple, built after the captivity, more resembled, than it did Solomon's magnificent edifice. Indeed, the sanctuary at first was only a *tent*, or *tabernacle*, when Phinehas superintended it, in time past: yet, "the "LORD was with him." (*Notes, Num.* iii. 32. iv. 27, 28. xxxi. 4—6.)—This seems to have been mentioned, as an instruction and encouragement to the priests and Levites, in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah: for there can be no reasonable doubt that Phinehas the grandson of Aaron was intended.—Among numerous instances in which the WORD of the LORD is used, by the Jewish paraphrasts, *personally* for JEHOVAH, the following may be adduced: 'In the Targum, The WORD of the LORD was his Helper. '—From whence Beckius frames this argument:—that if 'he who was with Phinehas was JEHOVAH the true God, 'and this WORD was with Phinehas; then the WORD, in 'the opinion of this paraphrast, was JEHOVAH the true 'God.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 22. Samuel seems to have made some regulations

be porters in the gates, *were* two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy [m] in their villages, whom [n] David and [o] Samuel the seer [*] did ordain in their [†] set office.

23 So they and their children *had* [p] the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, *namely*, the house of the tabernacle, by wards.

24 In [q] four quarters were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south.

25 And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come after [r] seven days from time to time with them.

26 For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in *their* [‡] set office, and were over the [§] chambers [*] and treasuries of the house of God.

27 And they lodged round about the house of God, because [t] the charge *was* upon them, and [u] the opening thereof every morning *pertained* to them.

28 And *certain* of them had [x] the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should [‖] bring them in and out by tale.

29 *Some* of them also *were* appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the [*] instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and [y] the oil, and [z] the frankincense, and the spices.

30 And *some* [a] of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.

31 And Mattithiah, *one* of the Levites, who *was* the first-born of [b] Shallum the Korahite, had the [†] set office, over the things that were made [‡] in the pans.

32 And *other* of their brethren, of [c] the sons of the Kohathites, *were* over the [§] shew-bread, [d] to prepare *it* every sabbath.

33 And these *are* [e] the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, *who remaining* in the chambers [f] *were* free: for [‖] they were [g] employed in *that* work day and night.

34 These [h] chief fathers of the Levites *were* chief throughout their generations; these dwelt at Jerusalem.

35 ¶ And [i] in Gibeon dwelt [k] the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wife's name *was* Maachah:

36 And his first-born son Abdon, then Zur, and [l] Kish, and Baal, and Ner, and Nadab,

37 And Gedor, and Ahio, and [m] Zechariah, and Mikloth.

38 And Mikloth begat [n] Shimeam: and they also dwelt with their bre-

m 16. 25. Neh. xi. 25—30. 36. xii. 28, 29. 44.
n xxiii. xxv. xxvi. xxviii. 13. 21
o 1 Sam. ix. 9.
* Heb. *foundea.*
† Or, *trust.* 26. 31.
p xxiii. 32. 2 Chr. xxiii. 19. Neh. xii. 45. Ez. xliv. 10, 11. 14.
q xxvi. 14—18.
r 2 Kings xi. 5. 7. 2 Chr. xxiii. 8.
‡ Or, *trust.* 22. 31.
§ Or, *storehouses.*
* xxvi. 20—27. 2 Chr. xxxi. 5—12. Neh. x. 38, 39. xiii. 5.
t xxiii. 32. Rom. xii. 7.
u 1 Sam. iii. 15. Mal. i. 10.
x xxvi. 22—26. Num. iii. 25—37. Ezra viii. 25—30. Neh. xii. 44. xiii. 4, 5.
‖ Heb. *bring them in by tale, and carry them out by tale.*
* Or, *vessels.*
y Ex. xxvii. 20.
z Ex. xxx. 23—38.
a Ex. xxx. 25. 33. 35—38. xxxvii. 29.
b 17. 19.
† Or, *trust.* 22. 26.
‡ Or, *on flat plates, or slices.* Lev. ii. 5. 7. vi. 21.
c vi. 33, &c.
§ Heb. *bread of ordering.*
d Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 5—8.
e *See on* vi. 31—33. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4—6. xxv. 1, &c. Ezra vii. 24.
f Neh. xi. 17. 22, 23.
‖ Heb. *upon them.*
g Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 2. cxxxv. 1—3.
h 13. Neh. xi. 1—15. B. C. 1300.
i viii. 29—40.
k ii. 23, 24. 45. 50—52.
l 39. *See on* viii. 33.
m viii. 31. *Zacher.*
n viii. 32. *Shimeah.*

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respecting the attendance of the Levites, before those which David afterwards established: indeed, some think, that David received those instructions from Samuel, according to which he regulated the courses of the priests and Levites. (*Marg. Ref.*)—When the Jews returned from Babylon, they ordered these matters with respect to those appointments.

V. 23. (*Marg. Ref.*) The expression here used, "the "house of the tabernacle," is considered by many as confirming the opinion before mentioned, that a tabernacle was erected, after the captivity, till the temple was finished. (*Note*, 19—21.) No doubt can, I suppose, be made as to the *fact:* but, if the sacred historian wrote of Nehemiah's time, whatever allusion he might make to that fact; it is certain, that the temple had been completed many years before.—When David made those regulations concerning the courses and services of the Levites, there was no temple; but the ministrations were performed at the tabernacle: and perhaps on that account, "the house of the "tabernacle" is mentioned.

V. 24—26. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xxvi.

V. 27—29. The gold and silver vessels, and other treasures appropriated to the service of God, were deposited in the treasuries of the sanctuary; and the Levites lodged around it, as the appointed guard of them, as well as to be ready for their work. (xxvi. 20—28. *Note, Ezra* viii. 24—27.)

V. 30. The Levites kept guard over the deposit of spices and frankincense, as well as over the other treasures: but the priests compounded the holy oil and incense. (*Notes, Ex.* xxx. 22—38.) It seems, however, that Bezaleel of Judah, made them in the time of Moses. (*Ex.* xxxvii. 1. 29.)

V. 31—33. *Marg. Ref.—Singers.* (33) A number of the Levites were employed, by rotation, in singing praises to the LORD; and they seem to have continued the service, night and day; and consequently were exempted from other employments, and also from paying tribute. (*Marg. Ref.* e—g. *Note, Ezra* vii. 24—26. *Ps.* cxxxiv.)—Moses *commanded* nothing concerning singers or musicians; and he forbad any to add to his words: but this could only mean *uninspired persons;* for no doubt God, by his prophets, might add, diminish, or alter, as he saw good.

V. 35—44. (*Note*, viii. 29—40.) This repetition seems to have been intended merely as an introduction to the ensuing history.

Ner, &c. (39) (1 *Sam.* xiv. 50, 51.) Perhaps Abiel, the father of Kish, was also called Ner.—Ner, the father

thren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren.

o 1 Sam. xiv. 50, 51. 39 And [o] Ner begat Kish, and Kish
p x. 2. 1 Sam. xiii. 22. xiv. 1. 49. *Ishui.* xxxi. 2. begat Saul, [p] and Saul begat Jonathan,
q *See on* viii. 33. and Malchishua, and Abinadab, and [q] Esh-baal.

40 And the son of Jonathan *was*
r *See on* viii. 34—36. [r] Merib-baal: and Merib-baal begat Micah.

41 And the sons of Micah *were* Pithon, and Melech, and Tahrea, *and Ahaz.*

s viii. 36. *Jehoadah.* 42 And Ahaz begat [s] Jarah, and Jarah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza,

t viii. 37. *Rapha.* B. C. 900. 43 And Moza begat Binea; and [t] Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.

44 And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan: these *were* the sons of Azel.

CHAP. X.

Saul's defeat and death, 1—7. The Philistines abuse his dead body, 8—10. The men of Jabesh-gilead rescue it, with the bodies of his sons, 11, 12. Saul's sin; for which he died, and the kingdom was transferred to David, 13, 14.

B. C. 1056. a 1 Sam. xxviii. 1. xxix. 1, 2. xxxi. 1, 2. NOW [a] the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down [*] slain in [b] mount Gilboa.

* Heb. *wounded.*
b 1 Sam. xxviii. 4. xxxi. 1. 2 Sam. i. 6. 21. xxi. 12.

2 And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew [c] Jonathan, and [d] Abinadab, and Malchishua, [e] the sons of Saul.

c viii. 33. ix. 39. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 39, 40. 2 Kings xxiii. 29. Is. lvii. 1, 2.
d 1 Sam. xiv. 49. *Ishui.*
e Ex. xx. 5. 2 Kings xxv. 7.

3 And the battle [f] went sore against Saul, and the [†] archers [‡] hit him, and [g] he was wounded of the archers.

f 1 Sam. xxxi. 3—6. 2 Sam. i. 4—10. Am. ii. 14.
† Heb. *shooters with bows.*
‡ Heb. *found.*
g Gen. xlix. 23, 24.

4 Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, [h] Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these [i] uncircumcised come and [k] abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for [k] he was sore afraid. So [l] Saul took a sword and fell upon it.

h Judg. ix. 54.
i Judg. xv. 18. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. xvii. 26. 36. 2 Sam. i. 20.
k Or, *mock.* Judg. xvi. 21. 23—25.
k 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. 2 Sam. i. 14—16.
l 2 Sam. i. 9, 10. xvii. 23. 1 Kings xvi. 18. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. Acts i. 18. xvi. 27.

5 And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.

6 So [m] Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.

m 1 Sam. iv. 10, 11. 18. xii. 25. Ec. ix. 1, 2. Hos. xiii. 10, 11.

7 And when all the men of Israel, that *were* in the valley, saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, [n] then they forsook their cities and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

n Lev. xxvi. 31. 36. Deut. xxviii. 33. 43. Judg. vi. 2. 1 Sam. xiii. 6. xxxi. 7.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came [o] to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

o 1 Sam. xxxi. 8. 2 Kings iii. 23. 2 Chr. xx. 25.

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of Abner or *Abiner*, (*my father Ner*,) was Saul's uncle, not his grandfather.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In remembering the miseries of man, we should be careful not to lose sight of his transgressions, that the justice of God in them may be acknowledged and adored.—When sinners repent, and forsake their sins, they are in the way of being extricated from trouble: and the affairs of church and state are likely to be well ordered, when men of all ranks and orders in the community concur in endeavours for that purpose.—Whatever politicians may suppose, no description of men are more essential to the real welfare of the state, than conscientious ministers of religion; and that service requires very able men, of clear heads and stedfast minds. God will raise up such persons, in those nations which he peculiarly favours; and qualify some for rulers in his church, and others for subordinate services: and it is well, when every one knows, and diligently attends to, his proper work, without envying or contemning any of his brethren. To be "a door-keeper "in the house of the LORD" is an honourable employment: and if he be with us, it will both be comfortable to us, and profitable to others; but without this, our services will be formal, and our souls miserable.—If employed in the service of the sanctuary, we have a charge to keep, as well as a work to do; and those, who "watch for men's "souls, as they that must give account," are entrusted with that which is unspeakably more valuable, than the richest treasures of silver and gold. They should therefore reside upon the spot, as much as possible; in order to be near and ready for their work, at every hour as occasion may require. To prepare bread for the sanctuary, in their stated publick preaching, may *perhaps* be only expected from them every sabbath: but some parts of their work must be needful every day; and they should generally be exempted from other cares and employments, that they may give themselves wholly to the word of God and prayer. (*P. O. Acts* vi. 1—7.) Blessed be his name! if indeed we be now true believers, we shall for ever, (not in rotation, but altogether,) without interruption or cessation, praise him night and day, in his temple above.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—12. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxxi.—*All his house died*, &c. (6) "All his men," in Samuel. 'All that were present with him in the battle:

9 And when they had stripped him, they [p] took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry [q] tidings unto their idols, and to the people.

10 And they put his armour in the house of [r] their gods, and fastened his head [s] in the temple of Dagon.

11 And when [t] all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul,

12 They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under [u] the oak in Jabesh, and [x] fasted seven days.

13 ¶ So Saul died for his transgression, which he * committed against the LORD, [y] *even* against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also [z] for asking *counsel* of *one that had* [a] a familiar spirit, to enquire *of it;*

14 And [b] enquired not of the LORD: therefore [c] he slew him, and [d] turned the kingdom unto David the son of † Jesse.

p 4. 1 Sam. xxxi. 9, 10. 2 Sam. i. 20. Matt. xiv. 11.
q Judg. xvi. 23, 24. Dan. v. 2—4. 23.
r 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. *Ashtaroth.*
s 1 Sam. v. 2—7.
t 1 Sam. xi. 1—11. xxxi. 11—13. 2 Sam. ii. 4—7.
u Gen. xxxv. 8. 2 Sam. xxi. 12—14.
x Gen. l. 10. 2 Sam. iii. 35.
* Heb. *transgressed.*
y 1 Sam. xiii. 13. xv. 3. 23.
z 1 Sam. xxviii. 7—20.
a Ex. xxii. 18. Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6. Deut. xviii. 10—14. 2 Kings xxi. 6. Is. viii. 19. Acts viii. 9—11. xvi. 16—18.
b Judg. x. 11—16. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. Ez. xiv. 3—6.
c Ps. xvii. 13. Is. x. 7. 15.
d 1 Sam. xiii. 14. xv. 28. xvi. 1. 11—13. xxviii. 17. 2 Sam. iii. 9, 10. v. 3.
† Heb. *Isai.*

CHAP. XI.

David, by general consent, is made king over all Israel, at Hebron, 1—3. He takes Zion from the Jebusites; dwells there, and prospers, 4—9. The names and achievements of his principal warriors, 10—47.

THEN [a] all Israel gathered themselves to David unto [b] Hebron, saying, [c] Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh.

2 And moreover * in time past, even when Saul was king, thou *wast* he [d] that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, [e] Thou shalt † feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be [f] ruler over my people Israel.

3 Therefore came all the [g] elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and [h] David made a covenant with them in Hebron [i] before the LORD; and they [k] anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD [l] by Samuel.

4 ¶ And [m] David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which *is* [n] Jebus; where the Jebusites *were,* [o] the inhabitants of the land.

a xii. 23—40. 2 Sam. v. 1.
b Num. xiii. 22. 2 Sam. ii. 1. xv. 10. 1 Kings ii. 11.
c Gen. xxix. 14. Deut. xvii. 15. Judg. ix. 2. 2 Sam. xix. 12, 13. Eph. v. 30.
* Heb. *both yesterday and the third day.*
d Num. xxvii. 17. 1 Sam. xviii. 13. Is. lv. 4. John x. 4.
e 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 13. 2 Sam. vii. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72. Is. xl. 11. Mic. v. 2. 4. Matt. ii. 6
† Or, *rule.*
f 2 Sam. v. 2. 1 Kings iii. 9. xiv. 7.
g 2 Sam. v. 3.
h 1 Sam. xi. 15. 2 Kings xi. 17. 2 Chr. xxiii. 3.
i Judg. xi. 11. 1 Sam. xxiii. 18.
k 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 2 Sam. ii. 4. 2 Kings xxiii. 30.
l 1 Sam. xv. 28. xxviii. 17.
‡ Heb. *by the hand of.*
m 2 Sam. v. 6—10.
n 5. Josh. xv. 63. xviii. 28. *Jebusi.* Judg. i. 21. xix. 10—12.
o Gen. x. 16. xv. 21. Ex. iii. 17.

'and his family had received such a blow, that it never 'recovered itself again. For though Ish-bosheth reigned 'over a part of the country, yet it was not in any splen-'dour.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13, 14. This history is repeated as an introduction to that of the kingdom of David. The Lord is said to have slain Saul, because he sentenced him to death, and gave Satan leave to tempt him to be his own executioner. —Is it possible, more strongly to mark the excessive criminality of consulting witches, conjurers, fortune-tellers, or sorcerers of any kind, real or pretended, than by representing Saul's conduct in this respect, as one principal reason of his rejection and awful end? (*Marg. Ref.* —*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 3—10.)

He enquired not, &c. (14) That is, he did not persevere in enquiring of the Lord; but gave it up as hopeless, and had recourse to the consulting of a witch. 'He 'was remiss and negligent, saying, If God will not hear 'me, I will go and consult a familiar spirit.' *Laniado, a Jew, in Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord punishes none except sinners; and no sinners can escape, who do not humbly cast themselves upon his mercy: but when transgressors enquire of God, and earnestly seek deliverance in his appointed way, they will certainly prevail; and if they be involved in domestick or national calamities in this world, they will be saved from the wrath to come.—Alas! many "reject his counsel, and "will none of his reproof," till he leaves them to "eat of "the fruit of their own ways, and to be filled with their "own devices:" and numbers, who profess to seek the Lord, are so superficial in doing it, so soon weary of it, and so ready to listen to Satan's temptations, that God accounts it no *enquiry* at all. May we "seek the LORD, "whilst he may be found," and till we have obtained pardon, peace, and sanctifying grace; and are enabled to renounce all fellowship with the works and prince of darkness! And may the good Lord deliver us from unbelief, impatience, and despair, and teach us to trust in him, to obey and submit to his will: and to render due honour and kindness to all, whatever their behaviour to us may have been! Thus waiting on him, we shall obtain a kingdom that cannot be moved, being beyond the reach of the incessant changes and revolutions of sublunary things.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—3. In this recapitulation of the transactions, with which David's reign over all Israel was introduced, no mention is made of Ish-bosheth, or Abner, or of the seven first years after Saul's death: (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* i—iv.:) but the narrative begins with his being submitted to, as God's appointed king, and as such anointed at Hebron, by the concurrence of the whole nation. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* v. 1—3.) It is here added, "ac-"cording to the word of the LORD by Samuel." (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xiii. 13—15. xvi. 6—13.)

V. 4—8. *Notes,* 2 *Sam.* v. 6—9.—*Joab,* &c. (6) It is evident that Joab was, before this, high in authority under David; but he was, as a reward of his courage and con-

5 And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, [p] Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took [q] the castle of Zion, which *is* [r] the city of David.

6 And David said, [s] Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be [*] chief and captain. [t] So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief.

7 And [u] David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called [†] it, The city of David.

8 And he built the city round about, even from [x] Millo round about: and Joab [‡] repaired the rest of the city.

9 So David [§] waxed greater and greater: [y] for the LORD of hosts *was* with him.

10 ¶ These also *are* [z] the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who [‖] strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, *and* with all Israel, [a] to make him king, [b] according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel.

11 And this *is* the number of the mighty men whom David had; [c] Jashobeam [*] an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains; he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain *by him* at one time.

12 And after him *was* [d] Eleazar the son of Dodo the [e] Ahohite, who *was one* of [f] the three mighties.

13 He was with David at [g] Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines.

14 And they [†] set themselves in the midst of *that* parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines: and [h] the LORD saved *them* by a great [‡] deliverance.

15 ¶ Now three [§] of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into [i] the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of [l] Rephaim.

16 And David *was* then [m] in the hold, and [n] the Philistines' garrison *was* then at Beth-lehem.

17 And David [o] longed, and said, Oh, that one would give me drink [p] of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that *is* at the gate!

18 And the three [q] brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: but David would not drink *of* it, but [r] poured it out to the LORD.

19 And said, [s] My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: [t] shall I drink the blood of these men [‖] that have put their lives [u] in jeopardy? for with *the jeopardy of* their lives they brought it: therefore he would not drink it. [x] These things did these three mightiest.

20 ¶ And [y] Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for, lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew *them*, and had a name among the three.

21 Of the three, he was more honourable than the two; for he was their captain: [z] howbeit he attained not unto the *first* three.

22 [a] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of [b] Kabzeel, [*] who had done many acts; he slew two [c] lion-like men of Moab: also he went down and [d] slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day.

23 And he slew an Egyptian, [†] a man of *great* stature, [e] five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand *was* [f] a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and [g] slew him with his own spear.

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[p] 1 Sam. xvii. 9, 10. 26. 36.
[q] 1 Kings viii. 1. 2 Chr. v. 2. Ps. ii. 6. ix. 11. xlviii. 2, 12, 13. lxxviii. 68. lxxxvii. 2. 5. cxxv. 1, 2. cxxxii. 13. Lam. iv. 11, 12. Rom. ix. 33. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1.
[r] 7. 2 Sam. v. 9. vi. 10, 12. Ps. cxxii. 5.
[s] Josh. xv. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xvii. 25.
[*] Heb. *head.*
[t] 2 Sam. ii. 18. iii. 27. viii. 16. xx. 23
[u] Ps. ii. 6.
[†] That is, *Zion.* 5.
[x] Judg. ix. 6. 20. 1 Kings ix. 15. xi. 27. 2 Kings xii. 20.
[‡] Heb. *revived.* Neh. iv. 2.
[§] Heb. *went in going and increasing.* 2 Sam. iii. 1. v. 10. Job xvii. 9. Is. ix. 7.
[y] ix. 20. Ps. xlvi. 7. 11. Is. viii. 9, 10. xli. 10. 14. Rom. viii. 31.
[z] 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.
[‖] Heb. *held strongly with.*
[a] xii. 38. 2 Sam. iii. 17, 18. 21.
[b] 1 Sam. xvi. 12—14.
[c] xxvii. 2. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. *The Tachmonite,—Adino, the Eznite.*
[*] Or, *son of Hachmoni.*
[d] xxvii. 4. *Dodai.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 9,
[e] viii. 4.
[f] 19. 21. 2 Sam. xxiii. 17—19. 23.
[g] 1 Sam. xvii. 1. *Ephes-dammim.*
[†] Or, *stood.*
[h] 1 Sam. xiv. 23. xix. 5. 2 Sam. xxiii. 10. 2 Kings v. 1. Ps. xviii. 50.
[‡] Or, *salvation.* Ps. cxliv. 10. Prov. xxi. 31.
[§] Or, *captains over the thirty.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 13.
[i] Josh. xii. 15. 1 Sam. xxii. 1. Mic. i. 15.
[k] xiv. 9. 2 Sam. v. 18. 22. Is. xvii. 5.
[l] Josh. xv. 8. *the giants.*
[m] 1 Sam. xxii. 1. xxiii. 25. Ps. cxlii. *title.*
[n] 1 Sam. x. 5. xiii. 4. 23.
[o] Num. xi. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xxiii. 15, 16. Ps. cxliii. 6.
[p] Ps. xlii. 1, 2. lxiii. 1. Is. xii. 3. John iv. 10. 14.
[q] 1 Sam. xix. 8. Cant. viii. 6. Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.
[r] 1 Sam. vii. 6.
[s] 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. 1 Kings xxi. 3. Rom vi. 1, 2.
[t] Lev. xvii. 10. 14. Job xxxi. 31. Ps. lxxii. 14. Mark xiv. 24. John vi. 55.
[‖] Heb. *with their lives.* Rom. xvi. 4.
[u] Judg. v. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 30.
[x] *See on* 12.
B. C. 1047.
[y] ii. 16. 1 Sam. xxvi. 6. 2 Sam. ii. 18. iii. 30. xviii. 2. xx. 6. xxi. 17. xxiii. 18, 19.
[z] Matt. xiii. 8. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 41.
[a] xxvii. 6. 2 Sam. viii. 18. xx. 23. xxiii. 20—23. 1 Kings i. 8. 38. ii. 30. 34, 35.
[b] Josh. xv. 21.
[*] Heb. *great of deeds.*
[c] xii. 8. 2 Sam. i. 23.
[d] Judg. xiv. 5, 6. 1 Sam. xvii. 34—36.
[†] Heb. *a man of measure.*
[e] Deut iii. 11. 1 Sam. xvii. 4—7.
[f] xx. 5.
[g] 1 Sam xvii. 5.

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duct on this occasion, established commander in chief over the whole army.

V. 9. (2 *Sam.* v. 10.) David's increasing greatness, with the cause of it, is here emphatically stated.

V. 10—14. *Note,* 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 8—12.—*Who strengthened,* &c. (10) 'Those valiant men ... that assisted him' (David) 'in his advancement, and helped to establish him 'in his authority. They were such, in all likelihood, as 'had accompanied him, during his persecution by Saul, 'when they gave David many proofs of their valour and 'affection, as they also did afterward.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15—19. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 13—17.

V. 20—25. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 18—24.

24 These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had a name among the three mighties.

25 Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, [h] but attained not to the *first* three: and [i] David set him over his guard.

26 ¶ Also the valiant men of the armies *were* [k] Asahel the brother of Joab, [l] Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,

27 [m] Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the [n] Pelonite.

28 [o] Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the [p] Antothite,

29 [q] Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the [r] Ahohite,

30 [s] Maharai the Netophathite, [t] Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite,

31 [u] Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah, *that pertained* to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite,

32 [x] Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, [y] Abiel the Arbathite,

33 Azmaveth the [z] Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

34 The sons of [a] Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite,

35 Ahiam the son of [b] Sacar the Hararite, [c] Eliphal the son of Ur,

36 Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,

37 [d] Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai,

38 [e] Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar * the son of Haggeri,

39 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah,

40 Ira the [f] Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,

41 [g] Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai,

42 Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him,

43 Hanan the son of Maachah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite,

44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hotham the Aroerite,

45 Jediael the † son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite,

46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite,

47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the Mesobaite.

h 2 Sam. xxiii. 21.
i 2 Sam. xx. 23.
k xxvii. 7. 2 Sam. ii. 18—23. iii. 30. xxiii. 24.
l 2 Sam. xxi. 19.
m 2 Sam. xxiii. 25. *Shammah the Harodite.*
n 2 Sam. xxiii. 26. *Paltite.*
o xxvii. 9.
p xxvii. 12. 2 Sam. xxiii. 27. *Anethothite.*
q xxvii. 11. 2 Sam. xxiii. 27, 28. *Mehunnai.—Zalmon.*
r 12.
s xxvii. 13.
t xxvii. 15. *Heldai.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 29. *Heleb.*
u 2 Sam. xxiii. 29. *Ittai.*
x 2 Sam. xxiii. 30. *Hiddai.*
y 2 Sam. xxiii. 31. *Abi-albon.*
z 2 Sam. xxiii. 31. *Barhumite.*
a 1 Sam. xxiii. 32. *Jashen.*
b 2 Sam. xxiii. 33. *Sharar.*
c 2 Sam. xxiii. 34. *Eliphelet.—Ahasbai.*
d 2 Sam. xxiii. 35. *Hezrai—Paarai the Arbite.*
e 2 Sam. xxiii. 36. *Igal the son of Nathan.*
* Or, *the Haggerite.*
f 2 Sam. xx. 26. *Jairite.*
g 2 Sam. xi. 6, &c. xxiii. 39.
† Or, *Shimrite.*

CHAP. XII.

The companies which came to David at Ziklag, 1—22. The armed troops that came to him at Hebron, 23—40.

NOW [a] these *are* they that came to David to Ziklag, * while he yet kept himself close because of [b] Saul the son

B. C. 1058.
a 1 Sam. xxvii. 6. 2 Sam. i. 1. iv. 10.
* Heb. being *yet shut up.*
b viii. 33. ix. 39.

V. 26—47. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 25—39.) The marginal references and readings, shew the principal differences between this part of the chapter, and the passages referred to. Several names are added to the catalogue of worthies. It is probable, the persons intended were something less famous, than those mentioned also in the second book of Samuel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the time arrives for the performance of God's word, those persons who before were the most averse to the things predicted, will concur in accomplishing them.—Kings should remember, and have need to be reminded, that they are not advanced for their own aggrandizement or self-indulgence; but that they should, with activity and vigour, provide for the defence and welfare of the nations over which they reign.—The desire of applause and pre-eminence seems to be the highest motive, of which carnal men are capable: but those, who are born from above, are actuated by purer and nobler principles. Yet, in seeking the glory of God and the good of man, by endeavouring to advance the kingdom of Jesus the Lord's anointed; they most effectually secure their own honour and exaltation.—The kingdom and glory of Christ will surely wax greater and greater, (the Lord of hosts being with him,) till all his enemies are put under his feet, and all his friends placed with him upon his throne.—The way to be truly great is to be really useful; and to give the use and glory of all our talents and services to the Lord: and if we be, at length, preserved from the destruction of the wicked, we shall perceive that the Lord has saved us with a great deliverance. May he teach us to repress all our earthly desires, to govern our appetites, to acknowledge candidly our mistakes, and completely to rectify them when discovered; and to be gentle and tender to others, and only severe against our own sins. Attached to the person and cause, and obedient to the orders of our King and Captain, may we endure hardship, be valiant for the truth, and so "fight the good fight of faith, that we may lay "hold on eternal life;" and have our names enrolled with honour in the records of the heavenly Jerusalem!

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1, 2. The sacred writer here goes back

of Kish; and they *were* among [c] the mighty men, helpers of the war.

2 *They were* armed with bows, and [d] could use both the right hand and the left [e] in *hurling* stones, and *shooting* arrows out of a bow, *even* of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

3 The chief *was* Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of [*] Shemaah the [f] Gibeathite: and Jeziel, and Pelet, the sons of [g] Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu [h] the Antothite,

4 And Ismaiah the [i] Gibeonite, [k] a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jehaziel, and Johanan, and Josabad the [l] Gederathite,

5 Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite,

6 Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites,

7 And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of [m] Gedor.

8 And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David [n] into the hold to the wilderness, men of might, *and* men [†] of war *fit* for the battle, that could [o] handle shield and buckler, [p] whose faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* [‡] as [q] swift as the roes upon the mountains;

9 Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third,

10 Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,

11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,

12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,

13 Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh:

14 These *were* of the sons of Gad captains of the host: [§] one of the least *was* over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.

15 These *are* they that went over Jordan in the first month, when [r] it had [‖] overflowed all his banks; and they put to flight all *them* of the valleys, *both* toward the east, and toward the west.

16 And there came of [s] the children of Benjamin and Judah to [t] the hold unto David.

17 And David went out [*] to meet

c xi. 10. 19. 24, 25.
d Judg. iii. 15. xx. 16.
e 1 Sam. xvii. 49.
* Or, *Hasmaah.*
f 1 Sam. xi. 4. 2 Sam. xxi. 6.
g xi. 33.
h xi. 28.
i Josh. ix. 3. 17—23.
k xi. 16.
l Josh. xv. 36.
m iv. 18. 39. Josh. xv. 58.
n 16. xi. 16. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. 29. xxiv. 22.
† Heb. *of the host.*
o 2 Chr. xxv. 5. Jer. xlvi. 9.
p xi. 22. 2 Sam. i. 23. xvii. 10. xxiii. 20. Prov. xxviii. 1.
‡ Heb. *as the roes upon the mountains to make haste.*
q 2 Sam. ii. 18. Prov. vi. 5. Cant. viii. 14.
§ Or, *one that was least* could resist *an hundred, and the greatest a thousand.* Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 30.
r Josh. iii. 15. iv. 18. Jer. xii. 5. xlix. 19.
‖ Heb. *filled over.*
s 2.
t *See on* 8.
* Heb. *before them.*

in the history, to the times which preceded the death of Saul, and records some particulars not mentioned in the books of Samuel, respecting David's advancement to the throne.—Several considerable persons resorted to him at Ziklag: (*Marg. Ref.* a, b:) and either joined his small troop, or assured him of assistance when it became necessary.—Some of these were Benjamites, and related to Saul, who were either induced through a firm belief of the word of God by Samuel respecting him; or by indignation at the base treatment which David met with from Saul, to the disgrace of their family and tribe; or because they perceived, that the Lord was departed from Saul, and was with David of a truth. The hand of God was, however, very conspicuous, in raising him up friends from this tribe, whence he might have expected the most determined opposition.—*Use both*, &c. (2). *Notes, Judg.* iii. 15—18. xx. 16.

V. 4. Perhaps Saul had conferred some honourable distinction on thirty of his most valiant captains; as David afterwards did on the same number of his: and Ismaiah was placed over this illustrious company. For Ahiezer (3), seems to have been the chief of those who came to David at this time.—'I suppose, there were thirty Benjamites 'came over to David at one time, and this was their leader.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 8. *Into the hold*, &c.] These Gadites came to David, either to Ziklag, or to some of those natural fortresses in which he secured himself, before he went into the land of the Philistines. (*Marg. Ref.* n.).

Faces of lions, &c.] 'They had a fierceness in their 'countenances, which terrified their enemies; who durst 'not look them in the face, but ran away as soon as they 'saw them. But they could not save themselves by flight, 'being pursued so swiftly by these men, that they over-'took them and slew them.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.* p, q.)

V. 14, Either these persons had the command, some over a hundred men, and others over a thousand, before they came to David; or he preferred them afterwards, in consideration of their services; or the passage may be understood according to the marginal reading.

V. 15. The lot of Gad was to the east of Jordan: and it is probable, that these men crossed the river towards the west, or into the land of Canaan properly so called. (*Notes, Num.* xxxii.) It seems also, that some great emergency required their immediate interposition; but it is not stated what enemies they opposed.—Perhaps, during some part of Saul's reign, the Philistines and other tribes, made incursions into the land of Israel; and these resolute Gadites hastened to assist their brethren. Or perhaps they were coming to join David, in his extreme danger; and, being opposed by Saul's adherents, they put them to flight, and pursued them in every direction. (*Note*, 8.)

V. 16—18. David had experienced much treachery even from those of his own tribe, and was therefore put on his guard: but he very frankly avowed his suspicions, and appealed to the consciences of those concerned. If they came peaceably to assist him, he would cordially unite

them, and answered and said unto
u 1 Sam. xvi. 4. 2 Sam iii. 20—25. 1 Kings ii. 13. 2 Kings ix. 22. Ps. xii. 1, 2.
them, u If ye be come peaceably unto
x 1 Sam. xviii. 1. 3. 2 Kings x. 15. Ps. lxxxvi. 11. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Phil. i. 27.
me to help me, x mine heart shall be
* Heb. one. Jer. xxxii. 39. Acts iv. 32. 1 Cor. i. 10.
* knit unto you: but if *ye be come* to
† Or, violence.
betray me to mine enemies, seeing
y Gen. xxxi. 42. 53. 1 Sam. xxiv. 11—17. xxvi. 23, 24. Ps. vii. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 23.
there is no † wrong in mine hands,
z Zech. iii. 2. Jude 9.
y the God of our fathers look *thereon*,
a Judg. vi. 34. xiii. 25.
and z rebuke *it*.

‡ Heb. clothed Amasai.
18 Then a the Spirit ‡ came upon
b ii. 17. 2 Sam. xvii. 25. xix. 13. xx. 4, &c. Amasa.
b Amasai, *who was* chief of the captains,
c 2 Kings x. 5.
and he said, c Thine *are we*, David,
d Ruth i. 16. 2 Sam. xv. 21. 2 Kings ix. 32. Matt. xii. 30.
d and on thy side, thou son of Jesse:
e Gal. vi. 16. Eph. vi. 23, 24.
e peace, peace *be* unto thee, and peace
f 1 Sam. xxv. 28, 29. 2 Sam. v. 2. Zech. viii. 23. John vi. 67, 68.
be to thine helpers; for f thy God help-
g 1 Sam. viii. 12. xxii. 7. 1 Kings ix. 22.
eth thee. Then David received them,
h 1 Sam. xxix. 2—4.
and made them g captains of the band.

i Heb. on our heads.
19 ¶ And there fell *some* of Manas-
i 1 Sam. xxix. 11.
seh to David, h when he came with
the Philistines against Saul to battle;
but they helped them not: for the
lords of the Philistines, upon advise-
ment, sent him away, saying, He will
fall to his master Saul i to *the jeopardy*
of our heads.

20 As he i went to Ziklag, there fell
to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Joza-
bad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jo-
k Ex. xviii. 21. Deut. i. 15. xxxiii. 17.
zabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, k cap-
tains of the thousands that *were* of Ma-
nasseh.

‖ Or, with a band.
† 1 Sam. xxx. 1—17.
m 20. v. 24. xi. 10. 21, 22.
21 And they helped David ‖ against
† the band *of the rovers*: for they *were*
all m mighty men of valour, and were
captains in the host.

n 2 Sam. ii. 2—4. iii. 1. Job xvii. 9.
22 For at *that* time, n day by day,
there came to David to help him, until
o Gen. xxxii. 2. Josh. v. 14. Ps. cxlviii. 2.
it was a great host, like o the host of
God.

23 ¶ And these *are* p the numbers
B. C. 1048.
p xi. 1—3. 2 Sam. v. 1—3.
* Or, captains, or men. Heb. heads.
of the * bands *that were* ready armed
to the war, *and* came to David to He-
q x. 14.
bron, q to turn the kingdom of Saul to
r xi. 10. 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 12, 13. 2 Sam. iii. 18. Ps. ii. 6. lxxxix. 19, 20.
him, r according to the word of the
LORD.

† Or, prepared.
24 The children of Judah, that bare
shield and spear, *were* six thousand and
eight hundred, ready † armed to the
war.

25 Of the children of Simeon,
mighty men of valour for the war,
seven thousand and one hundred.

26 Of the children of Levi four thou-
sand and six hundred.

s ix. 20. 2 Kings xi. 4. 9. xxv. 18.
t vi. 49—57. xxvii. 17.
27 And Jehoiada *was* s the leader of
the t Aaronites, and with him *were*
three thousand and seven hundred.

u vi. 8. 53. 2 Sam. viii. 17. 1 Kings i. 8. ii. 35. Ezek. xliv. 15.
28 And u Zadok, a young man
mighty of valour, and of his father's
house twenty and two captains.

‡ Heb. brethren. 2 Gen. xxxi. 23.
§ Heb. a multitude of them. 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9.
29 And of the children of Benja-
min, the ‡ kindred of Saul, three thou-
sand: for hitherto § the greatest part
of them had kept the ward of the house
of Saul.

30 And of the children of Ephraim
twenty thousand and eight hundred,
‖ Heb. men of names. Gen. vi. 4.
mighty men of valour, ‖ famous through-
out the house of their fathers.

x Josh. xvii.
31 And of x the half tribe of Manas-
seh eighteen thousand, which were ex-
pressed by name, to come and make
David king.

y Gen. xlix. 14. Esth. i. 13. Is. xxii. 12—14. Mic. vi. 9. Matt. xvi. 3. Luke xii. 56, 57.
z Prov. xiv. 8. Eph. v. 17.
32 And of the children of Issachar,
y *which were men* that had y understand-
ing of the times, z to know what Israel
ought to do; the heads of them *were*

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with them; and the time would come, when he should be able to recompense them: but, as he was conscious, he had not injured either Saul or his country; he reminded them, that if they came to betray him, the God of their fathers would surely avenge his cause upon them. Then Amasai, their leader, animated by a special impulse of the Spirit of God, answered him in the name of all the rest. He declared, that they were entirely attached to his person and interest; and cordially desired the prosperity of him, and of all who helped him; not only as his cause was just, but as they were persuaded that it was the cause of God, and would prevail: and they desired to share the conflicts and the successes of David and his friends. Accordingly David received and preferred them.—It is not certain, whether Amasai was, or was not, the same as Amasa, elsewhere mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.* b.)

V. 19. *Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxix. 2—6.

V. 20, 21. These captains of Manasseh seem to have met David, as he was returning from the army of the Philistines to Ziklag. It is probable, that they did not bring their companies with them; yet they both assured him of future assistance, and very seasonably helped him against the Amalekites who had spoiled Ziklag. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxx.)

V. 22. Such numbers resorted to David, after Saul's defeat and death, and they were so loyally attached to David, so united with each other, and so powerfully illustrious and valiant, that they resembled "the host of God;" that is, his legions of angels. Some consider it merely as a Hebraism for a very great army.

V. 23—40. Some learned men understand this passage, or at least a part of it, as relating to the time when David was made king over Judah, on his first coming to Hebron: but it seems entirely to refer to his being made king over

two hundred, and [a] all their brethren *were* at their commandment.

33 Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, [*] expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could [†] keep rank: *they were* [‡] not of double heart.

34 And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand.

35 And of the Danites, expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.

36 And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, [§] expert in war, forty thousand.

37 And on [b] the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.

38 All these men of war that could keep rank, came [c] with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and [d] all the rest also of Israel *were* of one heart to make David king.

39 And there they were with David three days, [e] eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them.

40 Moreover they that were nigh them, *even* unto Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought [f] bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen; *and* [‖] meat, meal, [g] cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for [h] *there was* joy in Israel.

[a] Prov. xxiv. 5. Ec. vii. 19. ix. 18.

[*] Or, *rangers of battle*, or *ranged in battle.*

[†] Or, *set the battle in array.*

[‡] Heb. *without a heart and a heart.* Ps. xii. 2. John i. 47.

[§] Or, *keeping their rank.*

[b] v. 1, &c. Num. xxxii. 33—42. Deut. iii. 12—16. Josh. xiii. 7—32. xiv. 3. xxii. 1—10.

[c] 1 Kings viii. 61. xi. 4. 2 Kings xx. 3. Ps. ci. 2

[d] *See on* 17, 18. Gen. xlix. 8—10. 2 Chr. xxx. 12. Ps. cx. 3. Ez. xi. 19.

[e] Gen. xxvi. 30. xxxi. 54. 2 Sam. vi. 19. xix. 42.

[f] 2 Sam. xvi. 1. xvii. 27—29.

[‖] Or, *victual of meal.*

[g] 1 Sam. xxv. 18.

[h] 1 Kings i. 40. 2 Kings xi. 20. Prov. xi. 10. xxix. 2. Jer. xxxiii. 5, 6. Luke xix. 37, 38. Rev. xix. 5—7.

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all Israel, after the death of Ish-bosheth; for there was no such union of the several tribes, on the former occasion, as is here described. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* ii. 1—4. v. 1—3.)—At that time great numbers came to David from each of the tribes of Israel: but in different proportions, according to the degree of the cordiality and zeal of each tribe. It is probable, that so small a number of Judah was present, in order that David's own tribe, over which he had now reigned seven years, might not appear to impose a king on their brethren. There was a considerable number of Levites assembled; but not at all in proportion to the multitude of the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who appeared on this occasion under a leader named Jehoiada, probably appointed by Abiathar the high priest: while Zadok, who was afterwards high priest, being now a young man, headed a company of chief men, perhaps of the line of Eleazar. So greatly had that family increased, notwithstanding the slaughter which Saul had not long before made of them, (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xx. 6—19,) that almost four thousand attended on this occasion!—The Benjamites in general had favoured the house of Saul; and numbers of them still waited for an opportunity of reviving the claim of that family, in some of its branches; for so the latter part of the twenty-ninth verse may be interpreted.—The leaders of Issachar were intelligent men, who understood the signs of the times; and perceived that it was both the duty and political interest of Israel, to advance David to the throne: and, having great authority in their tribe, they induced them to a unanimous concurrence in this measure; though they do not seem to have brought them to Hebron. Besides the numbers, who doubtless on various accounts were kept away, though cordially attached to David, there were three hundred and fifty thousand armed men, all heartily devoted to his service; who placed him upon the throne of Israel, with every expression of joy and affection.

Not of double heart. (33) 'All sincerely affected to David; though there were so many of them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

(*Note, Jam.* i. 5—8.)—*On asses*, &c. (40) No mention is made of horses, as employed on this occasion.—*There was joy in Israel.*] 'Their hearts were enlarged with joy, 'to see an end of their division, by their union under such 'a king, as they might reasonably hope would procure 'great happiness to them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

Earthly princes in general honour with marked distinction such persons, as have faithfully adhered to them in seasons of difficulty and danger: and, in like manner, Jesus Christ will confer peculiar honour upon those, who embrace and adhere to his gospel, in times of persecution and distress; who deny themselves, renounce their worldly interests, break through difficulties, and bear the cross, for his sake and after his example.—Courage, strength, agility, ingenuity, or superior mental endowments, are valuable to the possessors and to the community, only when, being considered as talents committed to them by the great Lord of all, they are conscientiously improved in promoting the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind: for, when misused or neglected, they prove occasions of increasing condemnation.—Long experience of the deceitfulness of mankind will teach caution to every reflecting person; but we should be afraid of growing unreasonably suspicious: and if we have a clear conscience, and use moderate precautions, we may trust in God to defend us from the effects of secret treachery, as well as of open violence; while we should readily forgive former injuries, and unite with those, who profess a disposition to be at peace with us, and to help us. But, when we cannot but suspect men's intentions in courting our friendship, it is best, in some cases, frankly to remonstrate with them as in the sight of God. This may sometimes intimidate the insincere, and give the upright an opportunity of clearing up their characters; while suspicions, harboured in secret, or only whispered among friends, are often injurious to the suspected person, and

CHAP. XIII.

David, with the princes and people, with great solemnity and zeal, fetches the ark from Kirjath-jearim, 1—8. Uzza is smitten, David is disconcerted, and the ark is left at the house of Obed-edom, 9—14.

[a] xii. 14. 20. 32. 2 Sam. vi. 1. 2 Kings xxiii. 1. 2 Chr. xxix. 20. xxxiv. 29, 30.

AND David [a] consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, *and* with every leader.

2 And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, [b] If *it seem* good unto you, [c] and *that it be* of the LORD our God, let us [*] send abroad unto our brethren every where, *that are* [d] left in all the land of Israel, and with them *also* to [e] the priests and Levites *which are* in [†] their cities *and* suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

3 And let us [‡] bring again [f] the ark of our God to us: for [g] we enquired not at it in the days of Saul.

4 And all the congregation said that they would do so; for [h] the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

5 ¶ So [i] David gathered all Israel together, from [k] Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of [l] Hemath, to bring the ark of God from [m] Kirjath-jearim.

6 And David went up, and all Israel, to [n] Baalah, *that is*, to Kirjath-jearim, which *belonged* to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, [o] that dwelleth *between* the cherubims, [p] whose name is called *on it*.

7 And they [§] carried the ark of God, [q] in a new cart, [r] out of the house of Abinadab; and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

8 And [s] David and all Israel played before God with all *their* might, and with [‖] singing, and [t] with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

b 1 Kings xii. 7. 2 Kings ix. 15. Prov. xv. 22. Philem. 8, 9.
c Ex. xviii. 23. 2 Sam. vii. 2—5.
* Heb. *breakforth*, and *send*.
d x. 7. Is. xxxvii. 4.
e xv. 2—14. Num. iv. 4, &c. 2 Chr. xxxi. 4, &c.
† Heb. *the cities of their suburbs*. vi. 54—81. Num. xxxv. 2—9.
‡ Heb. *bring about*.
f 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2. Ps. cxxxii. 6.
g 1 Sam. xiv. 18. 36, 37. xxii. 10. 15. xxiii. 2. 4. 9—12.
h 1 Sam. xviii. 20. 2 Sam. iii. 36. 2 Chr. xxx. 4. *marg.* Esth. viii. 5.
i 2 Sam. vi. 1.
k Num. xxxiv. 5—8. Josh. xiii. 3—6. *Sihor*. 1 Kings iv. 21. Jer. ii. 18. *Sihor*.
l Num. xxxiv. 8. Josh. xiii. 5. 1 Kings viii. 65. 2 Kings xxv. 21. *Hamath*.
m 6. 1 Sam. vi. 21. vii. 1.
n Josh. xv. 9. 60. 2 Sam. vi. 2. *Baale*.
o Ex. xxv. 22. Num. vii. 89. 1 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Kings xix. 15. Ps. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1. Is. xxxvii. 16.
p Ex. xx. 24. xxiii. 21. Num. vi. 27. 1 Kings viii. 16.
§ Heb. *made the ark to ride*.
q xv. 2. 13. Num. iv. 15. 1 Sam. vi. 7, 8. 2 Sam. vi. 3.
r 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2.
s xv. 16—24. 1 Sam. x. 5. 2 Sam. vi. 5. 2 Kings iii. 15. Ps. xlvii. 5. lxviii. 25—27.
‖ Heb. *songs*.
t xv. 28. xvi. 5. 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1—6. Dan. vi. 5. Am. v. 23. vi. 5.

always troublesome to ourselves. Integrity and affection will frequently, when the case requires it, dictate such frank, unreserved, and energetick language, as to afford full satisfaction: and then, cordial union, in promoting one common cause, succeeds jealousies, distance, and the debility of distrust.—Peace or victory, prosperity and felicity, are ensured to those whom God helps, and to all who concur with them. If under the influence of his Spirit, we, on that account, desire to have our lot among them, and declare on their side; and if we uprightly embrace the cause of Christ; his heart will be knit unto us, and he will receive and advance us in due season.

V. 19—40.

The cause of our King appears to a carnal eye weak and obscure, and his subjects have been hitherto comparatively few: but his kingdom and glory will, ere long, rapidly advance; and his host become, like "the host of God," innumerable and invincible.—The advancement of wise and good men to authority, is justly considered as a cause of great and general joy; and joy naturally enlarges the heart in cheerful liberality. Thus the Saviour's exaltation to the throne of glory filled the hearts of his people with gladness: nay, the sinner's willing submission to him, ushers in a day of joy and gladness, in which his brethren share, and to which they contribute. But, what a joyful time will that be, "when all kings shall fall down before "him, all nations shall serve him!" Every individual, in the innumerable throng, will participate and add to the joy of all the rest: and nothing short of the perfect purity and harmony of heaven, can give us a higher idea of true happiness. Mean while, happy are they, "who have un-"derstanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to "do:" who wisely perceive it to be their duty and interest, to submit to and trust in Jesus Christ the Son of David: who renounce all inconsistent connexions, pursuits, and employments for his sake; and unreservedly employ all their influence and ability to promote his cause, from love to him and to their brethren: whose love also abounds in knowledge and in all judgment, so that their beneficent endeavours are directed by heavenly wisdom, through an acquaintance with the word of God, and a maturity of experience and observation: and who consequently know how to attempt every thing in that manner, and at those seasons, which are suited to give it the greatest effect. This is to unite "the wisdom of the serpent with the harm-"lessness of the dove;" and "if any man lack this wisdom, "let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, "and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—4. It is probable, that David consulted with his principal friends and officers, about bringing back the ark, immediately after he had got possession of mount Zion, and had fixed his residence there: yet it appears, from comparing the different parts of the narrative, that he did not accomplish the design till some time after, being retarded by the incursions of the Philistines, and by other hindrances. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* v. vi. 1, 2.)—He did not judge it expedient, to act merely by authority, in so important a concern: but by consulting his friends, he ensured their ready concurrence, and that of their several connexions, and also of the priests and Levites.—During Saul's reign, or the latter part of it at least, the ark had been neglected, and even David had enquired of God by the high priest at a distance from it; (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 1—6. 9—13. xxx. 7—10. 2 *Sam.* ii. 1—3;) while Saul concerned himself very little in any way about religion. Thus the regular way of enquiring the will of God, by the high priest, with the breast-plate of judgment, before the ark in the sanctuary, had been long neglected.

V. 5—14. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 1—11.—

9 And when they came unto the threshing-floor of [u] Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen [*] stumbled.

10 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because [x] he put his hand to the ark: and [y] there he died before God.

11 And David was [z] displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called [†] Perez-uzza [a] to this day.

12 And David was [b] afraid of God that day, saying, [c] How shall I bring the ark of God *home* to me?

13 So David [‡] brought not the ark *home* to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of [d] Obed-edom [e] the Gittite.

14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months. And [f] the LORD blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

u 2 Sam. vi. 6. *Nachon.*

* Or, *shook it.*

x xv. 13. 15. Num. iv. 15. Josh. vi. 6.

y Lev. x. 1—3. Num. xvi. 35. 1 Sam. vi. 19. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—20. 1 Cor. xi. 30—32.

z 2 Sam. vi. 7—9. Jon. iv. 4. 9.

† That is, *The breach of Uzza.*

a Gen. xxxii. 32. Deut. xxxiv. 6. Josh. iv. 9.

b Num. xvii. 12; 13. 1 Sam. v. 10, 11. vi. 20. Ps. cxix. 120. Is. vi. 5. Luke v. 8, 9.

c 1 Kings viii. 27. Job xxv. 5, 6. Matt. xxv. 24.

‡ Heb. *removed.*

d xv. 18. xvi. 5. xxvi. 4. 8. 2 Sam. vi. 10, 11.

e 2 Sam. iv. 3.

f Gen. xxx. 27. xxxix. 5. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10, 11.

CHAP. XIV.

Hiram sends timber and builders to build David a house, 1. He prospers in his kingdom, takes more wives, and has several children, 2, 3. The names of his sons, 4—7. He gains two signal victories over the Philistines, 8—17.

NOW [a] Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, [b] and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, [c] to build him an house.

2 And David perceived that [d] the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel; for [e] his kingdom was lifted up on high, [f] because of his people Israel.

3 And David [g] took [*] more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters.

4 Now these *are* the names of *his* children which he had in Jerusalem; [h] Shammua, and Shobab, [i] Nathan, and [k] Solomon,

5 And Ibhar, and [l] Elishua, and Elpalet,

6 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

7 And Elishama, and [m] Beeliada, [n] and Eliphalet.

8 ¶ And [o] when the Philistines heard that David was [p] anointed king over all Israel, [q] all the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard *of it*, and went out against them.

9 And the Philistines came and spread themselves in [r] the valley of Rephaim.

10 And David [s] enquired of God,

a 2 Sam. v. 11, 12. 1 Kings v. 1. 8—12. 2 Chr. ii. 11, 12. *Huram.*

b xxii. 2. 1 Kings v. 6. 9, 10. 18. 2 Chr. ii. 3. 8—10. Ezra iii. 7.

c xvii. 1. 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Kings vii. 1—12. Jer. xxii. 13—15.

d xvii. 17. 2 Sam. vii. 16. Ps. lxxxix. 20—37.

e Num. xxiv. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 8, 9.

f 1 Kings x. 9. 2 Chr. ii. 11. Esth. iv. 14. Is. i. 25—27. Dan. ii. 30.

g iii. 1—4. Deut. xvii. 17. 2 Sam. v. 13. 1 Kings xi. 3. Prov. v. 18, 19. Ec. vii. 26—29. ix. 9. Mal. ii. 14, 15. Matt. xix. 4, 5. 8.

* Heb. *yet.*

h iii. 5. *Shimea.* 2 Sam. v. 14. *Shammuah.*

i 2 Sam. xii. 1. Luke iii. 31.

k xxii. 9—12. xxviii. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. 1 Kings i. 13. 17. ii. 15. iii. 3. 5—11. Matt. i. 6.

l iii. 6. *Elishama.* 2 Sam. v. 15.

m 2 Sam. v. 16. *Eliada.*

n iii. 8. *Eliphelet.*

B. C. 1047.

o 1 Sam. xxi. 11. 2 Sam. v. 17—25.

p xi. 3. 2 Sam. v. 3.

q Ps. ii. 1—6. Rev. xi. 15—18.

r xi. 15. 2 Sam. v. 18. 22. xxiii. 13. Is. xvii. 5.

s 14. xiii. 3. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2—4. 9—12. 2 Sam. ii. 1. v. 19. 23.

Shihor, &c. (5) *Marg. Ref.* k. *Note, Josh.* xiii. 1—5.—*A new cart*, &c. (7) 'They had so long been without it' (the ark) 'that they had forgot how it ought to be carried.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

When we set out in life, or obtain any temporal advancement, we should first enquire, how we may honour God and do good, and enjoy the divine blessing, in our several situations, and in the use of our possessions! Princes especially ought to adopt the most useful measures which they can devise to promote true religion by their example and authority, that they may have the Lord nigh unto them in all they undertake. This can only be done by consulting with others, and engaging them to concur in measures of acknowledged utility, and evidently consistent with the word of God; and by reminding, encouraging, and charging the ministers of religion, to attend to their important duties in their several situations, that good examples and good instructions may abound throughout the land. When such things, being mildly proposed, seem good to the leading men, we may hope that they are from the Lord, and expect that many other persons, being called upon, will voluntarily assist; and that thus the gospel will excite general attention, without any of the antichristian weapons of compulsion.—In rectifying abuses, it is generally best to shun personal reflections and severe accusations: they appear malevolent, and excite opposition. Suffice it to shew, that things needful have been neglected, and that it is proper for us to attend to them: and, in publick transgressions, humility will teach a man to consider himself as in some measure guilty, and more readily to condemn himself than others.—Even good men, in doing their duty, are liable to mistakes, and to act in an improper spirit: and rebukes, though merited and needed, often excite murmurs, discouragements, and hard thoughts of God. May we then, with redoubled diligence, seek to become acquainted with the whole word of God, and to make it "the lantern of our path:" may we walk humbly and circumspectly, avoid rashness and presumption, rejoice in our privileges with trembling, be patient under divine rebukes, persevere in well doing without discouragement, and seek the forgiveness and acceptance of every service, from the mercy of God in Christ Jesus! Thus will the gospel, which is to many "the savour of death," become to us "the savour of life," and the source of all blessings in time and to eternity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—16. (*Notes*, iii. 1—9. 2 *Sam.* v. 11—25.) The events, recorded in this chapter, are supposed

saying, [t] Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, [u] Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand.

11 So they came up to [v] Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, [x] God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand [y] like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place * Baal-perazim.

12 And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they [z] were burned with fire.

13 And the Philistines [a] yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

14 Therefore David [b] enquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them: [c] turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.

15 And it shall be, when thou shalt hear [d] a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, *that* [e] then thou shalt go out to battle: [f] for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines.

16 David therefore [g] did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from [h] Gibeon even to [i] Gazer.

17 And the [j] fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought [k] the fear of him upon all nations.

t 1 Sam. xxx. 8. Prov. iii. 6.
u Judg. iv. 6, 7. 1 Kings xxii. 6. 15—17.
v 2 Sam. v. 20. Is. xxviii. 21.
x Ps. xviii. 13—15. xliv. 3. cxliv. 1. 10.
y Ex. xiv. 28. Job xxx. 14. Matt. xii. 27.
* That is, *a place of breaches.*
z Ex. xii. 12. xxxii. 20. Deut. vii 5. 25. 1 Sam. v. 2—6. 2 Kings xix. 18.
B. C. 1046.
a 2 Sam. v. 22—25. 1 Kings xx. 22.
b *See on* 10. Ps. xxvii. 4.
c Josh. viii. 2—7. John ix. 6, 7.
d Lev. xxvi. 36. 2 Kings vii. 6. xix. 7. Acts ii. 2.
e Judg. iv. 14. vii. 9. 15. 1 Sam. xiv. 9—22. Phil. ii. 12, 13.
f Is. xiii. 4. xiv. 1, 2. Mic. ii. 12, 13.
g Gen. vi. 22. Ex. xxxix. 42, 43. John ii. 5. xiii. 17. xv. 14.
h 2 Sam. v. 25. *Geba.*
i vi. 67. Josh. xvi. 10. *Gezer.*
j Josh. vi. 27. 2 Chr. xxvi. 8.
k Ex. xv. 14—16. Deut. ii. 25. xi. 25. Josh. ii. 9—11. ix. 24.

CHAP. XV.

David prepares a place for the ark, and gives orders to the priests and Levites, about bringing it from the house of Obed-edom, 1—24. He and all the chiefs of Israel attend its removal, with sacrifices and songs of praise, 25—28. Michal despises David for dancing before the ark, 29.

AND *David* made him [a] houses in the city of David, [b] and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.

2 Then David said, * None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for [c] them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and [d] to minister unto him for ever.

3 And David [e] gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, [f] to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place, which he had prepared for it.

4 And David assembled [g] the children of Aaron, and the Levites:

5 Of the sons of Kohath; [h] Uriel the chief, and his † brethren an hundred and twenty.

6 Of the sons of [i] Merari; Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty:

7 Of the sons of Gershom; [k] Joel

a 2 Sam. v. 9. xiii. 7, 8. xiv. 24.
b 3. xvi. 1. xvii. 1—5. Ps. cxxxii. 5. Acts vii. 46.
* Heb. It is *not to carry the ark of God, but for the Levites.*
c Num. iv. 2—15. 19, 20. vii. 9. Deut. x. 8. xxxi. 9. Josh. iii. 3. vi. 6. 2 Chr. xxxv. 3.
d Num. viii. 13, 14. 24—26. xviii. 1—8. Is. lxvi. 21. Jer. xxxiii. 17—22.
e xiii. 5. 1 Kings viii. 1.
f 1. 2 Sam. vi. 12.
g vi. 16—20. 49, 50. xii. 26—28. Ex. vi. 16—22. Num. iii. 4.
h vi. 22—24.
† Or, *kinsmen.*
i vi. 29, 30.
k 11. xxiii. 8.

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to have taken place, in the order assigned to them in the second book of Samuel; and before David attempted to bring the ark to mount Zion.

Left their gods, &c. (12) That is, "Their images." (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* v. 21.) 'No wonder they could not preserve such gods, as could not preserve them, which David would not honour, as they had done the ark when they took it, but burnt them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17. *Notes, Josh.* ii. 8—11. vi. 27. *Matt.* iv. 23—25.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord has so arranged matters in his providence, that all have reciprocally need of each other's assistance: Thus men learn to feel their own insufficiency, and to unite in society for their common benefit. But, all our advantages are from God, by whatever means or instruments they are derived to us; and we should recollect, that we possess them for the good of others, and especially for the benefit of his people.—To repress that disposition to carnal security and self-indulgence, which gathers strength by prosperity, we must expect successive conflicts and troubles. But, if we enquire of the Lord in all our difficulties, and trust in him simply; if we use the appointed means with diligence, and obey his orders without reserve; if we break every league with sin, give no quarter to our lusts, and neither spare our own idols, nor covet those of others; and if we be disposed to give all the glory to the Lord; we shall not only be conquerors, but every conflict will increase our felicity, and add lustre to our eternal triumphs. Yet, all the praise and honour will ultimately be ascribed to the Saviour: his kingdom is confirmed and made very high, for the benefit of all his believing people: may his fame go forth into all lands; and may all nations fear his indignation, trust his mercy, submit to his authority, and unite in glorifying his name!

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1. As David had many wives and children, he had occasion to build several houses for them. (iii. 1—9. 2 *Sam.* xiii. 7. 20. 23. xiv. 24.)—Some think that the tabernacle made by Moses was become ruinous from time and neglect. About four hundred and fifty years had passed since it was erected. (*Notes*, xvi. 37—43. 1 *Kings* vi. 1. viii. 4.)

V. 2, 3. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 12—15. 2 *Sam.* vi. 12, 13.

V. 4—11. The priests and Levites had been before sent

the chief, and his brethren an hundred and thirty:

8 Of the sons of [l] Elizaphan; [m] Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred:

9 Of the sons of [n] Hebron; Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourscore:

10 Of the sons of [o] Uzziel; [p] Amminadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve.

11 And David called for [q] Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for [r] Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab,

12 And said unto them, [s] Ye *are* the chief of the fathers of the Levites: [t] sanctify yourselves, *both* ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto *the place that* I have prepared for it.

13 For because [u] ye *did it* not at the first, [v] the LORD our God made a breach upon us, [x] for that we sought him not after the due order.

14 So the priests and the Levites [y] sanctified themselves, to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

15 And the children of the Levites [z] bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the word of the LORD.

16 And [a] David spake to the [b] chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren *to be* [c] the singers with the instruments of musick, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by [d] lifting up the voice with joy.

17 So the Levites appointed [e] Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, [f] Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, [g] Ethan the son of Kushaiah;

18 And with them their brethren of [h] the second *degree*, [i] Zechariah, Ben, and [k] Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, [l] and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters.

19 So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, *were appointed* to sound with [m] cymbals of brass;

20 And Zechariah, and [n] Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on [o] Alamoth;

21 And [p] Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with [q] harps on the [*] Sheminith to excel.

l Ex. vi. 22. *Elizaphan.* m 11.
n vi. 2. xxiii. 12. 19. xxvi. 23. 30, 31. Ex. vi. 18. Num. xxvi. 58.
o vi. 18. xxiii. 12. Ex. vi. 18. 22.
p vi. 22.
q xii. 28. xviii. 16. 1 Sam. xxii. 20—23. 2 Sam. viii. 17. xv. 24—29. 35. xx. 25. 1 Kings ii. 35.
r *See on* 5—10.
s lx. 34. xxiv. 31.
t 14. Ex. xix. 14, 15. 2 Chr. v. 11. xxix. 4, 5. xxx. 15. xxxv. 6. Ez. xliv. 11. John xvii. 17. Rom. xii. 1, 2. Rev. v. 9, 10.
u xiii. 7—9. 2 Sam vi. 3.
v xiii. 10, 11. 2 Sam. vi. 7, 8.
x *See on* 2—Num. iv. 15. vii. 9. Deut. xxxi. 9. 2 Chr. xxx. 17—20. Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 8—10.
y Lev. x. 3. 2 Chr. xxix. 15. 34. Joel ii. 16, 17.
z Ex. xxv. 12—15. xxxvii. 3—5. xl. 20. Num. iv. 6. 1 Kings viii. 8. 2 Chr. v. 9.
a 2 Chr. xxx. 12. Ezra vii. 24—28. Is. xlix. 23.
b 12. Acts xiv. 23. 1 Tim. iii. 1—15. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. i. 5.
c 27, 28. vi. 31—38. xiii. 8. xvi. 42. xxiii. 5. xxv, 1—6. 2 Chr. xxix. 28—30. Neh. xii. 36. 46. Ps. lxxxvii. 7. cxlix. 3. cl. 3, 4.
d 2 Chr. v. 13. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Neh. xii. 43. Ps. lxxxi. 1. xcii 1—3. xcv. 1. c. 1. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
e vi. 33. xxv. 1—5. 1 Sam. viii. 2.
f vi. 39. xxv. 2. Ps. lxxiii.—lxxxiii. *titles.*
g 19. vi. 44. *son of Kishi.*
h xxv. 2—6. 9—31.
i xvi. 5, 6.
k 20. *Aziel.*
l xiii. 14. xvi. 5. 38. xxvi. 4. 8. 15.
m 16. xiii. 8. xvi. 5. 42. xxv. 1. 6. Ps. cl. 5.
n 18. *Jaaziel.*
o Ps. xlvi. *title.*
p 18. xvi. 5.
q xxv. 6, 7. 1 Sam. x. 5. Ps. xxxiii. 2. lxxxi. 1, 2. xcii. 3. cl. 3.
* Or, *eighth* so *oversee.* Ps. vi. xii. *titles.*

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to; (xiii. 2;) but it is probable, that only a few of them attended: at least, at this time greater numbers were collected, and they were arranged with more exact regularity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12—14. It appears from David's language to the priests and Levites, that they had before neglected to "sanctify themselves," by carefully avoiding, or seeking to be cleansed from, all ceremonial pollutions; by abstraction from outward indulgences; and by repentance, faith, prayer, and meditation. (*Notes, Ex.* xix. 10—15. *2 Chr.* xxix. 3—5, *v.* 5. xxx. 15.)—The ark had been long stationary, and the priests and Levites, through negligence, had forgotten how it ought to be removed; so that the king himself first discovered the error which had been committed, and pointed it out to them: and though he joined himself with them, as "not having sought the LORD after the due order;" (xiii. 9—11. *Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 3—11. *2 Chr.* xxx. 16—20;) yet it is plain that a large proportion of the blame belonged to them, especially to the chief persons among them. (*Note, Mal.* ii. 4—9.) It seems, however, that they were at this time made sensible of their guilt and danger; and very seriously and reverentially prepared for the solemn service. 'This good king doth not wholly excuse himself, and lay all the blame on them; but puts 'himself into the number of those who were negligent in 'this matter. For it was his duty, as well as their's, to 'look into the law, and pray to God for his direction.' *Bp. Patrick.* Had the express injunction in the law of Moses (*Note, Deut.* xvii. 18,) been strictly observed, it would have prevented many of these mistakes. But it may be doubted, if even David himself had noticed it.

V. 15. The Levites of the family of Kohath were appointed to carry the ark, and the priests were of that family; so that, on some occasions the priests, and on others the ordinary Levites descended from Kohath, performed this service. (*Notes, Num.* iv. 4—16. vii. 4—9. *Josh.* iii. 3, 4. 1 *Kings* viii. 3.)

V. 16. David, as a prophet, appointed the several particulars concerning the solemn worship at the sanctuary, especially in respect of psalmody and musick: and he seems first to have begun this arrangement when he removed the ark, though he afterwards more entirely completed it. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* xvi. 4—6. 37—43. xxv. *Ex.* xv. 1. 20, 21. *2 Chr.* xxix. 25—30.)

V. 17—19. *Marg. Ref.—Notes,* vi. 31—38.

V. 20, 21. *Alamoth* and *Sheminith* are musical terms, which either signify treble and bass, or some particular tunes, or the construction of the instruments to which

22 And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, *was* * for † song: [r] he instructed about the song, because he *was* skilful.

23 And Berechiah and Elkanah *were* [s] door-keepers for the ark.

24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, [t] the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and [u] Obed-edom and Jehiah *were* door-keepers for the ark.

25 ¶ So [x] David and the elders of Israel, and the [y] captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the house of [z] Obed-edom [a] with joy.

26 And it came to pass, when [b] God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that [c] they offered [d] seven bullocks and seven rams.

27 And David *was* clothed with [e] a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and [f] Chenaniah the master of the ‡ song with the singers: David also *had* upon him an ephod of linen.

28 Thus all Israel [g] brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD [h] with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

29 And it came to pass *as* the [i] ark of the covenant of the [k] LORD came to the city of David, that [l] Michal the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw king David [m] dancing and playing: and [n] she despised him in her heart.

* Or, *for the carriage: he instructed about the carriage.*
† Heb. *lifting up.* 16. 27.
r xxv. 7, 8.
s ix. 21—28. 2 Kings xxii. 4. xxv. 18. Ps lxxxiv. 10.
t xvi. 6. Num. x. 8. 2 Chr. v. 12, 13. Ps. lxxxi. 3.
u 18. 23.
x 2 Sam. vi. 12, 13. 1 Kings viii. 1.
y Num. xxxi. 14. Deut. i. 15. 1 Sam. viii. 12. x. 19. xxii. 7. Mic. v. 2.
z xiii. 14.
a xiii. 11, 12. Deut. xii. 7. 18. xvi. 11. 15. 2 Chr. xx. 27, 28. Ezra vi. 16. Ps. xcv. 1, 2. c. 1, 2. Phil. iii. 3. iv. 4.
b xxix. 14. 1 Sam. vii. 12. Acts xxvi. 22. 2 Cor. ii. 16. iii. 5.
c 2 Sam. vi. 13. Ps. lxvi. 13—15.
d Num. xxiii. 1, 2. 4. 29. xxix. 32. Job xlii. 8. Ez. xliii. 23.
e 1 Sam. ii. 18. 2 Sam. vi. 14.
f 22.
‡ Or, *carriage.* 22.
g 2 Sam. vi. 15.
h 16. xiii. 8. 2 Chr. v. 12, 13. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Ps. xlvii. 1—5. lxviii. 25. xcviii. 4—6. cl. 3—5.
i xvii. 1. Num. x. 33. Deut. xxxi. 26. Josh. iv. 7. Judg. xx. 27. 1 Sam. iv. 3. Jer. iii. 16. Heb. ix. 4.
k 2 Sam. vi. 16.
l 1 Sam. xviii. 27, 28. xix. 11—17. xxv. 44. 2 Sam. iii. 13, 14.
m Ex. xv. 20. Ps. xxx. 11. cxlix. 3. cl. 4. Ec. iii. 4. Jer. xxx. 19. xxxiii. 11.
n 2 Sam. vi. 20—23. Ps. lxix. 7—9. Acts ii. 13. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 2 Cor. v. 13.

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the compositions were adapted. (*Notes, Ps.* vi. *title.* xlvi. *title.*)

V. 22. Chenaniah seems to have been the *precentor,* and the principal instructor of all the company in singing: though Heman, Asaph, and Ethan had the chief authority over the singers and musicians of the families of Levites. (*Marg. Ref. v.* 17.)

V. 23, 24. Perhaps Berechiah and Elkanah were stationed on mount Zion, to open the doors of the tent, when the ark approached to it; and when the singers called on them for admission. (*Note, Ps.* xxiv. 7—10.) And Obed-edom and Jehiah were afterwards appointed statedly to guard the door of the tent, that none might enter, but according to the law.—The blowing of the trumpets was exclusively the office of the priests. (*Marg. Ref.* t. *Note, Num.* x. 2—10.)

V. 26. The Levites offered these sacrifices on their own account, besides those which David offered. (*Note, 2 Sam.* vi. 12, 13.) Thus they acknowledged the unmerited goodness of God, in enabling them with safety to perform the service allotted them; probably being conscious, that Uzzah had been smitten, as much through their fault as for his own.—Some think that they rested seven times, and offered a bullock and a ram each time. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27, 28. *Note, 2 Sam.* vi. 14, 15.

V. 29. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 16. 20—23.) 'She was a 'proud woman, and 'tis likely had no great sense of religion, 'which in the reign of Saul ... was much neglected.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most zealous and useful reformers have, in all ages, been left to make mistakes, which inferior persons could easily discern; and especially, before their judgments were matured by experience and observation. Satan avails himself of these errors to prejudice the minds of men against their whole character and work: and the artifice readily succeeds with those, who are in quest of some specious pretence, for despising and opposing the humbling truths and the holy service of God. But, we should hence infer, that nothing perfect can be expected from mere men; and we should neither be offended at the miscarriages blended with laudable and useful endeavours; nor yet vindicate or adopt every sentiment and practice, which have been sanctioned by respectable and eminent men: but, we should compare all, as well as we can, with the word of God; and by that criterion distinguish between the precious and the vile. Wise and good men, however, will profit by rebukes; having discovered, they will honestly confess, their mistakes, and acknowledge that they "did not seek the "LORD after the due order;" and, upon recollection, they will both justify him in his sharpest corrections, and proceed with their work with greater circumspection. It indeed, seems one of the greatest attainments of human nature, to search out, confess, rectify, and profit by, our own mistakes and miscarriages.—The Lord's choice of us, in every sense in which that expression is used or understood, implies our being chosen to *services,* as well as *privileges:* and plain and serious admonitions, from those who lead the way by a good example, and whose rank and character give weight and authority to their words, will often excite the remiss to diligence, and the ignorant and heedless to learn and attend to their duty.—But alas! preeminence is generally privileged with supineness and indulgence: and too often, examples of avarice, pride, and licentiousness, become infamously conspicuous, through the rank of those who set them; diffusing their baleful influence, like a destructive pestilence, among the subordinate members of the community. We have all, however, our proper place, work, and talent; every servant should know well his own business, and punctually execute it; and this cannot be done without attention to the Scriptures, and preparation of heart by the sanctification of the Spirit, vouchsafed in answer to our prayers.—Every thing

CHAP. XVI.

The ark being placed in its tent, David offers sacrifices, and liberally feasts the people, 1—3. He appoints singers and musicians to praise the Lord, 4—6. The psalm of thanksgiving then used, 7—36. The priests, singers, and porters appointed to minister continually before the ark, 37—42. David dismisses the people, 43.

a 2 Sam. vi. 17—19. 1 Kings viii. 6. 2 Chr. v. 7.
b xv. 1. 12. 2 Chr. i. 4. Ps. cxxxii. 8.
c 1 Kings viii. 5. 2 Chr. v. 6. Ezra vi. 16—18.

So [a] they brought the ark of God, and set it [b] in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and [c] they offered burnt-sacrifices and peace-offerings before God.

d Lev. i. 3.
e Gen. xiv. 19. xx. 7. xlvii. 7, 10. Num. vi. 23—27. Josh. xxii. 6. 2 Sam. vi. 18. 1 Kings viii. 55, 56. 2 Chr. xxix. 29. xxx. 18—20. 27. Luke xxiv. 50, 51. Heb. vii. 7.

2 And when David had made an end of offering [d] the burnt-offerings, and the peace-offerings, [e] he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.

f 2 Chr. xxx. 24. xxxv. 7, 8. Neh. viii. 10. Ez. xlv. 17. 1 Pet. iv. 9.

3 And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, [f] to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon *of wine*.

g xv. 16. xxii. 2—6. xxiv. 3.
h 37—42. xxiii. 27—32. Num. xviii. 1—6.
i 8. Ps. xxxviii. lxx. *titles.* cii. 2. cv. 5. Is. lxii. 6, 7.
j Gen. xvii. 7. xxxii. 28. xxxiii. 20. *marg.* 1 Kings viii. 15. Ps. lxxii. 18. cvi. 48.
k *See on* vi. 39. xv. 16—24. xxv. 1—6.

4 And [g] he appointed *certain* of the Levites to [h] minister before the ark of the LORD, and [i] to record, and to thank and praise [j] the LORD God of Israel:

5 [k] Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel with * psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals.

* Heb. *instruments of psalteries and harps,* xv. 20, 21. 2 Chr. xxix. 25.

6 Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests, [l] with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

l Num. x. 8. 2 Chr. v. 12, 13. xiii. 12. xxix. 26—28.
m 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. 2 Chr. xxix. 30. Neh. xii. 24.
n Ps. xii. xviii. *titles.*
o *See on* Ps. cv. 1—15.
p Is. xii. 4. Acts ix. 14. 1 Cor. i. 2.
q 1 Kings viii. 43. 2 Kings xix. 19. Ps. lxvii. 2—4. lxxviii. 3—6. cxlv. 5, 6.

7 ¶ Then [m] on that day David delivered first *this psalm,* to thank the LORD, [n] into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

8 [o] Give thanks unto the LORD, [p] call upon his name, [q] make known his deeds among the people.

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we engage in, must be undertaken in dependence on the mercy and grace of God through the atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer: and, as "it is of the LORD's mercy, that "we are not consumed;" so, if we go successfully and comfortably through any service, we must remember that God has helped us, and give him the glory; for without him we can do nothing. When God accepts our persons and our works, makes our hearts joyful in himself, and renders our services beneficial to his church; we may indeed expect, but need not regard, the scoffs and reproaches of unbelievers: and we must learn to bear them with patience, and to persevere in our compassionate prayers for those, who are thus enemies to their own souls by opposing the cause of God, which we are honoured to promote.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. *Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 17—19.

V. 4—6. These Levites were appointed "to record," or to put the people in remembrance of the wonderful works of God for Israel, as well as to thank him and praise his name. (*Note, Is.* lxii. 6, 7.) Doubtless, David acted as a prophet in regulating this part of divine worship: and his example will not justify uninspired men, in introducing *human inventions* into the worship of God, and *imposing* them by their own authority; for when Hezekiah made similar arrangements, he only enforced what David had appointed. (2 *Chr.* xxix. 26—28.) Yet it is evident that the other kings of Judah, and Nehemiah after the captivity, in many things *commanded* and directed the Levites and priests, and even the high priest, in respect of their ministrations; and that when they exercised this authority in religious concerns, according to the word of God, they were approved and commended for so doing. As this is no where enjoined on rulers in the law of Moses; it seems by no means exclusively to belong to that dispensation, but to be the proper improvement of the talents entrusted to them; while an unscriptural exercise of this authority constituted an abuse and perversion of their talents. (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* xvi. 10—16. 2 *Chr.* xv. 12—19. xxix. 12. 15. 21—24. xxx. 12. xxxi. 2—4. 20, 21. xxxiv. 20—28. xxxv. 1—9. *Neh.* xiii. 7—13. 28—31. *Ez.* xlv. 18—25.)—The use of *instrumental* musick in the worship of God was evidently prior to the ceremonial law; and therefore could form no part of it, or be abrogated with it: and though it is not required in the New Testament; yet, it seems no way inconsistent with it, provided it be suited to the solemnity and seriousness of our religious rejoicing, and so regulated as really to assist the exercise of devout affections. The sad abuse of making, what is called *sacred musick,* a matter of mere *carnal diversion,* with some other subordinate evils of the same kind, form the strongest arguments against it. (*Note, Ex.* xv. 1.)—The trumpets alone were appointed in the law, and had a typical meaning. (*Note, Num.* x. 2—10. *P. O.* 1—10.)

V. 7. The psalm, which was sung on this solemn occasion, is composed of extracts from several psalms. (*Marg. Ref.*) To the twenty-second verse inclusive is nearly the same as the former part of the cv. Psalm: from the twenty-third verse to the thirty-third, it accords to the xcvi. Psalm; and the conclusion, to that of the cvi. Psalm. Probably David had these by him, with many others, for his own private use; and he composed from them a song of praise and thanksgiving, to record the mercies of the Lord, suited to the solemnity. But, afterwards he gave the other psalms also, one after another, into the hands of the chief singers, for the benefit of the people who attended the worship performed before the ark.

To thank the Lord.] 'To give him thanks, (as Conradus 'Pellicanus well glosses) for all his benefits, he had be-'stowed on his people Israel, and which he intended to 'bestow on all the people of this world by his Son Christ.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 8, 9. In these verses the inspired and enraptured Psalmist excited the people, and taught them to animate

9 [r] Sing unto him, sing [s] psalms unto him, [t] talk ye of all his wondrous works.

10 [u] Glory ye in his holy name: [x] let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

11 [y] Seek the LORD and [z] his strength, [a] seek his face continually.

12 [b] Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and [c] the judgments of his mouth;

13 O [d] ye seed of Israel, his servant, ye children of Jacob, [e] his chosen ones.

14 He *is* [f] the LORD our God; [g] his judgments *are* in all the earth.

15 Be [h] ye mindful always of his covenant; the word *which* he commanded to [i] a thousand generations;

16 *Even of the covenant* [k] which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob [l] for a law, *and* to Israel *for* [m] an everlasting covenant,

18 Saying, [n] Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the * lot of your [o] inheritance;

r Ps. xcv. 1, 2. xcvi. 1, 2. xcviii. 1—4.
s Matt. xxvi. 30. Eph. v. 19 Col. iii. 16. Jam. v. 13.
t Ps. xl. 10. lxxi. 17, 18. xcvi. 3. cxlv. 4—6. 12.
u Ps. xxxiv. 2. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. Gr.
x xxviii. 9. Prov. viii. 17. Is. xlv 19. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 13. Matt vii. 7, 8.
y Am. v. 6. Zeph. ii. 2, 3.
z 2 Chr. vi. 41. Ps. lxviii. 35. lxxviii. 61.
a Ps. iv. 6. xxvii. 8, 9. lxvii. 1.
b 6, 9. Ps. ciii. 2. cxi. 4.
c Ps. xix. 9. cxix. 13. 20. 75. 137. Rom. xi. 33. Rev. xvi. 7. xix. 2.
d Gen. xvii. 7. xxviii. 13, 14. xxxv. 10—12
e Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. vii. 6 Ps. cxxxv. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
f Ex. xv. 2. Ps. lxiii. 1. xcv. 7. c. 3. cxviii. 28.
g 12. Ps. xlviii. 10. 11. xcvii. 8, 9.
h Ps. xxv. 10. xliv. 17. cv. 8. Mal. iv. 4.
i Deut. vii. 9.
k Gen. xv. 18. xvii. 2. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13, 14. Ex. iii. 15. Neh. ix. 8. Luke i. 72, 73. Acts iii. 25. Gal. iii. 15—17. Heb. vi. 13—18.
l Ps. lxxviii. 10.
m Gen. xvii. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Is. lv. 3. Heb. xiii. 20.
n Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. xvii. 8. xxviii. 13, 14. xxxv. 11, 12.
* Heb. *cord.* Mic. ii. 5.
o Num. xxvi. 53—56. Deut. xxxii. 8.

each other, in blessing the God of Israel for all his mercies, and in celebrating his glorious perfections, which are worthy to be known, admired, and extolled; and which render him the meet object of the universal and entire love, worship, confidence, and obedience of all rational creatures. He also exhorted them to *meditate*, and converse frequently, on the wonderful works of JEHOVAH, and to proclaim them before others; to call on him in all their wants and dangers; and by every means to adore and praise him. (*Notes, Ps.* xcvi. 1—4. cv. 1, 2. *Is.* xii. 4—6.)

V. 10. To "glory in God," is to value our relation to him, as our honour and privilege, far above all other distinctions; to make that alone the ground of our confidence and exultation; to account ourselves in this, more happy, more honoured, and more favoured, than any other people. To "glory *in his holy name*," is to rejoice and exult in his immutable wisdom, justice, truth, and love. (*Notes, Is.* xlv. 23—25. *Jer.* ix. 23, 24. 1 *Cor.* i. 26—31. *Phil.* iii. 1—7, *v.* 3.) And even they, who are only beginning to seek the Lord, may rejoice that he is upon a mercy-seat, ready to receive their submissions, to hear their prayers, to forgive their sins, to supply their wants, and to save their souls. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11. "Seeking the LORD" implies an earnest and diligent endeavour to obtain the knowledge and favour of God, according to the revelation made of him in his word; the renewal of the soul to holiness by his grace, the safety to be enjoyed under his omnipotent protection, and the comfort and support of his Spirit under all trials and temptations, till his strength has perfected the work of his mercy in the full salvation of both body and soul; when present glimpses of his glory, and experience of his love, shall be perfected, by beholding the full display of that glory, and enjoying the full effects of that love, in heaven for ever. (*Notes, Ps.* xiv. 2, 3. xxvii. 8, 9. *Is.* lv. 6, 7. *Matt.* vi. 33, 34. vii. 7—11.)—The gracious aid and protection of JEHOVAH were ensured to Israel, when they sought him as dwelling between the cherubim above the ark: therefore the ark itself is called "his strength;" and this implies, that we must "seek the Lord," through Christ, and according to the gospel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12, 13. "The judgments of his mouth," may either mean, the righteous laws and statutes given to Israel, or the just vengeance which God denounced and executed on his enemies, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in Canaan. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Deut.* vii. 6—8. *Is.* xli. 8, 9.)

V. 14. Israel, as the peculiar people of JEHOVAH, were bound to worship and obey him; and ought to glory and rejoice in him. Indeed, his word and his works, both of mercy and vengeance, which had become known and renowned among the nations far and wide, suggested powerful motives both of warning and encouragement, to his professed servants. He also governs the whole earth in justice and in judgment: and is continually executing, in his providence, deserved punishment upon offending nations and individuals. His judgments were made known in all the earth, in a most striking manner, when Christianity was established in the world; while the nation of the Jews, and the idolatrous Gentiles, who opposed the cause of Christ, were exposed to the most terrible and durable calamities.

V. 15—19. (*Note, Ps.* cv. 8—15, *v.* 8.) The covenant of JEHOVAH with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, engaged to their posterity the inheritance of Canaan. This was *absolute*, as *a law* which required prompt obedience. Their descendants must inherit the land; but, which of their generations, or for how long a time that should be, depended on other circumstances, which were declared and stipulated by the Sinai-covenant. (*Notes, Gen.* xvii. 4—12. xxvi. 2—5. xxviii. 13—15. *Ex.* xix. 5. xxiv. 6—8. *Jer.* xxxi. 31—34. *Gal.* iii. 15—18. *Heb.* vi. 16—20. viii. 7—13.)—'What he had first promised to Abraham, and 'confirmed to Isaac, by a solemn oath, he established to 'Jacob by an inviolable law, to endure for ever.' *Bp. Patrick.*—A thousand generations is a large definite number taken for an indefinite one; (*Deut.* vii. 9;) and this language was suited to lead the thoughts of pious Israelites, to the eternal inheritance typified by Canaan. The oath, by which the Lord condescended to ratify this engagement, shewed the immutability of his counsel, and represented the covenant of grace, as irreversibly confirmed with every true believer.—David called upon the people to remember this covenant; that, considering from how small beginnings, through how many and formidable difficulties, and after how many delays, the engagement of the Lord had been fulfilled; they might be animated to praise him, encouraged to trust him, and induced to cleave to and obey him.

19 When ye were but [*] few, even [p] a few, and strangers in it.

20 And *when* [q] they went from nation to nation, and from *one* kingdom to another people;

21 [r] He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, [s] he reproved kings for their sakes,

22 *Saying*, Touch not [t] mine anointed, and do my [u] prophets no harm.

23 [x] Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; [y] shew forth, from day to day, his salvation.

24 [z] Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

25 For [a] great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised: [b] he also *is* to be feared above all gods.

26 For [c] all the gods of the people *are* idols: but [d] the LORD made the heavens.

27 [e] Glory and honour *are* in his presence; [f] strength and gladness *are* in his [g] place.

28 [h] Give unto the LORD [i] ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD [j] glory and strength.

29 Give unto the LORD [k] the glory *due* unto his name: [l] bring an offering, and [m] come before him: worship the LORD in [n] the beauty of holiness.

30 Fear [o] before him, all the earth:

* Heb. *men of number.*
p Gen. xxxiv. 30. Acts vii. 5. Heb. xi. 13.
q Gen. xii. 10. xx. 1. xlvi. 3. 6.
r Gen. xxxi. 24. 29. 42.
s Gen. xii. 17. xx. 3. Ex. vii. 16, 17. ix. 13—18.
t 1 Kings xix. 16. 1 John ii. 27.
u Gen. xx. 7. xxvii. 39, 40. xlviii. 19, 20. xlix. 8—10.
x *See on* 9. Ps. xcvi. 1—13. —Ex. xv. 21. Ps. xxx. 4. Is. xii. 5.
y Ps. xl. 10. lxxi. 15. Is. li. 6—8.
z 2 Kings xix. 19. Ps. xxii. 27. Is. xii. 2—6. Dan. iv. 1—3.
a Ps. lxxxix. 7. cxlv. 3—6. Is. xl. 12—17. Rev. xv. 3, 4.
b Ex. xv. 11. Ps. lxvi. 3—5. lxxvi. 7. Jer. v. 22. x. 6—10. Rev. xv. 4.
c Lev. xix. 4. Ps. cxv. 4—8. Acts xix. 26. 1 Cor. viii. 4.
d Is. xlii. 5. Jer. x. 11, 12.
e Ps. viii. 1. xvi. 11. lxiii. 2, 3. John xvii. 24.
f Ps. xxvii. 4—6. xxviii. 7, 8. xliii. 2—4.
g Ps. xcvi. 6.
h Ps. xxix. 1, 2. lxviii. 34.
i Ps. lxvi. 1, 2. lxvii. 4, 7. lxxxvi. 8—10. xcviii. 4. c. 1, 2. Is. xl. 10.
j xxix. 10—14. Ps. cxv. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Eph. i. 6. 17—19. Phil. iv. 13.
k Ps. lxxxix. 5—8. 1 1 Kings viii. 8—5. cxlviii. 13, 14. Is. vi. 3. Rev. iv. 9—11. v. 12—14. vii. 12.
n 2 Chr. xx. 21. Ps. xxix. 2. 1. 2. xcvi. 6. 9. cx. 3. Ez. vii. 20. xxiv. 25. Ps. xcvi. 9. Rev. xi. 15.
o *See on* 23. 25.—

V. 20—22. (*Notes, Gen.* xx. 1—7. xxvi. 11.) The Patriarchs were the Lord's *anointed*, as they were believers, prophets, and types and ancestors of Christ; in respect of the Lord's choice of them, his grace bestowed on them, and their spiritual consecration to his service; though they were not externally anointed with oil, that we read of. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *John* ii. 20—29.)

V. 23, 24. Having taken a suitable passage from one psalm, to stir up the congregation to celebrate the praises of God, for his special mercies to Israel; David, introduces another psalm, and adds a solemn call to all the inhabitants of the earth to join in his praises, as the only living and true God, the Creator and Judge of the world, and the God of salvation; and from day to day to make known his glory and salvation still more widely. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Ps.* xcvi. 1—4.) 'Let not only the Israelites praise 'him, but all the people of the earth acknowledge their 'great Creator; proclaim his promised salvation by Christ 'without intermission.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 25, 26. The power and majesty, the authority and eternity, the omniscience, omnipresence, and unchangeableness of God, are his *greatness:* as his justice, wisdom, truth, goodness, and mercy, form his *holiness*. In both respects he is altogether glorious, and infinitely exceeds the most exalted praises, and even the comprehension, of the noblest of all created intelligences. Thus he is the sole Object of fear, and reverential worship, and adoring love; while all others, to whom divine worship ever was rendered, are either senseless stocks, fallen angels, or mere creatures, who cannot help their worshippers, or punish their despisers. (*Notes, Ps.* xcvi. 5. *Jer.* x. 6—8. 11—15. *Rev.* xv. 1—4.)

V. 27. (*Ps.* xcvi. 6.) Wherever the Lord displays his presence by his works, he shews the glory and honour of his perfections: but, in heaven, where his presence is manifested, in a manner to us inconceivable and ineffable, his glory and honour beam forth upon the blessed inhabitants, so as to transform them fully into his holy image of light, purity, and felicity, and to be reflected back in their rapturous unceasing worship and service of him. This is, in a feeble way, imitated and emulated, "in his *place*," his *sanctuary*, his church on earth. There his power and beauty are in a measure displayed; and the true believer, beholding in Christ Jesus the glory of the Lord, "is "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by "the Spirit of the Lord;" and thus is both made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and enjoys the earnests of it. (*Notes, Ps.* xxvii. 4—6. l. 1, 2. lxiii. 1—4. 2 *Cor.* iii. 17, 18.)

V. 28, 29. This is an exhortation to all who then heard, and all who now hear or read it, to "ascribe to JEHOVAH" the tribute of praise and adoration, which he demands as his due; to allow that all glory belongs to him, and that all power resides in him, or is derived from him; and to render to him that gratitude, love, and service, which is due to him from all, as their Creator and hourly Benefactor. (*Notes, Ps.* xxix. 1, 2. xcvi. 7—9.) This cannot be withheld without the basest ingratitude.—"All the kin-"dreds of the earth" form but one family, and ought to unite in the service of their common Father. But all had sinned, and fallen under condemnation: yet, through the Redeemer, who was promised from the beginning, all were invited to approach the Lord with their worship and oblations at his sanctuary. This may be called, "the beauty "of holiness," from the especial presence of the Lord, dwelling above the ark between the cherubim, upon the mercy-seat, as Israel's God; as typifying the human nature of Jesus Christ; and representing the believer's heart, now become "an habitation of God through the Spirit." When, however, we approach the Father, upon a mercy-seat, through the sacrifice and mediation of the Son, and under the influences of the Holy Spirit; then, and then only, do we, in the full meaning of the words, "worship "the LORD in the beauty of holiness."

V. 30. Let all men fear the power, justice, and majesty of God: let them fear his wrath, and flee for refuge to his mercy; let them reverence his authority and excellency, and learn to worship and obey him. (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 11, 12. 1 *Kings* viii. 41—43.) If this were done, it would render the moral state of the world as stable and immoveable, and keep every thing in as great order and regularity, as his creating and upholding word has established the natural state of it: and to this the gospel is suited to bring all who embrace it. (*Note, Ps.* lxxv. 2, 3. xcvi. 10.)

p Ps. xxxiii. 9. xciii. 1. cxlviii. 5, 6. Is. xlix. 8. Jer. x. 12. Col. i. 17. Heb. i. 3.
q Ps. xix. 1. lxxxix. 5. cxlviii. 1—4. Luke ii. 13, 14. xv. 10.
r Ps. xcvii. 1. xcviii. 4. Luke ii. 10.
s Ps. xciii. 1, 2. xcvi. 10. xcix. 1. cxlv. 1. Is. xxxiii. 22. Matt. vi. 13. Rev. xix. 6.
t Ps. xciii. 4. xcviii. 7.
u Ps. xcviii. 8. cxlviii. 9, 10. Is. xliv. 23.
x Ps. xcvi. 12, 13. Ez. xvii. 22—24.
y Ps. xcviii. 9. 2 Thes. i. 8, 10. 2 Pet. iii. 14. Rev. xi. 17, 18.
z Ezra iii. 11. Ps. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxviii. 1. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
a Ps. xiv. 7. liii. 6. lxxix. 9, 10.
b Ps. cv. 45. Is. xliii. 21. Eph. i. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9.
c 1. 10. Ps. xliv. 8. Is. xlv. 25. 1 Cor. i. 31.
d 1 Kings viii. 15. 56. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. cvi. 48. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
e Deut. xxvii. 15—26. Neh. viii. 6. Jer. xxviii. 6. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.
f See on 4—6.—xv. 17—24. xxv. 1—6.

the world also shall be p stable, that it be not moved.

31 Let q the heavens be glad, and r let the earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, s The LORD reigneth.

32 Let t the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the u fields rejoice, and all that *is* therein.

33 Then shall x the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, y because he cometh to judge the earth.

34 O z give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

35 And say ye, a Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, b that we may give thanks to thy holy name, *and* c glory in thy praise.

36 d Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people e said Amen, and praised the LORD.

37 ¶ So he left there, f before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, g as every day's work required:

g 2 Chr. viii. 14. Ezra iii. 4.

38 And h Obed-edom, with their brethren, threescore and eight; Obed-edom also the son of i Jeduthun, and Hosah *to be* porters:

h xiii. 14. xxvi. 4—8.
i xxv. 3.

39 And k Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, l before the tabernacle of the LORD, m in the high place that *was* at Gibeon,

k See on xii. 28.
l xxi. 29. 2 Chr. i. 3, 4.
m 1 Kings iii. 4.

40 To n offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually, * morning and evening, and *to do* according to all *that is* written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel;

n Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 3—8. 1 Kings xviii. 29. 2 Chr. ii. 4. xxxi. 3. Ezra iii. 3. Ezek. xlvi. 13—15. Dan. ix. 21. Amos iv. 4.
* Heb. *in the morning and in the evening.*

41 And with them o Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest *that were* chosen, who were p expressed by name, q to give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy *endureth* for ever;

o 37. vi. 39—47. xxv. 1—6.
p xii. 31. Num. i. 17. Ezra viii. 20.
q See on 34.—2 Chr. v. 13. vii. 3. xx. 21. Ps. ciii. 17. Luke i. 50.

42 And with them Heman and Jeduthun with r trumpets and cymbals,

r 2 Chr. xxix. 25—28. Ps. cl. 3—6.

V. 31. Wise, righteous, and good kings, and equitable laws, impartially administered, make prosperous nations; and all good subjects must rejoice in a government of this description: but traitors and criminals tremble on that very account. The Lord, who reigns over all, is perfect in his character, his law, and his administration: this alone would be cause of universal joy, if all men were loyal and obedient; but it speaks terror to the sinner's conscience. Yet, as the Lord reigneth in Jesus Christ upon a throne of grace; even sinners, yea, the chief of sinners, may rejoice, when, desirous of forgiveness and reconciliation, they are made humbly willing to become his subjects: so that men, of all nations on earth, are called on to join the gladness of the blessed inhabitants of heaven; and in exulting joy to proclaim, that "the LORD God omnipotent reigneth." (*Notes, Ps.* xcvii. 1, 2. xcix. 1—3.)

V. 32, 33. All the parts of nature are here poetically addressed, by the royal prophet, to join the universal song of joy and praise; in their several ways, to welcome JEHOVAH as the Sovereign of the universe; and to wait the great decisive day, when he will come, as the Saviour of his people, to judge the world in righteousness. (*Notes, Ps.* xcvi. 11—13. xcviii. 7—9. cxlviii. *Is.* lv. 12, 13.) Perhaps all the different ranks and descriptions of the human species, who have feared the Lord, and hoped in his mercy, and who will then unanimously rejoice in the consummation of their felicity, are here intended under figurative expressions. The first coming of Christ likewise, with the calling of the gentiles, and the surprising and most happy change effected by the gospel, in the moral and religious state of the world, as preparatory to his second coming, seems also to have been predicted.—Indeed, nothing but the plenteous goodness of God, the perpetuity and eternity of his mercy in Christ Jesus, can encourage a sinner to desire his appearing as a Judge: all therefore except true believers must tremble at the thoughts of that solemn season, in proportion as they understand the nature of that judgment, and attentively meditate upon it: and they will be driven to desperation when it shall arrive.

V. 34—36. (*Notes, Ps.* cxxxvi. 1—3. *Jer.* xxxiii. 10, 11.) Many Israelites, even when David came to the throne, might be dispersed in other nations, by the frequent wars waged with their neighbours. And he prayed that they might be gathered from their dispersions, to join in this joyful worship. (*Notes, Ps.* xiv. 7. cvi. 47, 48.) Perhaps the Spirit of God, who spake by the Psalmist, intended the gathering of Israel from future and greater dispersions: and it may well be accommodated to the present state of that nation, and our hope of their future calling into the church; as well as to the collecting together of believers from all the nations of the earth, to bless and adore the God of Israel, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.—We can scarcely enlarge our thoughts to conceive the effect, which these high praises of God, sung by so vast a multitude, with harmonious elevation of heart and voice, upon this joyful occasion, must have produced. It naturally leads our thoughts to the songs of the redeemed of the Lord in glory; and perhaps we are not, in this world, capable of more just and spiritual ideas of them, than are suggested by this subject, though we may be sure that they are unspeakably more sublime and refined. (*Notes, Ps.* xli. 11—13, *v.* 13. lxxxix. 52.)

V. 37—43. Abiathar was high priest at this time; and it is probable he resided at Jerusalem. c Abiathar the

for those that should make a sound, and with [s] musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun *were* [*] porters.

43 And [t] all the people departed, every man to his house: and David returned [u] to bless his house.

[s] xxv. 6. [*] Heb. *for the gate.*

[t] 2 Sam. vi. 19, 20. 1 Kings viii. 66.

[u] Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. ci. 2.

'high priest attended upon David, that if he had any oc-'casion to consult the divine majesty, ... he might be ready 'to do it for him.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The stated worship before the ark consisted principally of psalmody and musick, over which Asaph presided. But Zadok, of Eleazar's line, as next in authority under the high priest, resided at Gibeon, where the tabernacle and the brazen altar still remained; (*Note, 2 Sam.* vi. 17;) and there, with the other priests, he took care that all the sacrifices prescribed by the law should be regularly offered.—Psalmody was constantly performed here also, under the direction of Heman and Jeduthun: and *they had with them* the sacred trumpets, which seem to have been kept by them, though used by none but the priests.—When David brought the ark from obscurity, he was directed to convey it to Jerusalem, because it was to be stationed there. As he intended immediately to build a temple for its reception, he did not remove the tabernacle of Moses thither; but prepared a temporary tent, perhaps formed in the same manner: and when he was not allowed to build the temple, he made no alteration, but attended to both separately all his days. It seems that these regulations were made and declared, before the people separated, and were continued from that very day. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 20. 1 *Kings* iii. 4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

The publick revival of religion, and the pure worship of God, being countenanced and protected by "the powers "that be," are joyful events to believers: and when their hearts are enlarged with gratitude to God, they will also be expanded in liberality towards men, and disposed to pray for them, and to do good to them for his sake.—It is a good and pleasant thing to be thankful, and we should carefully record and frequently review the Lord's mercies, to us and to his church, that we may be excited to abound in joyful praises: and ministers are especially appointed, by the Son of David our King, to animate and assist the people thus to glorify and rejoice in God, by preaching to them the gospel of salvation, and by every other means in their power.—The streams of mercy, of which we partake, should be traced back to that Fountain of love whence they are derived; and, in thanking the Lord for his benefits to us, we should celebrate the glorious excellences of his nature. This will also encourage our own faith and hope, and excite the attention of others to observe and admire his marvellous works: therefore we should be unreserved and open, in singing and speaking forth the praises of our God.—Riches, pre-eminence, wisdom, and strength, are precarious blessings, in which we must not glory and rejoice: but "let him that glorieth, glory" in his relation to "the Lord" our Salvation. To know, love, and belong to him constitutes the chief honour and happiness of man; and forms "that good part which shall never "be taken from us." While the assured believer boldly glories in the righteousness, mercy, truth, and power of his reconciled God, let the trembling sinner rejoice also; for he casts out none that come, and saves all who trust in him. But, let us all learn to seek him diligently and continually: not only that we may rejoice in his favour; but that we may be strengthened by him, to perform every service, and to triumph over all our inward and outward enemies. Indeed, we could no longer distrust either his mercy, or his power, if we duly remembered his works of old; especially the marvellous work of redemption, through Jesus Christ, which has eclipsed all former displays of his wisdom, truth, and love. Nor are "the judgments of his "mouth" less worthy of our attention, than "the opera-"tions of his hands:" by them we are instructed and directed; and even the denunciations of his wrath, and the execution of his righteous vengeance on sinners, "warn us to flee from the wrath to come," and to "give "diligence to make our calling and election sure:" whilst his mercies are recorded, to enliven our gratitude and encourage our hope; as the happy and chosen servants of God, who are "followers of them, who through faith and "patience inherit the promises." (*Notes* and *P. O. Heb.* vi. 13—20.)

V. 14—29.

The all-sufficient God is the Portion and the everlasting recompence of his true people; while his worship and service form the solace of their souls in this evil world. "He "is ever mindful of his covenant," and he makes it a law to himself, an invariable rule of his conduct towards them: and if we were duly mindful of it, we should derive great encouragement from his promises, and from that oath which he has interposed for the "strong consolation of "all those, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the "hope set before them:" while love and gratitude would, as an inward law in our minds, command and constrain our most devoted obedience.—Those who are interested in his promise of eternal life, by faith in Jesus Christ, will be carried through all difficulties, and rendered superior in all conflicts, though in themselves they are few and poor. Here, they wander as strangers and pilgrims: but, compared with them, the most potent monarchs are accounted mean and vile, in the judgment of God. They have received the unction of his Holy Spirit; his seal is affixed to them, and no man can injure them with impunity: nay, nothing can possibly harm them, but all things shall eventually work together for their good. (*Notes* and *P. O. Rom.* viii. 28—39.) Let us, however, be careful of prematurely concluding, that we are numbered with them; and seriously appeal to our consciences and experience, whether "the Lord of the whole earth" be that Lord, whom we desire to obey: and whether salvation by Jesus Christ from deserved wrath, from Satan, sin, and this present evil world, be our daily prayer, hope, and rejoicing. Do we perceive and adore the glory of the divine perfections, and rejoice in celebrating his praise? And do we yield ourselves to his service; depending on his mercy and grace, and lamenting that we love him no more and serve him no better? All this, and immensely more, is due to him: for he is infinitely great, holy, and good; all our praises are beneath his excellency; and nothing can be compared with his uncreated majesty. Let us then devote all we

CHAP. XVII.

David, purposing to build a temple, is encouraged by Nathan, 1, 2. The Lord afterwards, by Nathan, prohibits it; but with many encouraging promises, 3—15. David's prayer and thanksgiving, 16—27.

NOW it came to pass, [a] as David sat in his house, that David said to [b] Nathan the prophet, Lo, [c] I dwell in an house of cedars, but [d] the ark of the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* [e] under curtains.

2 Then Nathan said unto David, [f] Do all that *is* in thine heart: [g] for God *is* with thee.

3 And it came to pass the same night, that [h] the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

4 Go and [i] tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, [j] Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in:

5 For I have not [k] dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel, unto this day; but have [*] gone [l] from tent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle *to another*.

6 Wheresoever I have [m] walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of [n] the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to [o] feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?

7 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, [p] I took thee from the sheep-cote, *even* [†] from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be [q] ruler over my people Israel:

8 And [r] I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and [s] have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have [t] made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in the earth.

9 Also [u] I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will [x] plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, [y] and shall be moved no more; neither shall [z] the children of wickedness [a] waste them any more, [b] as at the beginning,

10 And [c] since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people

[a] 2 Sam. vii. 1, 2. Dan. iv. 4. 29, 30.
[b] xxix 29. 2 Sam. xii. 1. 25. 1 Kings i. 8. 23. 44.
[c] xiv. 1. Jer. xxii. 15. Hag. i. 4. 9.
[d] Ps. cxxxii. 5. Acts vii. 46
[e] 5. xv. 1. xvi. 1. Ex. xl. 19—21. 2 Sam. vi. 17. 2 Chr. i. 4.
[f] xxii. 7. xxviii. 2. Josh. ix. 14. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. xx. 4. 1 Cor. xiii. 9.
[g] 1 Sam. x. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 3. Zech. viii. 23. Luke i. 28.
[h] Num. xii. 6. 2 Kings xx. 1—5. Is. xxx. 21. Am. iii. 7.
[i] Is. lv. 8, 9. Rom. xi. 33, 34.
[j] xxii. 7, 8. xxviii. 2, 3. 2 Sam. vii. 4, 5. 1 Kings viii. 19. 2 Chr. vi. 8, 9.
[k] 2 Sam. vii. 6. 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chr. ii. 6. vi. 18. Is. lxvi. 1, 2. Acts vii. 44—50.
[*] Heb. *been.*
[l] Ex. xl. 2, 3. 2 Sam. vi. 17. 1 Kings viii. 4. 16.
[m] Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15. xl. 35—38. Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Num. x. 33—36. Deut. xxiii. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 16 Rev. ii. 1.
[n] Judg. ii. 16—18. 1 Sam. xii. 11 2 Sam. vii. 7 *tribes.* Acts xiii 20.
[o] xi. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72. Jer. xxiii. 4. Ez. xxxiv. 2. Mic. v. 4. Matt. ii. 6. *marg.*
[p] Ex. iii. 1—10. 1 Sam. xvii. 15. 2 Sam. vii. 8. Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71. Am. vii. 14, 15. Matt iv. 18—22. Luke v. 10.
[†] Heb. *from after.*
[q] 2 Sam. vi. 21. Matt. ii. 6.
[r] 2. 1 Sam. xviii. 14. 28. 2 Sam. vii. 9. viii. 6. 14. Ps. xlvi. 7. 11.
[s] 1 Sam. xxvi. 10. xxxi. 1—6. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. 38—41.
[t] 17. 2 Sam. viii. 13. Ezra iv. 20. Ps. lxxi. 21. lxxv. 7. cxiii. 7, 8 Luke i. 52.
[u] Jer. xxxi. 2—12. Ez. xxxiv. 14.
[x] Ps. xliv. 2. Jer. xxiv. 6. xxxi. 41.
[y] Ez. xxxvi. 14, 15. xxxvii. 25. Am. ix. 15.
[z] Ps. lxxxix. 22. Eph. ii. 2, 3. v. 6.
[a] Is. xlix. 17. lx. 18.
[b] Ex. i. 13, 14. ii. 23.
[c] Judg. iii. 8. iv. 3. vi. 3—6. 1 Sam. xiii. 5, 6. 19, 20.

have and are to him, and aim to worship him "in the "beauty of holiness."

V. 30—43.

The LORD our God is greatly to be feared. All the earth should stand in awe of him: for his wrath against the workers of iniquity is intolerable and eternal; but "in "his favour there is life, in his presence there is fulness of "joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for ever-"more." He is glorious as our Creator and Judge, but more glorious as a Saviour: in that character sinners may approach and worship him, with acceptance and comfort; and men on earth, as well as the holy inhabitants of heaven, may rejoice in his universal and everlasting kingdom; because in Christ Jesus, "he is good, and his mercy en-"dureth for ever." Oh, that there were such a heart in us and in all men, thus to fear him and to hope in his mercy; that we might look forward with comfort and exultation to our meeting him upon his awful judgment seat! He is continually collecting, before his throne, that chosen remnant, which the Saviour has redeemed unto God with his blood, from all the nations of the earth: and there, being freed from sin, admitted to the beatifick vision, and filled with love, and gratitude, and joy, they sing eternal praises to his name. As we successively depart this life, may our souls be gathered unto them: and may that time speedily arrive, when the scattered Jews shall at length be gathered into the church, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, to "give thanks to his holy name, and to glory "in his praise!" Amen, and Amen.—In this life believers enjoy, from time to time, earnests and foretastes of heavenly bliss; but, when they cannot reach such fervent affections and exalted strains, they must statedly persevere in using the means of grace, as sinners "beholding the "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world:" and the continual attendance of his appointed ministers, in his courts, is not only right in itself, but an encouragement to the faith and hope of his people, and a help to their praises and thanksgivings. Finally, it is well, when one duty prepares the soul for another; when publick worship renders us more constant and spiritual in family-worship and secret devotion; and when the effects of the whole appear in our conduct in relative life and in society.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1—6. This chapter almost entirely answers to the seventh of the second of Samuel: many minute variations indeed are found; but those only which are more material need here be noticed. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 1—7.) *Tent to tent*, &c. (5) In the wilderness, the ark was taken out of the tent, when the camp of Israel marched; and was returned into it, when they rested.—It was afterwards taken from the tabernacle at Shiloh, and then stationed at Kirjath-jearim, doubtless in a tent prepared for it; thence David removed it to another tent on mount Zion. (xvi. 1—3. *Notes*, 1 *Sam.* vii. 1, 2. xxi. 1, 2. 2 *Sam.* vi. 10, 11. 17.)

V. 7—15. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 8—16.—*I took*, &c. (7) *Notes, 2 Sam.* xii. 7. *Ps.* lxxviii. 70—72. *Is.* li. 1—3. *Eph.* ii. 11—13.—*Name*, &c. (8) *Notes, Gen.* xii. 1—3. *Ps.* lxxi. 20, 21.—*But I will*, &c. (14) In the parallel passage, the Lord says to David, "*thine* "house, and *thy* kingdom;" but here "*mine house*, &c."

Israel. [d] Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee, that [e] the LORD will build thee an house.

11 And it shall come to pass, [f] when thy days be expired, that thou must [g] go *to be* with thy fathers, that [h] I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

12 [i] He shall build me an house, and [k] I will establish his throne for ever.

13 [l] I will be his Father, and he shall be [m] my son: and [n] I will not take my mercy away from him, [o] as I took *it* from *him* that was before thee:

14 But I will settle him [p] in mine house, and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

15 [q] According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

16 ¶ And David the king came and [r] sat before the LORD, and said, [s] Who *am* I, O LORD God, and [t] what *is* mine house, [u] that thou hast brought me hitherto?

17 And *yet* this was [x] a small thing in thine eyes, O God; [y] for thou hast *also* spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and [z] hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God.

18 What can David *speak* more to thee for [a] the honour of thy servant? for [b] thou knowest thy servant.

19 O LORD, for [c] thy servant's sake, and [d] according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all *these* [*] great things.

20 O LORD, *there is* [e] none like thee, neither *is there any* God [f] besides thee, [g] according to all that we have heard with our ears.

21 And [h] what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people Israel, whom God went to [i] redeem *to be* his own people, to [k] make thee a name of [l] greatness and terribleness, [m] by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?

22 For [n] thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God.

23 Therefore now, LORD, [o] let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.

24 Let it even be established, [p] that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God of Israel, *even* [q] a God to Israel: and *let* the house of David thy servant *be* established before thee.

25 For thou, O my God, hast [t] told thy servant, [r] that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath [s] found *in his heart* to pray before thee.

26 And now, LORD, [t] thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

27 Now therefore [‡] let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou

a Ps. xxi. 8, 9. lxxxix. 23. cx. 1.
b Ex. i. 21. 2 Sam. vii. 11. Ps. cxxvii. 1.
c xxix. 15. 28. Acts xiii. 36.
d Gen. xv. 15. Deut. xxxi. 16. 1 Kings i. 21. ii. 10. Acts ii. 29.
e xxviii. 5. 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. xii. 24, 25. 1 Kings viii. 20. Ps. cxxxii. 11. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Rom. i. 3, 4. xxii. 9, 10. xxviii. 6—10. 1 Kings v. 5. 2 Chr. ii. iv. Ezra v. 11. Zech. vi. 12, 13. John ii. 19—21. Acts vii. 47, 48. Col. ii. 9.
f Ps. lxxxix. 4. 29. 36, 37. Is. ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Rev. xi. 15.
g 2 Sam. vii. 14. Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27. Heb. i. 5.
h Ps. ii. 7. 12. Luke ix. 35. John iii. 35.
i 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. 1 Kings xi. 12, 13. 36.
k 12. x. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 28.
l Ps. ii. 6. lxxxix. 26. Luke i. 32, 33. Heb. iii. 6.
m 2 Sam. vii. 17. Jer. xxiii. 28. Acts xx. 27.
n 2 Sam. vii. 18. 2 Kings xix. 14.
o Gen. xxxii. 10. Ps. cxliv. 3.
p Judg. vi. 15. 1 Sam. ix. 21.
q Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. 1 Sam. vii. 12. Acts xxvi. 22. 2 Cor. i. 10.
r 7, 8. 2 Sam. vii. 19. xii. 8. 2 Kings iii. 18. Is. xlix. 6.
s 11—15. Eph. iii. 20.
t 8. 1 Kings iii. 18. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. lxxxix. 19, &c. Phil. ii. 8—11.
u 1 Sam. ii. 30. 2 Sam. vii. 20—24.
a 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. cxxxix. 1. John xxi. 17. Rev. ii. 23.
b Is. xxxvii. 35. xliii. 1. xlix. 3. 6.
c Matt. xi. 26 Eph. i. 9—11. iii. 11.
d Heb. *greatnesses.* xxix. 11, 12. Ps. cxi. 3. 6.
e Ex. xv. 11. xviii. 11. Deut. iii. 24. Ps. lxxxix. 6. 8. Is. xl. 18. 25. Jer. x. 6, 7.
f Deut. iv. 35. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. xliii. 10. xliv. 6. xlv. 5. 22.
g Ps. xliv. 1. lxxviii. 3, 4. Is. lxiii. 12.
h Deut. iv. 7. 32—34. xxxiii. 26—29. Ps. cxlvii. 20.
i Ex. iii. 7, 8. xix. 4—6. Deut. xv. 15. Ps. lxxvii. 15. cvii. 2. cxi. 9. Is. lxiii. 9. Tit. ii. 14.
k Neh. ix. 10. Is. xlviii. 9. lxiii. 12. Ez. xx. 9, 10.
l Deut. iv. 34. Ps. lxv. 5. lxvi. 3—7. cxiv. 3—8. Is. lxiv. 3.
m Deut. vii. 1, 2. Josh. x. 42. xxi. 43—45. xxiv. 11, 12. Ps. xliv. 2, 3.
n Gen. xvii. 7. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. vii. 6—8. xxvi. 18, 19. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Zech. xiii. 9. Rom. ix. 4—6. 25, 26. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
o Gen. xxxii. 12. 2 Sam. vii. 25—29. Ps. cxix. 49. Jer. xi. 5. Luke i. 38.
p 2 Chr. vi. 33. Ps. xxi. 13. lxxii. 19. Matt. vi. 9. 13. John xii. 28. xvii. 1. Phil. ii. 11. 1 Pet. iv. 11.
q Jer. xxxi. 1. Heb. viii. 10. xi. 16.
t Heb. *revealed the ear of.* 1 Sam. ix. 15.
r See on 10.
s Ps. x. 17. Ezek. xxxvi. 37. 1 John v. 14, 15.
t Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18.
‡ Or, *it hath pleased.*

The Lord was Israel's King; and David and Solomon were his vicegerents, as well as types of the Messiah, in whose church and kingdom all these promises and predictions have their grand fulfilment: which shews 'that this prin-'cipally belonged to the Messiah, of whom David was but 'a figure.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 16, 17. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 18, 19.) *Thou hast,* &c. (17) In the parallel passage we read, "Is this the manner "of men, O LORD God?" It was not the manner of men to raise a poor shepherd to be a renowned and powerful king. Some expositors, however, suppose, that David here referred to the Messiah himself, the Seed of the woman, the greatest of the human race, being also "the "Lord from heaven;" in whose line God had placed David as the progenitor, and had honoured him as the type of his anointed King. "Thou hast looked upon me "according to the manner of the Man who is of high de-"gree, O LORD God." (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 19. *Ps.* cx. 1. *1 Cor.* xv. 45—49. *Phil.* ii. 5—11.)

V. 18—24. *Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 20—25.—*Thy servant's sake.* (19) "For thy *word's* sake," in Samuel.—The promise, in fulfilling which God conferred these benefits on David and his race, was first given from love to him, as a type of Christ, "his Servant in whom his soul delighteth." 'He had passed his word to David by his prophets out of 'his own mere goodness, without any other motive. It 'may be also thought to signify, *for the sake of the Mes-'siah,* who is *the Word of God,* and by way of eminence 'is called *his Servant. Is.* xlii. 1. xlix. 5.' *Bp. Patrick.*

What one nation, &c. (21) *Notes, Deut.* iv. 6—8. 34—40.—*A God to Israel.* (24) The Lord, as "the God of Israel," not only required worship and obedience; but he was himself the all-sufficient Friend and Portion of his chosen people.

V. 25—27. *Notes, 2 Sam.* vii. 26—29. *Luke* i. 26—38.

u Gen. xxvii. 33. Ps. lxxii. 17. Rom. xi. 29. Eph. i. 3.

[u] blessest, O LORD, and *it shall be* blessed for ever.

CHAP. XVIII.

David subdues the Philistines, and makes the Moabites tributary, 1, 2. He smites Hadarezer and the Syrians, 3—8. Tou, king of Hamath, sends his son to David with presents, which he dedicates, with the spoil, unto God, 9—11. He puts garrisons into Edom, 12, 13. He reigns in equity, 14. His principal officers, 15—17

a 2 Sam viii. 1, 2.

NOW [a] after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took

b 1 Sam. v. 8. xxvii. 4. 2 Sam. i. 20. viii. 1. *Metheg-ammah.*

[b] Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.

c Num. xxiv. 17. Judg. iii. 29, 30. 2 Sam. viii. 2 Ps. lx. 8. Is. xi. 14.

d 1 Sam. x. 27. 1 Kings x. 2. 25. 2 Kings iii. 4, 5. Ps. lxviii. 29, 30. lxxii 8—10. Is. xvi. 1.

2 And [c] he smote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, *and* [d] brought gifts.

e 2 Sam. viii. 3. *Hadadezer.*

f 1 Sam. xiv. 47. 2 Sam. x. 6. Ps lx. *title.*

g Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31.

3 And David smote [e] Hadarezer king of [f] Zobah unto Hamath, as he went to stablish his dominion [g] by the river Euphrates.

h 2 Sam. viii. 4. *seven hundred.*

i Deut. xvii. 16. Josh. xi. 6. 9. Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 16, 17.

4 And David took from him a thousand chariots, and [h] seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also [i] houghed all the chariot-*horses*, but reserved of them [k] an hundred chariots.

k 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 26.

5 And when [l] the Syrians of [*] Damascus came [m] to help Hadarezer king of [n] Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

l 2 Sam. viii. 5, 6. 1 Kings xi. 23, 24.

* Heb. *Darmesek.*

m Is. viii. 9, 10.

n 3. 1 Sam. xiv. 47.

6 Then David put *garrisons* in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians [o] became David's servants, *and* brought gifts. [p] Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

o *See on* 2.—Ps. xviii. 43, 44.

p xvii. 8. Ps. cxxi. 8. Prov. xxi. 31.

q 1 Kings x. 16, 17. xiv. 26—28. 2 Chr. ix. 15, 16. xii. 9, 10.

7 And David took the [q] shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

r 2 Sam. viii. 8. *Betah. Berothai.*

8 Likewise from [r] Tibhath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass [s] wherewith Solomon made the brazen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.

s xxii. 14. 1 Kings vii. 15—47. 2 Chr. iv. 2—6. 12—18. Jer. lii. 17—23.

9 ¶ Now when [t] Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the host of Hadarezer king of Zobah;

t 2 Sam. viii. 9. *Toi.*

10 He sent [†] Hadoram his son to king David, to [‡] enquire of his welfare, and to [§] congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and

† Or, *Joram.* 2 Sam. viii. 10.

‡ Or, *salute him.*

§ Heb. *bless him.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The repetitions in the word of God may be considered, as tacit reproofs of our negligence, forgetfulness, and unteachableness. Indeed, we are very backward to get familiarly acquainted with *every part* of the sacred volume, and very prone to forget what we have read; so that we need to be taught again what we seem to have already learned: and for all these reasons it is very useful to have the same important truths, precepts, and examples enforced on us, in different parts of the scriptures. If, in reading any chapter, or hearing any sermon, we learn nothing new; yet, are reminded of those things of which we had lost sight, and stirred up to the exercise of faith and holy affections, and to the more diligent, fervent, and delightful practice of our several duties; very important purposes are answered. (*Note*, 2 *Pet.* i. 12—15. *P. O.* 12—18. *Note* iii. 1—4.) It may, however, suffice to observe in this place, that persons of eminent piety will still be devising, and attempting, one service after another for the honour of God, and to promote the best interests of mankind; accounting themselves to have done nothing, while so much remains to be done: that Christ alone begins and finishes his work, and perpetually unites in his own person all those offices, which are requisite for the welfare of his church; but that mere men have, for a short space, certain portions of service allotted them, which they cannot exceed: that God accepts and rewards those good desires, which he is pleased for wise reasons to frustrate: that his favour and his image ennoble the meanest of his people, above "the estate of men of high degree:" that we cannot possibly desire more for ourselves, or for the church, than he has promised: that true grace desires all this, and wants no more; and true faith, in vigorous exercise, seeks, asks, expects, and waits for it all, in the way which God has prescribed: and that, if we serve the Lord, as a God *over us* in dependence on his mercy through Jesus Christ, he will be a God *to us;* and those whom he blesses, will be blessed for evermore. For this blessedness may we look, with patient submission and joyful expectation, amidst the trials of life, and in the hour of death; and may the same be continued to our children and posterity after us, through successive generations!

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. In the parallel passage, Gath is called Metheg-ammah, or the *bridle of Ammah*, as built on a natural strong hold, called Ammah, and intended to bridle, or keep in subjection, the adjacent country. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 1.)—The rest of this chapter, which is for substance the same, as the eighth chapter of the second of Samuel, has already been commented on. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2—8. *Establish his dominion.* (3) In Samuel, "Recover his border."—*Seven thousand.* (4) In the parallel passage, "Seven hundred." (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 3, 4.)—*Brazen sea*, &c. (8) *Notes*, 1 *Kings* vii. 15—47.

V. 9—17. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 9—18.—*Dedicated.* (11) 'David... had in his heart to build a 'splendid house for God's habitation. And when he was 'prohibited by God to do it,... he could not satisfy him-

smitten him; (for Hadarezer * had war with Tou;) and *with him* [u] all manner of vessels of gold, and silver, and brass.

11 Them also king David [v] dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all *these* nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from [x] the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from [y] Amalek.

12 [z] Moreover † Abishai the son of Zeruiah [a] slew of the Edomites, in [b] the valley of salt, eighteen thousand.

13 And he put [c] garrisons in Edom; and [d] all the Edomites became David's servants. [e] Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

14 ¶ So [f] David reigned over all Israel, and [g] executed judgment and justice among all his people.

15 And [h] Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and [i] Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud ‡ recorder.

16 And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and [k] Abimelech the son of [l] Abiathar, *were* the priests; and [m] Shavsha was scribe;

17 And [n] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the [o] Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David *were* chief § about the king.

* Heb. *was the man of wars.*
u 2 Chr. ix. 1. 23, 24. Is. xxxix. 1.
v xxii. 14. xxvi. 20. 26, 27. xxix. 14. Ex. xxxv. 5. 21—24. 2 Sam. viii. 11, 12. 1 Kings vii. 51. 2 Kings xii. 18. 2 Chr. v. 1. Mic. iv. 13.
x xx. 1, 2.
y 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, 9. xxx. 13. 20. Ps. lxxxiii. 6, 7.
z ii. 16. xi. 20. 1 Sam. xxvi. 6. 8. 2 Sam. iii. 30. x. 10. 14. xvi. 9—11. xix. 21, 22. xx. 6. xxi. 17. xviii. 18.
† Heb. *Abishai.*
xix. 11. *marg.*
a 2 Sam. viii. 13. Ps. lx. *title.* 8, 9.
b 2 Kings xiv. 7. 2 Chr. xxv. 11.
c 6. 1 Sam. x. 5. xiii. 3. xiv. 1. 2 Sam. xxiii. 14. 2 Cor. xi. 32.
d Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 29. 37. 40. Num. xxiv. 18.
e *See on* 6.—Ps. xviii. 48—50. cxxi. 7. cxliv. 10.
f xii. 38.
g 2 Sam. viii. 15. Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72. Is. ix. 7. xxxii. 1, 2. Jer. xxii. 15. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 15.
h xi. 6. 2 Sam. viii. 16.
i 1 Kings iv. 3.
‡ Or, *remembrancer.*
k 2 Sam. viii. 17. *Ahimelech.*
l 2 Sam. xx. 25. 1 Kings ii. 35.
m 2 Sam viii. 17. *Seraiah.* xx. 25. *Sheva.* 1 Kings iv. 3. *Shisha.*
n 2 Sam. viii. 18. xv. 18. xx. 7. 23. xxiii. 19—23. 1 Kings i. 38. 44. ii. 34, 35.
o Zeph. ii. 5.
§ Heb. *at the hand of.* xxiii. 28. *marg.*

CHAP. XIX.

David sends ambassadors to comfort the king of Ammon, who abuses and insults them, 1—5. The Ammonites and Syrians are vanquished by Joab and Abishai, 6—15. The king of Syria sends another army, which David conquers, slaying its commander, 16—18. The Syrians submit to David, 19.

NOW it came to pass after this, that [a] Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead.

2 And David said, [b] I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father shewed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of [c] the children of Ammon, to Hanun, to comfort him.

3 But [d] the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, * Thinkest thou that [e] David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for [f] to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land?

4 Wherefore Hanun [g] took David's servants, and [h] shaved them, [i] and cut off their garments in the midst, hard by their buttocks, and [k] sent them away.

5 Then there went *certain*, [l] and told David how the men were served. And he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry [m] at Jericho until [n] your beards be grown, and *then* return.

6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they [o] had made themselves † odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent [p] a thousand talents of silver, to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of [q] Syria-maachah, and out of [r] Zobah.

a 1 Sam. xi. 1, 2. xii. 12. 2 Sam. x. 1—3.
b 1 Sam. xxx. 26. 2 Sam. ix. 1. 7. 2 Kings iv. 13. Esth. vi. 3. Ec. ix. 15.
c Gen. xix. 37, 38. Deut. xxiii. 3—6. Neh. iv. 3. 7. xiii. 1.
d 1 Sam. xxix. 4. 9. 1 Kings xii. 8—11.
* Heb. *In thine eyes doth David.*
e 1 Cor. xiii. 5—7.
f Gen. xlii. 9—18. Josh. ii. 1—3. Judg. i. 23, 24. xviii. 2. 8—10.
g Ps. xxxv. 12. cix. 4, 5.
h Lev. xix. 27. Is. xv. 2. Jer. xli. 5. xlviii. 37.
i Is. xx. 4. xlvii. 2, 3.
k 2 Sam. x. 4, 5. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Mark xii. 4. Luke xx. 10, 11.
l Matt. xviii. 31.
m Josh. vi. 24—26. 1 Kings xvi. 34.
n Judg. xvi. 22.
o Luke x. 16. 1 Thes. iv. 8.
† Heb. *to stink.* Gen. xxxiv. 30. Ex. v. 21. 1 Sam. xiii. 4. xxvii. 12. Ps. xiv. 3. *margine.*
p 2 Chr. xvi. 2, 3. xxv. 6. xxvii. 5.
q 2 Sam. x. 6.
r xviii. 3. 5. 9. 1 Sam. xiv. 47. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Kings xi. 23, 24.

'self without doing something towards it; by preparing 'materials for it, and consecrating a great deal of treasure 'to be employed in the building, and no other use.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xxii. 2—5. 14. *P. O.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those who "seek first the kingdom of God and his "righteousness," shall, in due time and manner, have all other things added unto them.—Communion with God, and his consolations, are intended to animate us to diligence in our proper work, and vigour in our spiritual warfare.—Earthly possessions are often lost by attempting to establish them: and sinners ruin themselves by encouraging and assisting one another, in rebellion against God, and opposition to his cause.—Our good fight of faith, under the Captain of our salvation, will assuredly terminate in everlasting triumph and peace. But the happiness of Israel, through David's victories and equitable administration, very faintly shadowed forth the felicity of the redeemed in the realms above, when the last enemy shall be destroyed, and Jesus shall reign in the midst of them for ever and ever, and they shall behold, and share, the joy and glory of his kingdom. (*Heb.* xii. 2. *Notes, Matt.* xxv. 19—23. *Rev.* iii. 20—22.) Let us then, without delay, join ourselves to him, trusting and serving him constantly and faithfully, that at length we may be for ever with him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1—5. *Notes*, 2 *Sam.* x. 1—5.

V. 6. *Syria-maachah.*] Or, *Aram-maachah.* Maachah (or *Maachathi*) lay to the east of Jordan, and had been allotted to Manasseh: but it is probable, that the Syrians had got possession of it; and that it was thence called Syria-maachah. (*Deut.* iii. 14. *Josh.* xii. 5.)

s xviii. 4. Ex. xiv. 9. Judg. iv. 3. 1 Sam. xiii. 5. 2 Chr. xiv. 9. Ps. xx. 7—9.
t 2 Sam. x. 6 *king Maacah.*
u Num. xxi. 30. Josh. xiii. 9. Is. xv. 2.

7 So they s hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and t the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before u Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle.

x xi. 6. 10. &c. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, &c.

8 And when David heard *of it*, he sent x Joab and all the host of the mighty men.

v 1 Sam. xvii. 2. 2 Sam. xviii. 4. 2 Chr. xiii. 3. xiv. 10. Is. xxviii. 6. Jer. l. 42. Joel ii. 5.
z 2 Sam. x. 8. 1 Kings xx. 1. 24.

9 And the children of Ammon came out, and v put the battle in array before the gate of the city: and z the kings that were come *were* by themselves in the field.

a 2 Sam. x. 9—14.
* Heb. *face of the battle was.*
b Josh. viii. 22. Judg. xx. 42, 43.
† Or, *young men.*

10 Now a when Joab saw that the * battle was b set against him before and behind, he chose out of all the † choice of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians.

‡ Heb. *Abishai.* xi. 20.—*See on* xviii. 12.
c *See on* 9.

11 And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of ‡ Abishai his brother, c and they set *themselves* in array against the children of Ammon.

d Neh. iv. 20. Ec. iv. 9—12. Gal. vi. 2. Phil. i. 27, 28.

12 And he said, d If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be

e Deut. xxxi. 6, 7. Josh. i. 7. x. 25. 1 Sam. iv. 9. xiv. 6—12. xvii. 32. 2 Sam. x. 12. Ezra x. 4. Neh. iv. 14. Ps. xxvii. 14. 1 Cor. xvi. 13.
f Judg. x. 15. 1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Sam. xv. 26. xvi. 10, 11. Job i. 21.

too strong for thee, then I will help thee. *

13 Be e of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people and for the cities of our God: and f let the LORD do *that which is* good in his sight.

14 So Joab, and the people that *were* with him, drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and g they fled before him.

g 1 Kings xx. 13, 14. 19—21. 28—30. 2 Chr. xiii. 5—.6.

15 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, h they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

h Lev. xxvi. 7. Rom. viii. 31.

16 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, i and drew forth the Syrians that *were* beyond the § river: and k Shophach the captain of the host of Hadarezer *went* before them.

i Ps. ii. 1. Is. viii. 9, 10. Mic. iv. 11, 12. Zech. xiv. 1—3.
§ That is, *Euphrates*
k 2 Sam. x. 16. *Shobach.*

17 And it was told David: and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, l and set *the battle* in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him.

l *See on* 9.—Is. xxii. 6, 7.

18 But the Syrians m fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand *men, which fought in* chariots, and forty thousand n footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

m 13, 14. Ps. xviii. 32. xxxiii. 16. xlvi. 11.
n 2 Sam. x. 18. *horsemen.*

19 And when o the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither p would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

o Gen. xiv. 4, 5. Josh. ix. 9—11. 2 Sam. x. 19. 1 Kings xx. 1. 12. Is. x. 8.
p xiv. 17. Ps. xlviii. 3—6.

V. 7. Thirty-two thousand *soldiers,* (exclusive of a thousand sent by the king of Maachah,) are mentioned in the parallel passage: (2 *Sam.* x. 6:) but thirty-two thousand *chariots* are here stated. (*Note,* 1 *Sam.* xiii. 5.) Either some trivial mistake has crept into the text, in respect of the number or kind of these auxiliaries; or they were used in general to fight, some on foot, and others on horseback; yet on some occasions they all could drive, and fight from chariots of war.

* V. 8—15. *Note,* 2 *Sam.* x. 8—14.—*The kings,* &c. (9) The people of the allied kings are mentioned in Samuel.—*Behave ourselves valiantly.* (13) "Let us play the men." 2 *Sam.* x. 12.—The original is the same, in both places.

V. 16—19. *Note,* 2 *Sam.* x. 18.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may expect, that in this world our kindest actions will often be requited with the basest returns, and our best intentions expose us to the most injurious suspicions. Even in our implicit obedience to our great and gracious Lord, when we most sincerely desire to do good to our fellow-creatures, we must lay our account with ingratitude, contempt, and abuse. But these things should not discourage us; for he will plead our cause, and both comfort us, and kindly recompense all that we endure for his sake: and after his example *we also* should endeavour to make up to those that serve us, every loss to which they are exposed in executing our orders.—In every case the servants of God, though here disgraced, will finally be honoured: but none of his enemies will bring upon themselves more sudden and terrible vengeance, than those who insult his ambassadors, when sent with a message of peace and salvation.—The only safety of us sinners consists in submitting to God, making our peace with him, and becoming his servants: thus separating from those who persist in their opposition and rebellion, we may escape their doom.—When prudence, vigilance, courage, and diligence, have been used in a good cause, and we have mutually assisted each other; we may confidently leave the event to the Lord, saying, "Let him do what seemeth him good." But let us look to ourselves, and examine our hearts and lives, and fear, lest having been instruments of good to

CHAP. XX.

Rabbah is taken and spoiled, and the inhabitants are treated with great severity, 1—3. Three giants are slain by David's servants, in three battles against the Philistines, 4—8.

B. C. 1035.
a 2 Sam. xi. 1.
* Heb. *at the return of the year.* 1 Kings xx. 22. 26. 2 Kings xiii. 20.
b Is. vi. 11. lix. 16.
c Deut. iii. 11. 2 Sam. xii. 26. xvii. 27. Jer. xlix. 2, 3. Ez. xxi. 20. xxv. 5. Am. i. 14.
d 2 Sam. xi. 16—25. xii. 26—31.
† Heb. *the weight of it.*
e xviii. 11. 2 Sam. viii. 11, 12.
f xix. 2—5. Ps. xxi. 8, 9.
g Ex. i. 14. Josh. ix. 23. Judg. viii. 6, 7. 16, 17. 1 Kings ix. 21.

AND [a] it came to pass, that * after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out *to battle*, Joab led forth the power of the army, and [b] wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged [c] Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And [d] Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.

2 And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found † it to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: [e] and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.

3 And [f] he brought out the people that *were* in it; and cut *them* [g] with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

B. C. 1018.
h 2 Sam. xxi. 15.
‡ Or, *continued* Heb. *stood.*
i Josh. xii. 12. xvi. 3. Or, *Gob.* 2 Sam. xxi. 18.
j xi. 29. *Sibbecai.*
k 2 Sam. xxi. 18. *Saph.*
§ Or, *Rapha.*

4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that [h] there ‡ arose a war [i] at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time [j] Sibbechai the Hushathite slew [k] Sippai, *that was* of the children of § the giant: and they were subdued.

5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of [l] Jair slew Lahmi, the brother of [m] Goliath the Gittite, whose spear's staff *was* like a weaver's beam.

l 2 Sam. xxi. 19. *Jaare-oregim.*
m 1 Sam. xvii. 4. xxi. 9. xxii. 10. 2 Sam. xxi. 19.

6 And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man ‖ of *great* stature, whose fingers and toes *were* four and twenty, six *on each hand*, and six *on each foot*: and he also was * the son of the giant.

‖ Heb. *of measure.* 2 Sam. xxi. 20.
* Heb. *born to the giant, or, Rapha.*

7 But when [n] he † defied Israel, Jonathan the son of [o] Shimea David's brother slew him.

n 1 Sam. xvii. 10. 26. 36. Is. xxxvii. 23.
† Or, *reproached.*
o ii. 13. *Shimma.* 1 Sam. xvi. 9. *Shammah.*

8 These were born unto the giant in Gath; and [p] they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

p Josh. xiv. 12. Ec. ix. 11. Jer. ix. 23. Rom. viii. 31.

CHAP. XXI.

David, tempted by Satan, requires Joab to number the people, 1—4. The number is returned to the king, 5, 6. God is displeased, and David owns his fault, 7, 8. The Lord, by Gad the prophet, proposes three judgments to David, who chooses three days' pestilence, 9—13. Seventy thousand are cut off; and David, seeing the destroying angel, intercedes for the people, 14—17. Directed by Gad, he buys Ornan's threshing-floor; and sacrifices: fire consumes the oblation, and the plague is stayed, 18—27. He again sacrifices there, fearing to go unto Gibeon, 28—30.

a 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Kings xxii. 20—22. Job i. 6—12. ii. 4—6. Zech. iii. 1. Matt. iv. 3. Luke xxii. 31. John xiii. 2. Acts v. 3. Jam. i. 13. Rev. xii. 10.

AND [a] Satan stood up against Israel, and [b] provoked David to number Israel.

b Luke xi. 53. Heb. x. 24.

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others, we should ourselves be found to come short of salvation, through unbelief and impenitent continuance in sin.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—3. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xii. 26—31.) The whole account of David's adultery, and of the sins and sufferings consequent upon it, is here entirely omitted. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xi—xix.)

V. 4—7. *Marg. Ref.—Note, 2 Sam.* xxi. 15—22.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

A pious and benevolent mind cannot possibly *delight* in mentioning the transgressions of useful and eminent men. So that if truth and candour will permit, and if no good purpose can be answered by speaking, persons of this character will choose to be silent; though they will by no means deny, excuse, or extenuate the sins of any man, when they cannot honestly conceal them. It however proves a malignant or an unfeeling mind, to be always searching into the miscarriages of others, especially those of superior reputation, in the world, or in the church.—The conflicts of believers, like those of David, will be successive, as long as they live here, and sometimes the sharpest are reserved till the last: and their victories will be gradual, as their enemies will still be renewing their assaults, and recovering their strength.—Though the Lord severely correct the sins of his own believing people, he will not leave them in the hands of their enemies; his assistance far more than counterbalances all the advantages, in number and strength, of those that defy his Israel; and all that trust in him shall be made more than conquerors, through him that loveth them.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1. (*Note, 2 Sam.* xxiv. 1, 2.) 'It is 'said in 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1, that God, being angry with 'Israel, moved David, that is, suffered Satan to move him. 'This is sufficiently explained there. Only here the phrase '*stood up* is to be observed; which was the posture of 'those who charged or accused any person of a crime, in a 'court of justice. See 1 *Kings*, xxii. 21. Thus Satan is 'represented as "the accuser of the brethren," in the 'book of the Revelation; and here to lay some sin to the 'charge of the Israelites, which he represented to God as 'a reason to punish them. For it is the way of the holy 'Scripture, thus to bring down these things, and ac-

2 And David said to [c] Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel, from [d] Beer-sheba even to Dan; and [e] bring the number of them to me, [f] that I may know *it*.

3 And Joab answered, [g] The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they *be:* but, my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? [h] why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

4 Nevertheless [i] the king's word prevailed against Joab. [j] Wherefore Joab departed [k] and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

5 And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all *they of* Israel were [l] a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah *was* four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.

6 But [m] Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to [n] Joab.

7 [*] And [o] God was displeased with this thing; therefore [p] he smote Israel.

8 And David said unto God, [q] I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, [r] do away the iniquity of thy servant; for [s] I have done very foolishly.

9 ¶ And the LORD spake unto [t] Gad, David's seer, saying,

10 Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I [†] offer thee three *things:* [u] choose thee one of them, [x] that I may do *it* unto thee.

11 So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [‡] Choose thee,

12 Either [y] three years' famine; or three months [z] to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee;* or else three days [a] the sword of the LORD, [b] even the pestilence, in the land, and [c] the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. [d] Now therefore advise thyself, what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

13 And David said unto Gad, [e] I am in a great strait: [f] let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; [g] for very [§] great *are* his mercies: but [h] let me not fall into the hand of man.

14 ¶ So [i] the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel [j] seventy thousand men.

15 And God sent an angel [k] unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he [l] repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, [m] It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of [n] Ornan the Jebusite.

16 And David lifted up his eyes, and [o] saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders *of Israel, who were* [p] clothed in sackcloth, [q] fell upon their faces.

17 And David said unto God, [r] *Is it* not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed: but *as for* [s] these sheep, [t] what have they done? [u] Let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and [x] on my father's house: but not on thy people, [y] that they should be plagued.

18 ¶ Then [z] the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, [a] that David should go up, and set up an

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c See on 2 Sam. xxiv. 2—4.
d Judg. xx. 1. 1 Sam. iii. 20. 2 Sam. iii. 10. xvii. 11. xxiv. 15. 1 Kings iv. 25. 2 Chr. xxx. 5. xxvii. 23, 24.
e Deut. viii. 13—17. 2 Chr. xxxii. 25, 26. Prov. xxix. 23. 2 Cor. xii. 7.
f xix. 13. Ps. cxv. 14. Prov. xiv. 28. Is. xxvi. 15. xlviii. 19.
g Gen. xx. 9. Ex. xxxii. 21. Num. xxxii. 9, 10. 1 Sam. ii. 24. 1 Kings xiv. 16.
h Ec. viii. 4.
i Ex. i. 17. Dan. iii. 18. Acts v. 29.
k See on 2 Sam. xxiv. 3—8.
l xxvii. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xxiv. 9.
m Num. i. 47—49.
n 2 Sam. iii. 27. xi. 15—21. xx. 9, 10.
* Heb. *And it was evil in the eyes of God concerning this thing.*
o 2 Sam. xi. 27. 1 Kings xv. 5.
p 14. Josh. vii. 1. 5. 13. xxii. 16—26. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 14. xxiv. 1.
q 2 Sam. xii. 13. Ps. xxv. 11. xxxii. 5. Jer. iii. 13. Luke xv. 18, 19. 1 John i. 9.
r Ps. li. 1—3. Hos. xiv. 2. John i. 29. Gen. xxxiv. 7. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. xxvi. 21. 2 Sam. xiii. 13. 2 Chr. xvi. 9.
s xxix. 29. 1 Sam. ix. 9. 2 Sam. xxiv. 11.
† Heb. *stretch out.*
u Josh. xxiv. 15. Prov. i. 29—31.
x Num. xx. 12. 2 Sam. xii. 10—12. 1 Kings xiii. 21, 22. Prov. iii. 12. Rev. iii. 19.
‡ Heb. *Take to thee.*
y Lev. xxvi. 26—29. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 1 Kings xvii. 1. 2 Kings viii. 1. Lam. iv. 9. Luke iv. 25.
z Lev. xxvi. 17. 36, 37. Deut. xxviii. 15. 25. 51, 52. Jer. xlii. 16.
a 16. Is. lxvi. 16. Jer. xii. 12. xlvii. 6.
b Lev. xxvi. 16. 25. Deut. xxviii 22. 27. 35. Ps. xci. 6. Ez. xiv. 19—21.
c 15, 16. Ex. xii. 23. 2 Kings xix. 35. Matt. xiii. 49, 50. Acts xii. 23. Rev. vii. 1—3.
d 2 Sam. xxiv. 13, 14.
e 2 Kings vi. 15. vii. 4. Esth. iv. 11. 16. John xii. 27. Phil. i. 23.
f Heb. x. 31.
g Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8. cxxx. 7. Lam. iii. 32. Jon. iii. 9. iv. 2. Mic. vii. 18. Hab. iii. 2.
§ Or, *many.* Ps. v. 7. li. 1, 2. lxix. 13. 16. cvi. 7. Is. lv. 7. lxiii. 7. 15.
h 2 Chr. xxviii. 9. Prov. xii. 10. Is. xlvii. 6.
i Num. xvi. 46—49. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15.
j Ex. xii. 30. Num. xxv. 9. 1 Sam. vi. 19. 2 Kings xix. 35.
k 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Jer. vii. 12. xxvi. 9. 18. Matt. xxiii. 37, 38.
l *See on* Gen. vi. 6.—Ex. xxxii. 14. Judg. ii. 18. x. 16. Ps. lxxviii. 38. Jer. xviii. 7—10.
m Ex. ix. 28. 1 Kings xix. 4. Ps. xc. 13. Mark xiv. 41.
n 2 Sam. xxiv. 18. *Araunah.* 2 Chr. iii. 1.
o Ex. xix. 19, 20. 2 Kings vi. 17.
p 1 Kings xxi. 27. 2 Kings xix. 1. Ps. xxxv. 13, 14. Jon. iii. 6—8.
q Num. xiv. 5 xvi. 22.
r 8. 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. Ps. li. 4. Ez. xvi. 63.
s 1 Kings xxii. 17. Ps. xliv. 11.
t 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.
u Gen. xliv. 33. Ex. xxxii. 32, 33. John x. 11, 12. Rom. ix. 3. 1 John iii. 16.
x Ex. xx. 5. 2 Sam. xii. 10. Ps. li. 14. Is. xxxix. 7, 8.
y Josh. xxii. 18.
z 11. Acts viii. 26, &c.
a 15. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18. 2 Chr. iii. 1.

'commodate them to the lowest capacities.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Job* i. 9—12. *Zech.* iii. 1—4. *Rev.* xii. 7—12.)

V. 2—6. *Notes, 2 Sam.* xxiv. 3—9.—*Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?* (3) This part of Joab's expostulation with David is not found in Samuel; and it shews, that Joab, amidst all his crimes, had considerable knowledge in religion, and much sagacity in discerning the motives, and presaging the consequences, of other men's conduct. (*Marg. Ref.* h.)—*The king's word was abominable to Joab.* (6) 'He did all this against his will: 'and at last the work was so odious unto him, that he was 'quite tired with it; and therefore broke off, before he 'took the numbers of these two tribes.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 7, 8. *Notes, 2 Sam.* xi. 27. xii. 13. xxiv. 10.—*He smote Israel.* (7) 'He resolved to punish them; because 'it was for their sins, that God permitted David to indulge 'himself in this vanity.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9—17. *Notes, 2 Sam.* xxiv. 11—17.

V. 18—25. *Notes, 2 Sam.* xxiv. 18—25.—*Saw,* &c. (20) The destroying angel was rendered visible, not only

altar unto the LORD, in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

19 And David [b] went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the LORD.

20 * And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. [c] Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

21 And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshing floor, and [d] bowed himself to David with *his* face to the ground.

22 Then David said to Ornan, † Grant me the place of *this* threshing floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD: [e] thou shalt grant it me for the full price: [f] that the plague may be stayed from the people.

23 And Ornan said unto David, [g] Take *it* to thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is* good in his eyes: lo, I give *thee* [h] the oxen *also* for burnt-offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.

24 And king David said to Ornan, [i] Nay, but I will verily buy it for the full price; for I will not take *that* which *is* thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.

25 So [k] David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.

26 And David [l] built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, [m] and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven [n] by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.

27 And [o] the LORD commanded the angel; and [p] he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

28 At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

29 For [q] the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, *were* at that season in the high place at [r] Gibeon.

30 But David could not go before it to enquire of God: for [s] he was afraid, because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

b 2 Kings v. 10—14. John ii. 5. Acts ix. 6.

* Or, *When Ornan turned back and saw the angel; then he, and his four sons with him hid themselves.*

c Judg. vi. 11.

d 1 Sam. xxv. 23. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18—20.

† Heb. *Give.* 1 Kings xxi. 2.

e 2 Sam. xxiv. 21.

f Num. xvi. 48. xxv. 8.

g Gen. xxiii. 4—6. 2 Sam. xxiv. 22, 23. Jer. xxxii. 8.

h 1 Sam. vi. 14. 1 Kings xix. 21. Is. xxviii. 27, 28.

i Gen. xiv. 23. xxiii. 13. Deut. xvi. 16, 17. Mal. i. 12—14. Rom. xii. 17.

k 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, 25.

l Ex. xx. 24, 25. xxiv. 4, 5.

m 1 Sam. vii. 8, 9. Ps. ii. 15. xci. 15. xcix. 6. Prov. xv. 8. Is. lxv. 24. Jer. xxxiii. 3.

n Lev. ix. 24. Judg. vi. 21. xiii. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 38. 2 Chr. vii. 1.

o 15, 16. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Ps. ciii. 20. Heb. i. 14.

p 12. 20. Jer. xlvii. 6. Ez. xxi. 30. Matt. xxvi. 52. John xviii. 11.

q Ex. xl. 1, &c.

r xvi. 39. 1 Kings iii. 4. 2 Chr. i. 13.

s 16. xiii. 12. Deut. x. 12. 2 Sam. vi. 9. Job xiii. 21. xxi. 6. xxiii. 15. Ps. cxix. 120. Heb. xii. 28, 29. Rev. i. 17. xv. 4.

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to David and the elders of Israel, but to Ornan (or Araunah) and his sons also. Indeed, it is probable, that this awful vision of the angel, with a "drawn sword in his "hand, stretched out over Jerusalem," continued apparent to all the inhabitants, till David had offered the appointed sacrifices. The variations in the narrative are noted in the exposition of the parallel passage in Samuel.

V. 26. The fire from heaven was an emblem of divine vindictive justice against sinners: but, this fire consuming the sacrifices, and sparing the offenders, who thus pleaded guilty and sought mercy, was the highest token of the Lord's acceptance of the sacrifice, and a type of our salvation by the propitiatory sufferings of Christ for us. (*Notes, Gen.* iv. 3—5. *Lev.* ix. 24. 1 *Kings* xviii. 38, 39. 2 *Chr.* vii. 1—3.)

V. 28—30. David had in general been used to sacrifice at Gibeon; (*Notes,* xvi. 37—43. 1 *Kings,* iii. 4;) but on this emergency he was afraid to leave Jerusalem, lest the angel should smite the inhabitants: and having been accepted at the threshing floor of Ornan, he continued afterwards to offer sacrifices there. (*Note,* xxii. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

So long as we abide on earth Satan has access to us, through the remains of sin in our hearts, especially of pride: and the Lord has wise and righteous reasons for permitting this enemy, under certain restrictions, to tempt his servants. As far as he obtains this permission, he is unwearied in his malicious efforts to deceive, to defile, or to distress us; and he can vary his devices in many plausible ways: but, he does us more harm as a seducer than as an accuser, as a subtle serpent than as a roaring lion. We are therefore called upon to be sober and vigilant, and to pray always that we "enter not into temptation:" and, as men advance in rank and reputation, authority, or usefulness, they have need to redouble the guard, and to be more watchful and instant in prayer than ever; for the enemy levels his assaults especially against those who are eminent in character, or fill up publick stations, in the church or in the community; because their falls involve numbers either in sin or suffering.—It is a mercy to be speedily made sensible of our guilt, when we have been left to transgress: but no confession or humiliation can secure us from present sufferings, when we have committed such crimes, as appear abominable even to ungodly men, and bring an open scandal upon our profession.—By thus yielding to temptation we bring ourselves into dreadful straits, from which we can by no means extricate ourselves: yet, even in this case, there is encouragement for us to leave our cause in the hand of the Lord, that he may do with us as he pleases; "for very great are his mercies." —Of all the painful consequences of transgression, none in this world can be more distressing to an ingenuous mind, than to see those whom we most love, and desire the most to do good to, suffering heavily through our sins. But even under the anguish of this trial, we must not allow

CHAP. XXII.

David makes large preparations for the temple, 1—5. He instructs Solomon, and charges him to build it, 6—16. He commands the elders of Israel to assist him, 17—19.

THEN David said, [a] This *is* the house of the LORD God, [b] and this *is* the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel.

2 And David commanded to gather together [c] the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel: and he set [d] masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.

3 And David [e] prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance [f] without weight;

4 Also [g] cedar-trees in abundance: for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre brought much cedar-wood to David.

5 And David said, [h] Solomon my son *is* young and tender, and the house *that is* to be builded for the LORD *must be* [i] exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will *therefore* now make preparation for it. So [k] David prepared abundantly before his death.

6 Then he called for Solomon his son, and [l] charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Israel.

7 And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, [m] it was in my mind to build an house [n] unto the name of the LORD my God:

8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, [o] Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: [p] thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

a xxi. 18—28. Gen. xxviii. 17. Deut. xii. 5—7. 11. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18. 2 Chr. iii. 1. vi. 5, 6. Ps. lxxviii. 60. 67—69. cxxxii. 13, 14. John iv. 20—22.
b 2 Kings xviii. 22. 2 Chr. xxxii. 12.
c 1 Kings ix. 20, 21. 2 Chr. ii. 17. viii. 7, 8. Is. lxi. 5, 6. Eph. ii. 12. 19—22.
d xiv. 1. 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Kings v. 17, 18. vi. 7. vii. 9—12. 2 Kings xii. 12. xxii. 6. Ezra iii. 7.
e xxix. 2. 7.
f 14. 1 Kings vii. 47. 2 Chr. iv. 18. Jer. lii. 20.
g 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Kings v. 6—10. 2 Chr. ii. 3. Ezra iii. 7.
h xxix. 1. 1 Kings iii. 7. 2 Chr. xiii. 7.
i 1 Kings ix. 8. 2 Chr. ii. 5. viii. 21. Is. lxiv. 11. Ez. vii. 20. Hag. ii. 3. 9. Luke xxi. 5.
k Deut. xxxi. 2, —7. Ec. ix. 10. John iii. 30. iv. 37, 38. ix. 4. xiii. 1. 2 Pet. i. 13—15.
l Num. xxvii. 18, 19. 23. Deut. xxxi. 14. 23. Matt. xxviii. 18—20. Acts i. 2. xx. 25—31. 1 Tim. v. 21. vi. 13—17. 2 Tim. iv. 1.
m xvii. 1. xxviii. 2. xxix. 3. 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Kings viii. 17—19. 2 Chr. vi. 7—9. Ps. cxxxii. 5. Acts vii 46.
n Deut. xii. 5. 11. 21. 1 Kings viii. 16. 20. 29. ix. 3. 2 Chr. ii. 4. Ezra vi. 12.
o xxviii. 3. Num. xxxi. 19, 20. 24. 1 Kings v. 3.
p xvii. 4—10. 2 Sam. vii. 5—11.

ourselves to murmur, or to despond.—The Lord has righteous reasons for his dispensations, though mysterious to us: and therefore they, who are reciprocally suffering through each other's sins, should unite together in humiliation before him, and in fervently deprecating the effects of his indignation from each other. This forms the proper employment of every individual, in times of general calamity: and when publick honour has thus been rendered to the righteous Author of national sufferings, his merciful interposition may be expected. He knows how to educe good from evil, and to over-rule our sufferings, nay, even our sins, for the good of our souls, and the promotion of true religion.—The fear of impending vengeance, from the wrath of an offended God, is naturally calculated to drive men *from him*. But in subserviency to the gospel, and through the influence of the Spirit of God, it concurs in shewing sinners the preciousness of Christ; disposing them to forsake all for him, and afterwards enlarging the mind in grateful obedience to him, who has saved them from so great a destruction. Those who shelter their souls, as it were, under the atonement of his sacrifice, who "suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust," will be safe from danger, even in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment: and none are losers, by being willing to part with all for the sake of Christ, or to dedicate all to his service.—When the urgency of our affairs constrains us to act contrary to our previous methods and rules, or to our inclination, we shall frequently learn afterwards, that, by so doing, we were preparing the way for some important benefit from the Lord to us or to others: and in the observance of his directions, we may confidently expect acceptance and returning comfort.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. The Lord, having pointed out the place, where he would have sacrifice offered for averting the pestilence, and having "answered by fire from heaven;" David was assured, probably by immediate inspiration, that it was his will, the temple should be built by Solomon on this very spot. It had immediately before been in the possession of a *Jebusite*, which was an intimation of mercy intended for the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. (xxi. 18.)—It does not appear, whether David removed the ark thither with its tent, or whether it remained in its former place.—Henceforth this became the spot, which God "chose to place his name there," and where sacrifices were regularly offered, as long as that dispensation lasted. (*Notes, Deut.* xii. 5—7. 2 *Chr.* iii. 1, 2. *Ps.* lxxviii. 67—69. *John* iv. 19—24.)

V. 2—5. David, though denied the honour of building the temple, yet out of love to so good a work, employed himself in making every kind of preparation for it. (*Notes*, xviii. 9—17, *v.* 11. xxviii. 11—18. xxix. 1—9.)—The *strangers*, here mentioned, seem to have been the remnant of the old inhabitants, who, having submitted to David, had their lives spared, and had been reduced to bondage. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* ix. 20—22.)—David procured much cedar-wood for the temple; but Solomon had occasion for a great deal more. (*Marg. Ref.*)—According to the nature of that introductory dispensation, and for an emblem of the spiritual glory of Christ and his church, Solomon's temple was built with great magnificence: that, being renowned through all countries, strangers might be induced to visit it, and thus become acquainted with JEHOVAH, and his true worship. Solomon also would need every encouragement and assistance for so great a work, as succeeding to the throne of Israel when young, and being called to perform so arduous and important a service; that he might not be retarded from entering on it in an early period of his reign. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14.)

V. 6—10. (*Notes, Num.* xxvii. 18, 19. 2 *Tim.* iv. 1—8.) David was a type of Christ in his conflicts, victories, and the destruction of his obstinate enemies: but Solomon represented the Saviour triumphant, glorified, and giving

9 Behold, [q] a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and [r] I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be [s] Solomon, and [t] I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

10 [t] He shall build an house for my name, and [u] he shall be my son, and I *will be* his father; and [x] I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

11 Now, my son, [y] the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12 Only [z] the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, [a] that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

13 Then [b] shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed [c] to fulfil the statutes and judgments, which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: [d] be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

14 Now, behold, in my [†] trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD [e] an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron [f] without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

15 Moreover *there are* workmen with thee in abundance, [‡] hewers and workers of stone and timber, and [g] all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

16 Of [h] the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, *there is* no number. [i] Arise *therefore*, and be doing, [k] and the LORD be with thee.

17 ¶ David also commanded [l] all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, *saying*,

18 *Is* [m] not the LORD your God with you? [n] and hath he *not* given you rest

q xvii. 11. xxviii. 5—7. 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.
r 1 Kings iv. 20, 25. v. 4. Ps. lxxii. 7. Is. ix. 6, 7.
s That is, *Peaceable*. 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25.
t Judg. vi. 24. *Marg.* Job xxxiv. 29. Is. xxvi. 12. xlv. 7. lvii. 19. lxvi. 12. Hag. ii. 9.
u xvii. 12, 13. xxviii. 6. 1 Kings v. 5. viii. 19, 20. Zech. vi. 12, 13.
x Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27. Heb. i. 5.
y xvii. 14. xxviii. 7. Ps. lxxxix. 36, 37. Is. ix. 7.
z 1 Kings xxviii. 20. Is. xxvi. 12. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20. Rom. xv. 33. 2 Tim. iv. 22.
a 1 Kings iii. 9—12. 2 Chr. i. 10. Ps. lxxii. 1. Prov. ii. 6, 7. Luke xxi. 15. Jam. i. 5.
b Deut. iv. 6. 1 Kings xi. 1—10. Prov. xiv. 8. 1 John ii. 3.
c xxviii. 7. Josh. i. 7, 8. *marg.* 1 Kings ii. 3. Jer. xxii. 3, 4.
d Matt. iii. 15. Acts xiii. 22. Gal. vi. 2. Jam. ii. 8.
e xxviii. 10. 20. Deut. xxxi. 7, 8. Josh. i. 6—9. 18. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Eph. vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1.

† Or, *poverty*. 2 Cor. viii. 2.
e xxix. 4—7. 1 Kings x. 14.
f 2 Kings xxv. 16. Jer. lii. 20.
‡ That is, *masons and carpenters*. *See on* 2—4.
g Ex. xxviii. 6. xxxi. 3—5. xxxv. 32—35. 1 Kings vii. 14.
h *See on* 3. 14.
i Josh. i. 2. 5. 9. vii. 10. Judg. iv. 14. xviii. 9, 10. 2 Chr. xx. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Eph. v. 14. Phil. ii. 12, 13. iv. 13.
k 1 Sam. xvii. 37. xx. 13.
l xxviii. 21. xxix. 6. Rom. xvi. 2. 3. Phil. iv. 3. 3 John 8.
m Judg. vi. 12—14. Rom. viii. 31.
n *See on* 9.—xxiii. 25. Deut. xii. 10, 11. Josh. xxii. 4. xxiii. 1. 2 Sam. vii. 1. Acts ix. 31.

peace and felicity to his willing subjects. In this latter character, "the Prince of peace" erects his spiritual temple; and it more accorded to the nature of the Christian dispensation, and to the character of Jesus, both of which were represented in this transaction, that the temple should be built by a peaceable prince, than by a successful warrior. Yet, David in his wars did the work and sought the honour of God, and was eminently serviceable to his people: and he was desirous also of building the temple. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 1—5. 12—16. xii. 24, 25. 1 *Kings* viii. 17—21. *Zech.* vi. 12, 13.)

Hast shed blood. (8) 'Though David's wars were warranted, and succeeded by God in an extraordinary manner; yet it did not suit so well with the divine Majesty to have an house built him by one who had shed so much blood, as by one that reigned in peace and quietness: that he might be an emblem of the King of peace, the Lord of the church, who was prefigured in all such great transactions.' *Bp. Patrick.*

For ever. (10) 'This can belong to none in the proper and full sense of the word, but Christ alone. For Solomon reigned but forty years, and after that his kingdom was torn in pieces. Therefore to Christ the author to the Hebrews applies them, *Heb.* i. 5.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11, 12. David had given Solomon exhortations and instructions; but the powerful influence of divine grace alone could form him to that wisdom, piety, and zeal, which such a work required. This he earnestly prayed for in Solomon's behalf, and taught him to pray for and confidently to expect: for the language may be understood as an assurance that it would be so; as well as a prayer that it might be so. The connexion also of the several particulars is well worthy of notice. The Lord must give the wisdom and understanding, in order that he might keep the charge and the law: for this would be the genuine and sure effect, and thus prosperity would be the result. (*Notes*, 13. 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14. *Ps.* lxxii. 1, 2.)

V. 13. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxviii. 7, 8. *Josh.* i. 7, 8.) Conscientious obedience to the commands of God, on scriptural principles, both secures final success, and inspires present courage and confidence.

V. 14. The gold and silver here mentioned, if computed by the ordinary weight of the talent, would amount to eight or nine hundred millions sterling: and this enormous quantity would have more than sufficed to erect an edifice, as large as the temple itself apart from its courts, of solid gold and silver. Compared therefore with the size of the temple, and with the gains of Solomon, when the precious metals became common at Jerusalem; (1 *Kings* ix. 14. 28;) it is generally concluded, either that some mistake has taken place in the numeral letters, or that a talent of inferior weight and value is meant.—David had collected this wealth for the temple in his trouble, or in his poverty. He had set out in life very poor; he had passed through a constant succession of trials and troubles, not only before he came to the kingdom, but during his whole reign; and all his prosperity was the result of the Lord's singular kindness, in making him a gainer by all the attempts of his numerous enemies.—He seems also to speak of his preparation as a small matter, whether compared with the greatness of the Lord to whom it was dedicated, or with his own obligations to him. (*Note*, xxix. 10—19.)

V. 15—19. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxviii. 20, 21. xxix. 2—9. 21—25.—*Set your heart*, &c. (19) Earnestly seize the present opportunity, and make it your grand concern to seek

o Deut. xx. 4. Josh. x. 42. 1 Sam. xxv. 28. 2 Sam. v. 19, 20. Ps. xliv. 1—5.
p Ps. xvi. 11. xxviii. 9. Deut. iv. 29. xxxii. 46, 47. 2 Chr. xx. 3. Dan. ix. 3. Hag. i. 5. Marg. Acts xi. 23.
q See on 16.—Is. lx. 1. Acts xxii. 16.

on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued o before the LORD, and before his people.

19 Now p set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God: q arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, r to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built s to the name of the LORD.

r 1 Kings viii. 6. 21. 2 Chr. v. 7. vi. 11.
s See on 7.—1 Kings v. 3.

and serve the Lord in all respects, as well as to build the temple. (*Notes, Ec.* ix. 10. *Is.* lv. 6, 7. *Matt.* vi. 33, 34. *John* xii. 34—36.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

When the grace of God possesses the heart, a man's falls and mistakes will eventually be over-ruled to form him to such a humble and watchful frame of mind, as will exceedingly increase the simplicity, purity, and activity of his zeal in the service of God.—The most eminent servants of the Lord are apt sometimes to abate their diligence; and alarming providences often concur with the warnings and rebukes of the Scripture, to stir them up to greater earnestness: especially when they are reminded of the approach of death, and perceive that much remains to be done, and that probably they have only a short time in which to do it.—When the Lord refuses to employ us in those kinds and in that measure of service to his church, which we desired and hoped to perform; we must not on that account yield to indolence or discouragement. But we should be doing what we can, in a subordinate sphere, and upon a smaller scale; and rejoice in affording any little assistance to those who are honoured with more extensive usefulness. The "spirit that is in us," indeed, powerfully "lusteth to envy;" but we must seek unto him, who "giveth more grace," that this evil may be mortified and subdued.—We are not likely on earth to witness those glorious times which are foretold in the Scriptures, when Satan shall no more deceive the nations, and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the "glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea:" yet, it is possible that we may be, as it were, collecting materials for that work. Whatever is done towards rendering the word of God more generally known, understood, and attended to, in the world, is like bringing a stone, perhaps an ingot of gold, towards erecting the edifice. Whatever tends to bring the rising generations, in succession, acquainted with the gospel of Jesus Christ, in its purity and energy, is, as it were, enlisting soldiers for that decisive conflict, in which the armies of Christ shall obtain most glorious victories. These considerations should encourage us, when we are grieved that we see no more fruits of all our labours. Much good may appear after our death, which was hidden from us, "lest we should be ex-"alted above measure." "Let us not then be weary of "well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint "not."—Above all, they who are aged, and expect shortly to be removed to a better world, should diligently instruct, encourage, charge, and caution those, who are young and inexperienced, and who are likely to succeed them in their work. The service is arduous and important, being intimately connected with the honour of God, and the salvation of souls; and "who is sufficient for these things?" Indeed, all our sufficiency must be of God. He allots various services to his people; and that which qualifies for one kind of usefulness, may unfit for another: we should then all acquiesce in his will; and fill up our proper place for the common benefit, as the members do in the human body. (*Note, Rom.* xii. 3—8.) But peace is in its own nature preferable to the most successful wars; and the shedding of human blood, though sometimes necessary, should always be done with great reluctance, and thought of with horror: for even when the Lord commanded it, he was pleased to speak of it, as "shed *in his* "*sight*," and as what he had no pleasure in beholding. We should therefore be far more ambitious of the honour of giving rest and quietness to those around us, than of the conqueror's applause. "Blessed are the peace-makers; "for they shall be called the children of God." (*Notes, Matt.* v. 9. *Jam.* iii. 17, 18.)—Among other unspeakable advantages of publick peace, this is peculiarly important, that it affords the fairest opportunities of executing useful designs to promote true religion: and then, we should be active and earnest to seize the favourable opportunity, by forming or assisting every design of general utility. (*Note, Acts* ix. 31.)—But especially peace among Christians is conducive to this most desirable end; which is grievously counteracted by the animosities, divisions, and vehement controversics, which, alas! prevail and are multiplied. Did all real believers "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and to *strive together* for "the faith of the gospel;" such effects would follow, as seem at present to exceed our largest expectations or conceptions. (*Note* and *P. O. Eph.* iv. 1—6.) The work is, however, in the hands of "the Prince of peace:" may he compose all our differences, and build the spiritual temple so magnificent and glorious, that the fame of it may be spread into all countries, till all the nations of the earth become his willing subjects, and live in love and peace with each other!

V. 11—19.

Even the young, the weak, and inexperienced, when called forth to service by the Lord, may expect that he will be with them; and that he will give them upright, zealous minds, with true wisdom and understanding, and then cause them to prosper in their work.—No abilities or diligence can render us durably and extensively useful to others, if we do not take heed to our own conduct, that it be regulated according to the word of God. While we trust in his grace and mercy, and obey his commandments, we need fear no difficulties or opposition; the things which seem to be against us will "work together for our good:" we should then be "strong in the Lord," and of good courage, and not dread or be dismayed at the prospect of any temptations, troubles, or persecutions, which may meet us in the way of our duty.—In such an age and nation as this, we of course enter in many respects into the

CHAP. XXIII.

David makes Solomon king, 1. The Levites are numbered, and classed for different services, 2—6. The sons of Gershon, 7—11. Of Kohath, 12—20. Of Merari, 21—23. The several offices of the Levites, 24—32.

a xxix. 28. Gen. xxv. 8. xxxv. 29. 1 Kings i. 1. Job v. 26.
b xxviii. 5. xxix. 22—25. 1 Kings i. 33—39.
c xiii. 1. xxviii. 1. Josh. xxiii. 2. xxiv. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 29, 30.
d Num. iv. 2, 3. 23. 30. 35. 43. 47.

SO when David was [a] old and full of days, [b] he made Solomon his son king over Israel.

2 And [c] he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.

3 Now [d] the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, man by man, was [e] thirty and eight thousand.

e Num. iv. 48.
f 28—32. vi. 48. ix. 28—32. xxvi. 20—27.
* Or, *oversee.* Neh. xi. 9, 22. Acts xx. 28.
g xxvi. 29—31. Deut. xvi. 18. xvii. 8—10. 2 Chr. xix. 8. Mal. ii. 7.
h ix. 17—27. xv. 23, 24. xvi. 38. xxvi. 1—12. 2 Chr. viii. 14. xxxv. 15. Ezra vii. 7. Neh. vii. 73.
i vi. 31—48. ix. 33. xv. 16—22. xvi. 41, 42. xxv. 1—7. 2 Chr. xx. 19—21. Ps. lxxxvii. 7.
j 1 Kings x. 12. 2 Chr. xxix. 25, 26.—*See on* Am. vi. 5.
k 2 Chr. viii. 14. xxix. 25. xxxi. 1 vi. 1. 16.

4 Of which [f] twenty and four thousand *were* to * set forward the work of the house of the LORD; and six thousand *were* [g] officers and judges.

5 Moreover four thousand *were* [h] porters; and four thousand [i] praised the LORD with [j] the instruments which I made, *said David,* to praise *therewith.*

6 And David [k] divided them into † courses among the sons of Levi, *namely,* [l] Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

2. xxxv. 10. Ezra vi. 18. † Heb. *divisions.* xxiv. 1. xxvi. 1. *Gershom.* Ex. vi. 16—24. Num. xxvi. 57, 58.

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labours of others: but to all the preparation hitherto made in any place, we shall find it requisite to add far more; for much, very much remains to be done to render us "a "peculiar people, zealous of good works." (*Note, Tit.* ii. 14.) All our advantages, and all the promises of the gospel, are intended to encourage our activity, and not to excuse our sloth. And, whether we seek our own salvation, or that of other men, we must "arise, and be doing."—The whole weight of publick services should not be laid upon those who sustain publick characters. Others are commanded to assist them in proportion to their talents and abilities; and they are exhorted to set their hearts and souls thus to seek and serve the Lord, that the good works, which have been devised, may be completed without needless delay. Thus nobles, senators, magistrates, and indeed every subject in his place, should concur with the king, in every scriptural measure for stopping the progress of immorality and profaneness, and for promoting the fear of God, and a regard to his truths, ordinances, and commandments: first they should lead the way by a good example; then they should proceed to employ their authority and influence, to give effect to such endeavours: and finally, they should seek the blessing of God upon them by fervent prayers. Thus likewise, the leading persons in congregations should second to the uttermost the labours of the minister for the good of souls: their unanimity, forbearance, and cordiality, their pious examples, family-religion, and earnest prayers, should never be wanting, that they may add weight to his exhortations, strengthen his hands, encourage him in his arduous work, and bring a blessing upon it. Yet, alas! how contrary is the conduct of too many, who would be thought friends to the gospel! In the church, in their families, and in their worldly concerns, they act as if they meant to counteract the labours of ministers; to weaken their influence, to discourage their hearts, to prejudice men's minds against the blessed truths which they preach, and to embolden all around them to disregard their warnings and exhortations!—But surely, if "the LORD indeed be with us," and has given us rest from our enemies; we shall set our hearts and souls to seek him, and by every means in our power, to glorify his name, and promote the peace and prosperity of his church.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1. David named Solomon his successor.—If this transaction preceded his last sickness, and Adonijah's usurpation, that usurpation was thus rendered more inexcusable: for it is evident that David acted as a prophet, as well as with the full concurrence of his people. (*Notes,* xxix. 21—25. 1 *Kings* i. 5, 6. ii. 15—18.)

V. 2—6. The ark being now stationed at Jerusalem, the place of the temple appointed, and great preparations made for the building of it; (xvi. 1. xxii. 1—4. 14;) David proceeded to reduce the whole service of the priests and Levites to method, which seems before to have been conducted with less regularity. The Israelites had been greatly increased; and we may suppose that, towards the close of David's reign, the occasional sacrifices were far more numerous than they had been. The priests and Levites also were greatly multiplied; and it was of importance to make every thing ready for conducting the service, with proportionable splendour and solemnity, as soon as the temple was finished. David therefore began his arrangements with numbering the Levites, from thirty years of age, as in the time of Moses: but it does not appear, that such as were above fifty years old were omitted. (*Notes,* 24—28. *Num.* iv. 3. viii. 24—26.) The priests, who were very numerous, were not included in the sum total here mentioned; so that this tribe had increased in greater proportion than the others.—Twenty-four thousand Levites were employed to "set forward the work of the house "of the LORD" (4): that is, to assist the priests in every thing pertaining to the sacrifices, and in removing from the temple and its courts whatever might be polluting and offensive; that the whole service might be performed with expedition and exactness, and every thing preserved entirely clean and beautiful (28). It is also probable, that, while the temple was building, they were employed in superintending the workmen. They served in rotation by courses; and it may be concluded, that every week a thousand came in, and a thousand went out. (*Marg. Ref.* —*Note, 2 Kings* xi. 5—9.) Doubtless it was also intended, that they should be instructors of the people, in their several districts, when not employed at the sanctuary. (*Notes, Num.* xxxv. 2—8. 2 *Chr.* xxx. 21, 22.) Six thousand were

7 ¶ Of the [m] Gershonites *were* [n] Laadan and Shimei.

8 The sons of Laadan; the chief *was* [o] Jehiel, and Zetham, and [p] Joel, three.

9 The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. These *were* the chief of the fathers of Laadan.

10 And the sons of Shimei *were* Jahath, [q] Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four *were* the sons of Shimei.

11 And Jahath was the chief, and [r] Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah [*] had not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to *their* father's house.

12 ¶ The [s] sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.

13 The [t] sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses: and Aaron was [u] separated, that he should [x] sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, [y] to burn incense before the LORD to minister unto him, and [z] to bless in his name for ever.

14 Now *concerning* Moses [a] the man of God, [b] his sons were named of the tribe of Levi.

15 The sons of Moses *were* [c] Gershom and Eliezer.

16 Of the sons of Gershom, [d] Shebuel *was* the chief.

17 And the sons of Eliezer *were*, Rehabiah [†] the chief. And Eliezer had none other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah [‡] were very many.

18 Of the sons of Izhar; [e] Shelomith the chief.

19 Of the sons of [f] Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

20 Of the sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second.

21 ¶ The sons of [g] Merari; [h] Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar and Kish.

22 And Eleazar died, and [i] had no sons, but daughters: and their [§] brethren the sons of Kish [k] took them.

23 The sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and [l] Jeremoth, three.

24 ¶ These *were* [m] the sons of Levi [n] after the house of their fathers: *even* the chief of their fathers, as they were counted by number of names [o] by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of [p] twenty years and upward.

25 For David said, [q] The LORD God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, [‖] that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever;

26 And also unto the Levites: they shall no *more* [r] carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof.

27 For [s] by the last words of David, the Levites *were* [*] numbered from twenty years old and above:

28 Because their [†] office *was* to wait on the sons of Aaron [t] for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and [u] in the chambers, and in the [x] purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;

29 Both for [y] the shew-bread, and

m vi. 17—20. xv. 7. xxvi. 21.
n Ex. vi. 17. *Libni. Shimi.*
o xv. 18. 20, 21.
p vi. 33, 34. xv. 7. 11. 17.
q 11 *Zizah.*
r 10. *Zina.*
* Heb. *did not multiply sons.*
s *See on* vi. 2—Ex. vi. 18. Num. iii. 27. xxvi. 58.
t *See on* vi. 3.—Ex. vi. 20. Num. iii. 27. xxvi. 59.
u Ex. xxviii. 1. Num. xviii. 1. Ps. xcix. 6. cvi. 16. Acts xiii. 2. Rom. i. 1. Gal. i. 15. Heb. v. 4.
x Ex. xxix. 33—37. 44. xl. 9—15. Lev. x. 10. 17. 18. xvi. 11—19. 32, 33. xvii. 2—6. Num. xviii. 3—8.
y Ex. xxx. 6—10. 34—38. Lev. x. 1, 2. xvi. 12, 13. Num. xvi. 16—18. 35—40. 46, 47. 2 Chr. xxvi. 18—21. Luke i. 9. Rev. viii. 3.
z Lev. ix. 22, 23. Num. vi. 23—27. Deut. xxi. 5.
a *See on* Deut. xxxiii. 1. Ps. xc. *title.*
b xxvi. 23—25.
c Ex. ii. 22. iv. 20. xviii. 3, 4.
d xxv. 20. *Shubael.*
† Or, *the first.* xxvi. 25.
‡ Heb. *were highly multiplied.*
e xxiv. 22. *Shelomoth.* xxvi. 26.
f 12. xv. 9. xxiv. 23.
g 6.—*See on* vi. 29, 30.—xxiv. 26—30.
h Ex. vi. 19. *Mahali.*
i xxiv. 28.
§ Or, *kinsmen.*
k Num. xxxvi. 6—8.
l xxiv. 30. *Jerimoth.*
m Num. x. 17. 24.
n Num. i. 4. ii. 32. iii. 15. 20. iv. 34—49.
o Num. i. 2. 18. 22. iii. 47.
p 3. 27. Num. i. 3. iv. 3. viii. 24. Ezra iii. 8.
q *See on* xxii. 18.—2 Sam. vii. 1. 11.
‖ Or, *and he dwelleth in Jerusalem, &c.* 1 Kings viii. 13. 27. Ps. ix. 11. lxviii. 16. 18. cxxxii. 13, 14. cxxxv. 21. Is. viii. 18. Joel iii. 21. Zech. viii. 3. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Col. ii. 9.
r Num. iv. 5. 49. vii. 9.
s 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. Ps. lxxii. 20.
* Heb. *numbers.*
† Heb *station* was *at the hand of.* xviii. 17. *marg.* Neh. xi. 24.
t 4. xxviii. 13. Num. iii. 6—9. viii. 11—22. 26. xviii. 2—6.
u ix. 26. 1 Kings vi. 5. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11. Ezra viii. 29. Neh. xiii. 4, 5. 9. Jer. xxxv. 4. Ez. xli. 6—11. 26. xlii. 3—13.
x ix. 28, 29. 2 Chr. xxix. 5. 18, 19. xxxv. 3—6. 11—14.
y ix. 31, 32. Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 5—9. 1 Kings vii. 48. 2 Chr. xiii. 11. xxix. 18. Neh. x. 33. Matt. xii. 4. Heb. ix 2.

employed as magistrates, in the different parts of the country, and perhaps they likewise acted in rotation (4). Four thousand kept the doors of the sanctuary, that no unclean or improper person might enter the courts; that no disturbance might be made, to interrupt the sacred services; that none but priests might go into the temple; and that no one might rob the treasures there deposited: and four thousand were appointed as singers and musicians, to keep up that part of divine worship continually. (*Marg. Ref.*)—These also were divided into twenty-four courses, and changed weekly. (ix. 25.)

V. 7—23. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, vi. 16—48. *Ex.* vi. 14—25. *Num.* iii, iv. xvi. 1—4.—*Aaron*, &c. (13) vi. 49. *Notes*, *Ex.* xxviii. 1. *Num.* vi. 23—27. xvi. 5—7. 35—50. xvii, xviii. 1—6.—*Moses*, &c. (14) As the sons of Moses were excluded from the priesthood; evidently with Moses's most cordial and disinterested concurrence, and, as it appears from the history, by their own also; no other person, not of Aaron's race, could on any account reasonably think of intruding into that sacred office. (*Note*, vi. 48.)

V. 24—28. (*Note*, 2—6.) The work of the Levites was by no means so laborious at this time, as when the tabernacle was carried by them, along with Israel in their journeys; and perhaps numbers of the young Levites, being out of employ, contracted bad habits or set bad examples: therefore David, as a prophet, ordered this change. Twenty-five years of age had been the earliest term of their entering upon their probationary services, but now they were to be employed from twenty years old: and, as a matter of importance, David confirmed it with his last words. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 29. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, ix. 31—33. *Ex.* xxv. 23—.

z ix. 29. Lev. vi. 20—23.
a See on Lev. ii. 4—7. vii. 9.
* Or, *flat plate.*
b Lev. xix. 35, 36. Num. iii. 50.
c vi. 31—33. ix. 33. xvi. 37—42. xxv. 1—7. 2 Chr. xxix. 25—28. xxxi. 2. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Ps. cxxxv. 1—3. 19, 20. cxxxvii. 2—4. Rev. v. 8—14. xiv. 3.
d Ex. xxix. 39—42. Ps. xcii. 1—3. cxxxiv. 1, 2.
e Lev. xxiii. 24, 39. Num. x. 10. Ps. lxxxi. 1—4. Is. i. 13, 14.

for [z] the fine flour for meat-offering, and for the [a] unleavened cakes, and for *that which is baked in* the [*] pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of [b] measure and size;

30 And to [c] stand [d] every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even;

31 And to offer all burnt-sacrifices unto the LORD [e] in the sabbaths, in the new-moons, and on the [f] set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them continually before the LORD:

f Lev. xxiii. Num. xxviii. xxix.

32 And that they should [g] keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy *place,* and [h] the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.

g ix. 27. Num. i. 53. 1 Kings viii. 4.
h Num. iii. 6—9. 38.

30. *Lev.* ii. 4—8. xxiv. 5—8.—*All manner,* &c.] Those Levites, who acted as magistrates (4), had the inspection of weights and measures of every kind, that no fraud might in this way be committed. Honesty is nearly connected with piety; and therefore the Levites, being sufficiently numerous, were employed to superintend the former as well as the latter. (*Notes, Deut.* xxv. 13—16. *Prov.* xi. 1. xvi. 11. xx. 10. 23. *Am.* viii. 4—10. *Mic.* vi. 10—15.) They probably kept standard-weights and measures at the temple, by which all those allowed in traffick, were tried and approved: and from this "the shekel of the "sanctuary," took that name. (*Note, Ez.* xlv. 10—12.)

V. 30—32. The Levites assisted the priests, in offering the sacrifices; though some parts of that service were performed by the priests alone. (*Notes, Lev.* i. 5—9. *Num.* viii. 19—26. xviii. 2—6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we be prepared for death, having accomplished our measure of services, and seeing others raised up to succeed us in the church or the community, according to our several situations, we surely may be "full of days," whatever our term of life may be: and satisfied with living in this world of sin and sorrow, of vanity and temptation, we may rejoice to leave all below, and even to be absent from our bodies, that we may go to heaven and be present with the Lord. (*Notes* and *P. O. 2 Cor.* v. 1—8.)—We should be thankful, in declining years, to be eclipsed by men of real integrity, piety, and useful endowments, who are coming forward upon the stage of action: yet, we should still endeavour to do all we can to promote the common cause of religion; and sometimes the sagacity and experience of old age, when incapable of much bodily exertion, may suggest and effect more real good, than the vigour and activity of youth.—The increase of ministers is of great importance, provided they be men of God, zealous for his glory, and earnestly seeking the salvation of souls. In this case they will desire employment, and in one way or other will be usefully active.—But it is expedient that every one should know his proper place, to help forward the work of the house of the Lord; to promote equity and justice; to instruct the people in the truths and precepts of God's word, to take care that his ordinances be duly administered; and to excite and assist the people in his sacred worship.—Every method should be used to prevent the irregularity, indolence, and worldly lusts, of this order of men, whose example, influence, and conversation are more useful, or more pernicious, than those of any other; and who are commonly either better or worse employed, than the other orders in society.—Though it is generally inexpedient, that the more arduous part of the sacred ministry should be performed by very young men; yet those who are intended for this service, ought by no means to waste their youth in inactivity or dissipation; but to employ their time in preparatory and initiatory studies and exercises.—A constant succession of religious duties, stated or occasional, publick or private, must engage the true minister's attention, day by day continually: and if a man cannot take pleasure in such employments, he must soon be weary of the work, as a drudgery; and will either neglect it, or attend upon it unwillingly, for the sake of his wages. (*P. O. Acts* vi. 1—7. *Notes,* 1 *Tim.* iv. 12—16.) *A new heart, a spiritual mind,* which delights greatly in God's commandments, is the first and most essential qualification for the ministry; as indeed it forms the great distinction between the true Christian, and all other men in the world. To the spiritual man every successive service will yield renewed satisfaction; and he will be unwearied, and always abounding and delighting in the work of the Lord; being never so happy, as when employed for such a good Master, in so pleasant a service. With him the work itself, and the success of his labours, are the principal objects: the emolument or maintenance (though he has a right to it, and perhaps cannot live without it,) is a very subordinate consideration: nor will he much regard whether he be called to take the lead, or whether he keep the charge of others who are placed over him, provided they do not bind his hands, or impede his usefulness. (*Notes,* 1 *Tim.* iii. 1—7. 1 *Pet.* v. 1—4.) These are indeed "men of God:" may he supply his church with numbers of them; in the place of those hirelings, who have in all ages swarmed in the professing church, to the scandal of religion and the ruin of their own souls! Such ministers as have been described, will be accepted and useful in the most obscure situations; and will subserve the interests of morality most effectually, as well as promote the spiritual worship of God through Jesus Christ. And should they leave their families in poverty and obscurity, after their decease: this circumstance will be a testimony before the world of their disinterestedness; and the Lord will surely provide for their wants, as far as is truly good for them. He advances, and he abases, as his infinite wisdom sees good, whatever may be our cares or desires. May we then seek and serve him uprightly, and leave all the rest to his disposal, by faith in his word and resignation to his righteous will!

CHAP. XXIV.

The priests are divided by lot into twenty-four courses, 1—19. The rest of the Kohathites, and the Merarites, are divided in like manner, 20—31.

a xxiii. 6. *Marg.*

b vi. 3. Ex. vi. 23. xxviii. 1. Lev. x. 1—6. Num. iii. 2. xxvi. 60.

c Ex. xxiv. 1. 9.

d Lev. x. 2. Num. iii. 4. xxvi. 61.

e Ex. xxix. 9. Lev. x. 12. Num. xvi. 39, 40. xviii. 7.

f vi. 31. vi. 4—8. 50—53. xii. 27, 28. xv. 11. xvi. 39. 2 Sam. xx. 25. 1 Kings ii. 35.

g 1 Sam. xxi. 1. xxii. 9. 2 Sam. viii. 17.

h xv. 6—12. 16.

i Num. xxv. 11—13. 1 Sam. ii. 30—36.

k *See on* xxiii. 24.

l Josh. xviii. 10. Prov. xvi. 33. Acts i. 26.

m ix. 11. 2 Chr. xxxv. 8. Neh. xi. 11. Matt. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 1. 6. v. 24.

n 1 Kings iv. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 13. Ezra vii. 6. Neh. viii. 1. Matt. viii. 19. xiii. 52. xxiii. 1, 2.

NOW *these are* [a] the divisions of the sons of Aaron. [b] The sons of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

2 But [c] Nadab and Abihu [d] died before their father, and had no children: therefore [e] Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office.

3 And David distributed them, both [f] Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and [g] Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service.

4 And there were more [h] chief men found of [i] the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar: and *thus* were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar *there were* sixteen chief men of the house of *their* fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar [k] according to the house of their fathers.

5 Thus were [l] they divided by lot, one sort with another; for [m] the governors of the sanctuary, and governors *of the house* of God, were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar.

6 And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel [n] the scribe, *one* of the Levites, wrote them before the king, and the princes and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and *before* the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites: one * principal household being taken for Eleazar, and *one* taken for Ithamar.

* Heb. *house of the father.* 4. xxiii. 24.

7 Now the first lot came forth to [o] Jehoiarib, the second [p] to Jedaiah,

o ix. 10. Neh. xii. 19. *Joiarib.*

p Ezra ii. 36. Neh. vii. 39. xi. 10.

8 The third to [q] Harim, the fourth to Seorim,

q Ezra ii. 39. x. 21. Neh. vii. 35. xii. 15.

9 The fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to [r] Mijamin,

r Neh. xii. 17. *Miniamin.*

10 The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to [s] Abijah,

s Neh. xii. 4. 17. Luke i. 5. *Abia.*

11 The ninth to [t] Jeshuah, the tenth to Shecaniah,

t Ezra ii. 36. Neh. vii. 39. xii. 10.

12 The eleventh to [u] Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,

u Neh. xii. 10.

13 The thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab,

14 The fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to [x] Immer,

x Ezra ii. 37. x. 20. Neh. vii. 40.

15 The seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Aphses,

16 The nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezekel,

17 The one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul,

18 The three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah.

19 These *were* [y] the orderings of them in their service to come into the house of the LORD, according to their manner, [z] under Aaron their father, as

y ix. 25. 2 Chr. xxiii. 4. 8. 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

z *See on* 1.—Heb. vii. 11.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1—4. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Lev.* x. 1—5. *Num.* xviii. 7.) It may be supposed, that the house of Ithamar, in consequence of the sentence denounced against it in the days of Eli, had decreased in numbers and eminency, before Zadok was constituted high priest: (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* ii. 30—36. iii. 11—14. 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27. 35:) so that there were twice as many flourishing families and principal persons in the line of Eleazar, as in that of Ithamar. 'To avoid all confusion, now that they were 'much increased, David distributed the priests as he had 'done the Levites, into several courses; which, no doubt, 'was by a divine direction, as well as the other. ... He ap- 'pointed ... sixteen courses of the sons of Eleazar, under 'as many heads of their families; and half as many of the 'posterity of Ithamar.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5. *Governors,* &c.] Or, principal ministers in holy things, and rulers in behalf of God, or superior magistrates. (*Marg. Ref.* m.)

V. 6. The regulation of these courses of the priests was made by casting lots, before the king and all the chief persons in the land, in a most solemn manner; and a record was made of the transaction, to prevent any future contest. First, one household was taken of Eleazar's race, and then one of Ithamar's, till sixteen had been completed; after which the remaining eight of Eleazar's sons, were arranged according to the order in which their lots came forth.

V. 7. It was thought, by the Jews in after ages, a great honour to be descended from Jehoiarib. The Maccabees were descended from him; (1 *Mac.* ii. 1—4;) and Josephus thought himself noble, because he sprang from the first of these twenty-four courses.

V. 10. *Abijah.*] The courses of the priests, established by David, were continued, with some alterations, till the days of Christ: these records must therefore have been very useful to the Jews, after their return from the Babylonish captivity. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ezra* ii. 36—39. *Luke* i. 5—7.)

V. 19. *Under Aaron their father.*] All the priests were considered as Aaron's successors, and as filling up his

the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

20 ¶ And the rest of the sons of Levi *were these:* Of the sons of [a] Amram; [b] Shubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah.

21 Concerning [c] Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, the first *was* [d] Isshiah.

22 Of the [e] Izharites; [f] Shelomoth: of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath.

23 And the sons *of Hebron;* [g] Jeriah *the first,* Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.

24 *Of* the sons of Uzziel; [h] Michah: of the sons of Michah; Shamir.

25 The brother of Michah *was* [i] Isshiah: of the sons of Isshiah; [k] Zechariah.

26 ¶ The [l] sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno.

27 The sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri.

28 Of Mahli *came* Eleazar, [m] who had no sons.

29 Concerning Kish: the son of Kish *was* Jerahmeel.

30 The sons also of [n] Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites after the house of their fathers.

31 These likewise cast [o] lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites, even [p] the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.

CHAP. XXV.

The names and offices of the principal singers and musicians, 1—7. They are divided by lot into twenty-four courses, 8—31.

MOREOVER David and [a] the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of [b] Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should [c] prophesy with [d] harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen according to their service was:

a vi. 18. xxiii. 12—14.
b xxiii. 16 xxvi. 24. *Shebuel.*
c xxiii. 17.
d xxvi. 25. *Jeshaiah.*
e xxiii. 18. Ex. vi. 21. Num. iii. 19. 27. *Izeharites.*
f xxiii. 18. xxvi 25. *Shelomith.*
g xxiii. 19. xxvi. 31. *Jerijah.*
h xxiii. 20. *Micah.*
i xxiii. 20. *Jesiah.*
k xv. 18. 20
l vi. 19. xxiii. 21. Ex. vi. 19. Num. iii. 20.
m xxiii. 22.
n vi. 47. xxiii 23.
o 5, 6. Num. xxvi. 56.
p xxv. 8. xxvi. 13.
a xii. 28. xxiii. 3. xxiv. 5, 6. 2 Chr. xxiii. 1. 9.
b *See on* vi. 33. 39. 44. xv. 16—19.
c 3. 1 Sam. x. 5. 2 Kings iii. 15. 1 Cor. xiv. 24—26.
d xv. 16—21. xvi. 4, 5. 42. xxiii. 5—7. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13. xxix. 25, 26. xxxi. 2. xxxiv. 12. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Neh. xii. 24. 27. 43—46. Ps. lxxxi. 2. xcii. 1—3. cl. 3—5. Rev. xv. 2—4

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place, in whose person the whole priesthood was originally vested, and from whom it was derived to his posterity.—These arrangements having been made by David, acting under the divine direction, and according to the commandment given by Moses concerning the priesthood; the courses of the priests attended, each during one week at a time, for the ordinary services; though at the great festivals, and on other publick occasions, numbers of the rest would be present and assist.

V. 20—30. (*Marg. Ref.*) These persons seem to have been the heads of those twenty-four thousand Levites, who in twenty-four courses waited on the priests in their ministrations. (xxiii. 4.)

V. 31. *The principal,* &c.] The whole company being ranged, according to their families, into the proper number of divisions, the order of their courses was assigned them by lot, without respect to rank or seniority.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord will certainly perform all his promises and threatenings; and if they do not take effect suddenly, and with observation, they will do it gradually and silently.—Sin ruins men's characters, comforts, and families; and will destroy the immortal souls of all those, who do not obtain salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.—In all cases we ought to act with exact impartiality, as far as we are able: and when human prudence fails of discerning a reason of preference, where it must be given; it is right, in one way or other, to refer the determination to the Lord.—Much wisdom and equity is requisite to exclude occasions of envy, jealousy, and contention, in the regulation of publick affairs, where numbers are concerned: but what is done fairly and openly, and in the fear of God, is placed upon the most permanent basis.—The solemn appointment and orderly attendance of ministers, is of considerable importance; but they are all under the hand of Jesus, from whom they receive their commission and instructions, as well as their qualifications; and to whom they are all accountable.—Difference of age, learning, piety, reputation, and other circumstances, gives external precedency to some ministers; but they are all brethren, and none ought to act as lords, with despotick rule, or domineer over the others. (*Note,* 1 *Pet.* v. 1—4. *P. O.* 1—7.) Thus, in Jesus Christ, there is neither male nor female, bond nor free; but all believers are one in him, being children of God, fellow-heirs of eternal life, and brethren to each other. May they all on earth emulate that love, peace, and harmony, which will subsist in the heavenly world!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—6. "The captains of the host" (1), seem to mean the leaders, or heads, of the several courses of the priests and Levites.—Jeduthun either was the same person, as was before called Ethan; or Ethan was dead, and Jeduthun succeeded him. (xv. 17—19. *Note,* 22.)—The word *prophesy,* in this place, seems to mean no more, than praising God by singing inspired prophetical hymns, with great earnestness and devout affections, under the influences of the Holy Spirit. As the prophets in Samuel's days used musick and singing; it

e 1. vi. 39. xv. 17. xvi. 5. Ps. lxxiii.—lxxxiii. *titles.*
f 14. *Jesharelah.*
g 3. 6. Is. iii. 6.

2 Of the sons of [e] Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and [f] Asarelah, the sons of Asaph [g] under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied [*] according to the order of the king.

* Heb. *by the hands of the king.* 6. *marg.*

h ix. 16. xvi. 41, 42. 2 Chr. xxix. 14.
i 9.
j 11. *Izri.*
k 15.
l 21. xv. 18. 21.
† With Shimei, mentioned 17.

3 Of [h] Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; [i] Gedaliah, and [j] Zeri, and [k] Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and [l] Mattithiah, [†] six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, [m] to give thanks and to praise the LORD.

m Ps. xcii. 1. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
n vi. 33. xv. 17. 19. xvi. 41, 42. Ps. lxxxviii. *title.*
o 13.
p 16.
q 18. *Azareel.* xxiv. 24.
r 20. xxiv. 20. *Shubael.*
s 22. xxiv. 30.
t 23.
u 25.
x 27.
y 29.
z 31.
a 24.
b 26.
c 28. 30.

4 Of [n] Heman: the sons of Heman; [o] Bukkiah, [p] Mattaniah, [q] Uzziel, [r] Shebuel, and [s] Jerimoth, [t] Hananiah, [u] Hanani, [x] Eliathah, [y] Giddalti, and [z] Romamti-ezer, [a] Joshbekashah, [b] Mallothi, [c] Hothir, *and* Mahazioth.

d xxi. 9. 1 Sam. ix. 9.
‡ Or, *matters.*
e xxviii. 5. Gen. xxxiii. 5. Ps. cxxvii. 3. Is. viii. 18.

5 All these *were* the sons of Heman [d] the king's seer in the [‡] words of God, to lift up the horn. And [e] God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

f 2, 3.
g 1—3. xv. 22. xxiii. 5. Ps. lxviii. 25. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.
§ Heb. *by the hands of the king.* 2. *marg.*
h *See on* 1—4.

6 All these *were* [f] under the hands of their father [g] for song *in* the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, [§] according to the king's order to [h] Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.

7 So the number of them, with their brethren, that were instructed in the songs of the LORD, *even* all that were cunning, *was* two hundred fourscore and eight.

i *See on* xxiv. 5. Lev. xvi. 8. 1 Sam. xiv. 41. 42. Prov. xvi. 33. Acts i. 26.
j xxiv. 31. xxvi. 13. 16. Neh. xii. 24.
k xv. 22. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13.
l 2.

8 ¶ And they [i] cast lots [j] ward against *ward*, as well the small as the great, [k] the teacher as the scholar.

9 Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to [l] Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons *were* twelve:

10 The third to [m] Zaccur, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

m 2.

11 The fourth to [n] Izri, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

n 3. *Zeri.*

12 The fifth to [o] Nethaniah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

o 2.

13 The sixth to Bukkiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

14 The seventh to [p] Jesharelah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

p 2. *Asarelah.*

15 The eighth to Jeshaiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

16 The ninth to Mattaniah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

17 The tenth to Shimei, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

18 The eleventh to [q] Azareel, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

q 4. *Uzziel.*

19 The twelfth to [r] Hashabiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

r 3.

20 The thirteenth to [s] Shubael, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

s 4. *Shebuel.*

21 The fourteenth to Mattithiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

22 The fifteenth to Jeremoth, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

23 The sixteenth to Hananiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

24 The seventeenth to Joshbekashah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

25 The eighteenth to Hanani, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

26 The nineteenth to Mallothi, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

27 The twentieth to Eliathah, *he*, his

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has been conjectured, that he first introduced them into the regular worship of Israel, and that David reduced to order what he found already established. (*Notes*, ix. 22. 1 *Sam.* x. 5, 6.)—These persons are said to have "prophe-"sied according to the order of the king;" because he instituted the order of their services.—Only five sons of Jeduthun are here named; but Shimei, afterwards mentioned, is supposed to have been the sixth (17). Perhaps, though as Jeduthun's son he was chosen to be the head of one course, he was at this time young, and not fit for present service.—Heman seems to have been a prophet, or "seer," in the common acceptation, and was much consulted by David: "he lifted up the horn," or presided over those who used wind-instruments of musick. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, vi. 33—39. ix. 31—33. xvi. 37—43. xxiii. v. 2—6.)

V. 7. These two hundred and eighty-eight, being twenty-four courses of twelve each, were more skilful than the other Levites; and being placed under the twenty-four sons of the chief singers, they had the four thousand before mentioned divided among them, to officiate by courses, according to their instructions. (xxiii. 5.) 'Twelve of 'those singers, with their governor, came and waited every 'week; at the end of which they were succeeded by other 'twelve, till the course was finished.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 8. Even among the twenty-four leaders, some were more expert than others; some were *teachers*, and others *scholars;* but every one was taken by the solemn casting of lots, without any regard to these distinctions. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Thus all things were disposed for the preserving 'order, and avoiding all disputes about precedence: there 'being no respect had in this divine distribution to their 'birth, but the younger in course preceded the elder.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9—31. *Marg. Ref.*

sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:
28 The one and twentieth to Hothir, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:
29 The two and twentieth to Giddalti, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:
30 The three and twentieth to [t] Mahazioth, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:
31 The four and twentieth to Romamti-ezer, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve.

CHAP. XXVI.

The divisions of the porters, 1—12. The gates assigned to them by lot, 13—19. The Levites who had the charge of the treasures, 20—28. Those who were officers and judges, 29—32.

[a] ix. 17—27. xv. 18. 23, 24. 2 Chr. xxiii. 19.
[b] Num. xxvi. 9—11. Ps. xliv—xlix. *titles.*
[c] 14. *Shelemiah.*
[d] vi. 37. ix. 19. *Ebiasaph.*

CONCERNING the divisions of [a] the porters: Of the [b] Korhites *was* [c] Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of [d] Asaph.
2 And the sons of Meshelemiah *were*, Zechariah the first-born, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,
3 Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh.
[e] xv. 18. 21. 24. xvi. 5. 38.
4 Moreover the sons of [e] Obed-edom *were*, Shemaiah, the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth,
5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for [f] God blessed [*] him.
[f] xiii. 14.
[*] That is, Obed-edom.
6 Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they *were* [g] mighty men of valour.
[g] 8. xii. 28. 2 Chr. xxvi. 17. Neh. xi. 14. 1 Tim. v. 9. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 3.
7 The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren *were* strong men, Elihu and Semachiah.
8 All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, *were* threescore and two of Obed-edom.
9 And [h] Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen.
[h] 1. 14.
10 Also [i] Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons: Simri the chief, (for *though* he was not the first-born, yet [k] his father made him the chief;)
[i] xvi. 38.
[k] *See on* v. 1, 2.
11 Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah *were* thirteen.
12 Among these *were* the divisions of the porters, *even* among the chief men, *having* [l] wards one against another, to minister in the house of the LORD.
[l] *See on* xxv. 8.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord is in himself exalted far above all blessing and praise, and our obligations to him are infinite: we ought therefore to give him thanks, and to praise him, with our noblest powers; and to render every kind and degree of capacity, ingenuity, or skill, which we possess, subservient to that highest end: but especially our best and most lively affections are his due. Every part of his service is delightful, in proportion as we are properly disposed: yet we should apply our minds to instruction, that we may become "workmen that need not be ashamed," as capable of performing our several duties with propriety and readiness. —Human prudence must regulate certain circumstances relative to religious worship; and every society, larger or smaller, should order such matters *for themselves*, to the best of their judgment: but unless the Spirit of God put life and fervour into our devotions, they will, however appointed, be a lifeless, worthless form.—We should all be ready to give or to receive instructions, without self-preference, or accounting ourselves degraded: for in God's sight the teachable scholar is nearly as honourable as the able instructor.—It is pleasant to receive all our temporal and domestick comforts, as given unto us of God, and then to devote them all to his service: and it is a singular mercy to have a large family, all employed and accepted by him. But whether our children and connexions be few or many, may we and they be all his, and meet in his temple above to sing his praises for ever! Whatever Providence may allot us here, may this be the lot and portion of our inheritance hereafter!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1. *Marg. Ref.—Note,* xxiii. 2—6, *v.* 5.—*Asaph.*] Not Asaph the chief musician, who was of the family of Gershom; (vi. 39—43;) but another Asaph, of the sons of Korah, called also Abiasaph. (vi. 37. ix. 19.)

V. 4. 5. (*Marg.*) The numerous and prosperous family of Obed-edom was the effect of the divine blessing, by which his reverential regard to the ark was recompensed. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* vi. 10—13.)

V. 6—12. *Marg. Ref.—Mighty men,* &c. (6) The porters, and treasurers of the temple, had occasion for strength and valour, both to oppose such as improperly attempted to enter the courts or sanctuary, or to raise any disturbance there; and also to guard the sacred treasures

13 ¶ And they cast lots, * as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate.

14 And the lot eastward fell to [m] Shelemiah. Then for [n] Zechariah his son, a wise counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot came out northward.

15 To Obed-edom southward; and to his sons, the house of † Asuppim.

16 To Shuppim and [o] Hosah *the lot came forth* westward, with the gate Shallecheth, by the [p] causeway of the going up, [q] ward against ward.

17 [r] Eastward *were* six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and toward Asuppim two *and* two.

18 At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, *and* two at Parbar.

19 These *are* the divisions of the porters among the sons of [s] Kore, and among the sons of Merari.

20 ¶ And of the Levites, Ahijah *was* over the [t] treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the [‡] dedicated things.

21 *As concerning* the sons of [u] Laadan; the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, *even* of Laadan the Gershonite, *were* [x] Jehieli.

22 The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, *which were* [y] over the treasures of the house of the LORD.

23 Of the [z] Amramites, *and* the Izharites, the Hebronites, *and* the Uzzielites:

24 And [a] Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* ruler of the treasures.

25 And his brethren by [b] Eliezer; [c] Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and [d] Shelomith his son:

26 Which Shelomith and his brethren *were* [e] over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host, had dedicated.

27 Out of the [§] spoils won in battles did they dedicate, [f] to maintain the house of the LORD.

28 And all that [g] Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and [h] Abner the son of Ner, and [i] Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; *and* whosoever had dedicated *any thing, it was* under the hand of Shelomith and of his brethren.

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of money, vessels, flour, frankincense, wine, and oil, there deposited, and of which some of them were appointed to keep an account. (20. *Notes*, ix. 27—30.)—Josephus speaks of the gates of the temple being so massy, as to require twenty persons to open or shut them: this too would find employment for the strength of the porters. The temple indeed was not yet built; but David had received from the Lord a pattern of what it was to be, and he arranged every thing with reference to it. (*Notes*, xxviii. 11—18.)—It is supposed, that the families of the Levites, succeeded to the lot of their fathers, whether as singers, porters, or whatever was the service assigned them; and this from one generation to another, without passing from one company to another. 'They were distributed into 'courses, as the priests and Levites were; and these were 'principal commanders over them: being the more illus-'trious of their brethren, and therefore particularly named.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13. The porters seem to have been divided into courses, by a different method than the other Levites. The several families or divisions of them cast lots, at which gates they should keep ward; and then the individuals of those divisions attended in rotation; but whether the order, in which they thus followed each other, was determined by lot, or by agreement, it does not appear.

V. 14. *A wise counsellor.*] It seems that Zechariah, being renowned for his wisdom, was preferred to be the king's counsellor. The office of porter in the temple was a place of great trust, and therefore honourable.

V. 15. "Asuppim" signifying *gatherings*, it is supposed, that the house of Asuppim was a building erected to contain the money that was collected, for the use of the sanctuary, with the vessels employed in the sacred services.

V. 16—23. *Marg. Ref.—Ward against ward.* (16) *Marg. Ref.*—Their stations were opposite to each other; as the north to the south, &c.—*Eastward were six*, &c. (17, 18) 'Among the porters there were four and twenty, 'according to the rest of the courses; six on the east side, 'four on the north, four on the south; at Asuppim, two 'and two, (four in all,) four on the west, and two at Par-'bar.' *Kimchi in Bp. Patrick.*

V. 24—27. These are the only persons among the descendants of Moses, who are mentioned, as appointed to any office of honour and distinction. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xviii. 11. xxii. 6—14.)

V. 28. *Samuel*, &c.] It had been customary from the time of Abraham, (*Notes, Gen.* xiv. 18—20. xxviii. 20—22,) and probably from the beginning of the world, for persons to dedicate a portion of their gains to the service of God, as an acknowledgment that all came from him: but it is

k 23. xxiii. 12. 18. 29 ¶ Of the [k] Izharites, Chenaniah
2 Chr. xxxiv. 13. Neh. xi. 16. and his sons *were* for [l] the outward bu-
m xxiii. 4. 2 Chr. xix. 8—11. siness over Israel, for [m] officers and judges.

l. xxiii. 12. 19. 30 *And* of the [n] Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, *were*

Heb. over the charge. [*] officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward, in all the business of the LORD, and in the service of the king.

o xxiii. 19 Jeriah 31 Among the Hebronites *was* [o] Jerijah the chief, *even* among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the [p] fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at [q] Jazer of Gilead.

p xxix. 27. 1 Kings ii. 11.

q Josh. xxi. 39. Is. xvi. 9.

32 And his brethren, [r] men of valour, *were* two thousand and seven hundred [s] chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the [t] Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, [u] and [†] affairs of the king.

r 6—9.

s xv. 12. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 31.

t xii. 37.

u 2 Chr. xix. 11.

† Heb. thing.

uncertain whether Samuel, or the other persons here mentioned, had an expectation of a temple being built, for which they desired to make preparation.

V. 29. *Marg. Ref.—Note,* xxiii. 2—6.—*The outward business,* &c.] These Levites seem not to have performed any service within the precincts of the sanctuary: and their employment on that account may be called "the outward "business." In general, it may be supposed, that, as well as the other Levites, they were expected to be instructors of the people in the law of God: and in particular they were made magistrates of different orders, to administer justice to the people. As the Levites were more numerous, than could be employed in the sanctuary; and as they ought to be, and had opportunities of being, better acquainted with the law than the other Israelites; they were appointed to this service, along with the elders of every tribe. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xix. 5—11.) From these, the scribes, lawyers, or doctors of the law, mentioned in the New Testament, seem to have arisen. As the office of the magistracy reaches only to the regulation of the *outward conduct;* whilst the ministry of the word forms the means of regulating the mind or judgment, with the conscience and affections of the heart; the former may in this sense also be called *the outward business.* The lawyers above mentioned made the whole of religion a mere *outward* business; and they have always had abundance of disciples in this respect. (*Notes, Matt.* xxiii. 25—28. *Luke* xi. 37—41.)

V. 30—32. Hebron was first assigned to the priests; (*Note, Josh.* xxi. 11, 12;) but it was afterwards occupied by Levites, perhaps as tenants whilst the priests were but few. The Levites here mentioned, it seems, lived there, till they had acquired the name of Hebronites, and then removed over Jordan into the land of Gilead. But being sought out, they were appointed judges, and officers, for various purposes, civil and ecclesiastical, superior and inferior, on each side Jordan, in two divisions: though the larger proportion was assigned to those who lived east of that river; perhaps because, being more remote from the sanctuary and the seat of government, they needed more attention to keep them to their duty, both to God, and to the king. (*Marg. Ref.*)

Fortieth year. (31) It is generally thought that most or all of these regulations were made in the last year of David's life: but, though this be uncertain, they were certainly arranged towards the close of his reign.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The blessing of God renders individuals happy, and families flourishing: and those, who have been faithful in a little, will be made rulers over many things.—Wisdom, courage, strength of faith, holy affections, and constancy of mind in our duty, are requisite for every station. But those, who minister in the house of the Lord, and are required, without respect of persons, to prevent the profanation of holy things, have peculiar need of these qualifications. They are the porters of the spiritual house, and the "stewards of the mysteries of God;" a charge is committed to their trust, infinitely more valuable than all the treasures of the temple; and they need to be watchful and faithful. (*Notes, Matt.* xxiv. 45—51. *Mark* xiii. 33—37. *Luke* xi. 35—46. 1 *Cor.* iv. 1—5.) Their office requires them "rightly to divide the word of truth," and to administer divine ordinances according to it; that the hungry souls may be fed and feasted from the provisions of the Lord's house; and that he may be glorified by their spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to him through Jesus Christ. Great integrity, firmness, and discretion, are necessary to do this according to the mind of the great Master of the family, and to prevent abuses, and prostitution of sacred ordinances to secular purposes, by ungodly men. From these sacred treasuries, "the unsearchable "riches of Christ," all our wants are supplied: but receiving from his fulness, and being victorious over our enemies by his grace, we must give him the glory, and endeavour to dispose of the whole of our abilities and substance according to his will; allotting a proportion to maintain the expense of his worship, as well as to provide for the poor. Many unbelievers, however, join in these external services, and we must not in any degree rest our hopes of salvation on them.—The work of the minister requires the whole man: *internal* renovation is immediately its object; and the *outward* business of external order in society properly belongs to the magistrate. These services are therefore best preserved distinct; yet particular circumstances may warrant exceptions. However, both magistrates and ministers should concur in leading people, by different means, to fear God, and honour the king, and to do justice, and shew kindness to their brethren.—It is very wrong for able men to get out of the way, when their help is wanted; but they should be sought out, and set to work: and as our end approaches, we should be more earnest to render our last services to mankind.

CHAP. XXVII.

David's twelve captains, one for each month, 1—15. The princes of the twelve tribes, 16—22. The numbering of the people was hindered, 23, 24. David's several officers and counsellors, 25—34.

NOW the children of Israel after their number, *to wit*, the chief fathers and [a] captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that [b] served the king in [c] any matter of the courses, which came in and went out [d] month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course, *were* twenty and four thousand.

a xiii. 1. Ex. xviii. 25. Deut. i. 15. 1 Sam. viii. 12. Mic. v. 2.
b xxviii. 1. 2 Chr. xvii. 12—19. xxvi. 11—18.
c 1 Kings v. 14.
d 1 Kings iv. 7. 27.

2 Over the first course for the first month, *was* [e] Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

e xi. 11. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. *Adino the Eznite.*

3 Of the children of [f] Perez, *was* [g] the chief of all the captains of the host for the first month.

f Gen. xxxviii. 29. Num. xxvi. 20. *Pharez.*
g Gen. xlix. 8—10. Num. vii. 12. x. 14.

4 And over the course of the second month *was* [h] Dodai an Ahohite, and of his course *was* Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise *were* twenty and four thousand.

h xi. 12. 2 Sam. xxiii. 9. *Dodo.*

5 The third captain of the host for the third month *was* [i] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a * chief priest: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

i xviii. 17. 1 Kings iv. 4.
* Or, *principal officer.* 1 Kings iv. 5.

6 This *is that* Benaiah, *who was* [k] mighty *among* the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his course *was* Ammizabad his son.

k xi. 22—25. 2 Sam. xxii. 20—23.

7 The fourth *captain* for the fourth month *was* [l] Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

xi. 26. 2 Sam. ii. 18—23. xxiii. 24.

8 The fifth captain for the fifth month *was* [m] Shamuth the Izrahite: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

m xi. 27. *Shammoth the Harorite.* xxvi. 29. 2 Sam. xxiii. 25. *Shammah the Harodite.*

9 The sixth *captain* for the sixth month *was* [n] Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

n xi. 28. 2 Sam. xxiii. 26.

10 The seventh *captain* for the seventh month *was* [o] Helez the [p] Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim; and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

o xi. 27.
p 2 Sam. xxiii. 26. *Paltite.*

11 The eighth *captain* for the eighth month *was* [q] Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the [r] Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

q xi. 29. 2 Sam. xxi. 18.
r Num. xxvi. 20.

12 The ninth *captain* for the ninth month *was* Abiezer the [s] Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

s xi. 28. *Antothite.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 27. *Anethothite.*

13 The tenth *captain* for the tenth month *was* [t] Maharai the Netophathite, of the [u] Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

t xi. 30. 2 Sam. xxiii. 28.
u 11.

14 The eleventh *captain* for the eleventh month *was* [x] Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

x xi. 31. 2 Sam. xxiii. 30.

15 The twelfth *captain* for the twelfth month *was* [y] Heldai the Netophathite, of [z] Othniel: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

y xi. 30. *Heled.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 29. *Heleb.*
z iv. 13. Judg. iii. 9.

16 ¶ Furthermore over the tribes of Israel: the ruler of the Reubenites *was* Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah:

17 Of the Levites, [a] Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: [b] of the Aaronites, Zadok:

a xxvi. 30.
b xii. 27, 28. xxiv. 4. 31.

18 Of Judah, [c] Elihu, *one* of the brethren of David: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael:

c 1 Sam. xvi. 6. xvii. 13. 29. *Eliab.*

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1—15. When David was not actually engaged in war, twenty-four thousand men seem to have been continually kept under military discipline. These were exchanged every month for others: so that two hundred and eighty-eight thousand men were, every year, exercised as a regular militia; but they were not kept from their other engagements, more than a month at one time. These were mustered from all the tribes of Israel, under commanders, called "captains of the companies, that mi-"nistered to the king by course." (xxviii. 1.) All the twelve captains are named among David's mighty men. (*Marg. Ref.*—xi. 10—47. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 8—39.) The word translated *priest*, and applied to Benaiah, evidently means, and should be rendered, *Ruler, or officer.* (*Marg.*)—Asahel, whom Abner slew, is numbered among these captains, and upon his death, his son succeeded him: hence we learn, that this order was at least begun to be established before David ruled over the whole land. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* ii. 18—23.)—Joab was the commander in chief (34).

V. 16—22. These persons, called "the princes of the "tribes," (xxviii. 1,) seem to have been *civil* rulers over their several tribes, not entirely unlike the lord lieutenants of counties in England.—Gad and Asher are not men-

19 Of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel:

20 Of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah:

21 Of the half *tribe* of Manasseh in Gilead, [d] Iddo the son of Zechariah: [d] 1 Kings iv. 14.
of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of [e] Abner: [e] 1 Sam. xiv. 50, 51. 2 Sam. iii. 27. 37.

22 Of Dan, Azareel the son of Jeroham. These *were* the princes of the tribes of Israel.

23 ¶ But David took not the number of them [f] from twenty years old and under: because the LORD had said [f] Num. i. 18.
[g] he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens. [g] Gen. xv. 5. Heb. xi. 12.

24 Joab the son of Zeruiah [h] began to number, but he finished not, because there fell wrath for it against Israel; [h] xxi. 1—17. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—15.
neither [*] was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David. [*] Heb. *ascended the number.*

25 And over [i] the king's treasures *was* Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and [i] 2 Kings xviii. 15. 2 Chr. xvi. 2.
over [k] the store-houses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, *was* Jehonathan the son of Uzziah: [k] Gen. xli. 48. Ex. i. 11. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. Jer. xli. 8.

26 And over them that did the work of the field for tillage of the ground *was* Ezri the son of Chelub:

27 And over the vineyards *was* Shimei the Ramathite; over [†] the increase of the vineyards for the wine-cellars *was* Zabdi the Shiphmite: [†] Heb. *that which was of the vineyards.*

28 And [l] over the olive-trees and the sycamore-trees that *were* in the low plains, *was* Baal-hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil *was* Joash: [l] 1 Kings iv. 7.

29 And over the herds that fed in [m] Sharon *was* Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds *that were* in the valleys *was* Shaphat the son of Adlai: [m] v. 16. Is. lxv. 10.

30 Over [n] the camels also *was* Obil [o] the Ishmaelite: and over the asses *was* Jehdeiah the Meronothite: [n] Job i. 3. [o] Gen. xlvii. 6.

31 And over the flocks *was* Jaziz the Hagarite. All these *were* the rulers of the substance which *was* king David's.

32 Also Jonathan David's [p] uncle was a counsellor, a wise man, and a [‡] scribe: and Jehiel the [§] son of Hachmoni *was* with the king's sons: [p] 2 Sam. xiii. 3. xxi. 21. *Nephew.* [‡] Or, *secretary.* [§] Or, *Hachmonite.* xi. 11.

33 And [q] Ahithophel *was* the king's counsellor: and [r] Hushai the Archite *was* the king's [s] companion: [q] 2 Sam. xv. 12. xvi. 23. xvii. 23. [r] 2 Sam. xv. 32. 37. xvi. 16. [s] 2 Sam. xvi. 17. Ps. lv. 13. Zech. xiii. 7.

34 And after Ahithophel *was* Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and [t] the general of the king's army *was* Joab. [t] xi. 6.

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tioned, probably because they were joined to the neighbouring tribes. Elihu, or Eliab, was David's elder brother. The Levites had a prince, or rulers, as the other tribes had; and the family of Aaron, as distinguished from the rest, had Zadok, for their ruler, or prince. The son of Abner was, probably, advanced upon his father's death, as an expression of David's unfeigned concern for that event. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* iii. 26—39.)

V. 23, 24. It seems probable, from this passage, that Joab began, by David's order, to number the children, as well as the grown men, but was prevented from finishing the account. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1—9.) The numbering of the effective men might have been deemed politically expedient: but ostentation alone could dictate the numbering of minors and infants; especially as God had pronounced the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, innumerable. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'An account of the number, as 'far as he went, was given by Joab to the king; but the 'king, being sensible of his error, would not have it re-'corded in the publick registers of the kingdom, as other 'things of daily occurrence were.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 25—31. (*Marg. Ref.*) This account mentions only such persons, as filled up needful or useful stations; not any superfluous officers, retained merely to make a shew of magnificence. Luxury, ambition, and venality have multiplied these attendants on courts; and selfish opposers will so impede the most unexceptionable measures of government, in limited monarchies, that without a number of retainers whose interest it is to support the crown, the publick business must move heavily, if it could at all proceed. Yet ancient simplicity was preferable to modern refinement; and the useful productions of the earth, to all the devices of luxury and indulgence. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* iv. 2—19. 2 *Chr.* xxvi. 10.)—These officers, are called "the "stewards over all the substance and possessions of the "king." (xxviii. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The prudent management of secular affairs is conducive to the interests of godliness; provided it be kept in its proper place, and the favour and glory of God have a decided preference. In the kingdoms of this world, habitua readiness for war forms a better security of peace, than any treaties or alliances: in like manner, nothing so much encourages Satan's assaults, as our unwatchfulness; and while we stand armed with "the whole armour of God," in the exercise of faith and preparation of heart for the conflict, we shall certainly be safe, and probably enjoy in-

CHAP. XXVIII.

David assembles the chiefs of Israel; shews them how his purpose of building a temple had been disallowed, and relates the LORD's special favour to him; and his promises to Solomon, 1—8. He charges Solomon to know and serve God, and to build the temple, 9, 10. He gives a pattern for the form of the several parts, (as God had shewed it to him,) and gold and silver for the materials, 11—19. He encourages Solomon with the assurance of help, both from God, and from his people, 20, 21.

1 AND David [a] assembled all the princes of Israel, [b] the princes of the tribes, and the [c] captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and [d] the stewards over all the [*] substance and possessions of the king, [†] and of his sons, with [e] the [‡] officers, and with [f] the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.

2 Then David the king [g] stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, [h] my brethren, and my people: *As for me,* [i] I *had* in mine heart to build an house of [k] rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for [l] the footstool of our God, and [m] had made ready for the building:

3 But God said unto me, [n] Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou *hast been* a man of war, and hast shed [§] blood.

4 Howbeit the LORD God of Israel [o] chose me before all the house of my father, to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath [p] chosen Judah *to be* the ruler; and of [q] the house of Judah the house of my father; and [r] among the sons of my father he liked me to make *me* king over all Israel:

5 And of [s] all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) [t] he hath chosen Solomon my son [u] to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.

6 And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, [x] he shall build my house and my courts: for [y] I have chosen him *to be* my son, and I will be his father.

a xxiii. 2. Josh. xxiii. 2. xxiv. 1.
b xxvii. 16—22.
c xxvii. 1—15.
d xxvii. 25—31.
* Or, *cattle.*
† Or, *and his sons.*
e xxvii. 32—34.
‡ Or, *eunuchs.*
f xi. 10, &c.
g Gen. xlviii. 2. 1 Kings i. 47.
h xi. 1—3. Deut. xvii. 15. 20. Ps. xxii. 22. Heb. ii. 11, 12.
i xvii. 1, 2. 2 Sam. vii. 1. 1 Kings viii. 17, 18.
k vi. 31. Ps. cxxxii. 8—5. 8. 14.
l Ps. xcix. 5. cxxxii. 7. Is. lxvi. 1. Lam. ii. 1. Acts vii. 49.
m xviii. 7—11. xxii. 2—5. 14.
n xvii. 4. xxii. 8. 2 Sam. vii. 5—13. 1 Kings v. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 8, 9.
§ Heb. *bloods.*
o 1 Sam. xvi. 6—13. 2 Sam. vii. 8—16. Ps. lxxviii. 68—72. lxxxix. 16—27.
p v. 2. Gen. xlix. 8—10. Ps. lx. 7. cviii. 8.
q 1 Sam. xvi. 1.
r 1 Sam. xvi. 2, 13. Ps. xviii. 19. cxlvii. 10, 11.
s iii. 1—9. xiv. 4—7.
t xxii. 9. xxiii. 1. xxix. 1.
u xvii. 14. xxix. 23. 2 Chr. i. 8, 9. Ps. lxxii. *title.* 1, &c. Is. ix. 6, 7.
x xvii. 11—14. xxii. 10. 2 Sam. vii. 13, 14. Zech. vi. 12, 13. Heb. iii. 3. 6.
y Heb. iv. 5.

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ward peace.—When we have exposed ourselves to wrath and chastening for our sins, we ought humbly to confess them and to desist from them: this will not make atonement for our crimes; but it is a preparation of heart from the Lord, for receiving the atonement made by the Saviour, and making suitable returns for it.—Usefulness is the proper standard of valuableness: and he who estimates by this rule, will give the word of God, the salvation of Christ, and true religion, a decided preference to all other things, because infinitely more useful.—Well chosen counsellors prove the wisdom of princes: yet, some will be found wise men and scribes, and eminent for worldly policy and plausibility, who are in fact very wicked characters. But the faithful, the upright, and godly, should be our friends and chosen companions; and no king will be well advised in all things, or in those of the greatest importance, who does not make the testimonies of God "his delight and "his counsellors;" however he may be surrounded by powerful family-connexions, faithful friends, and able politicians.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. This transaction seems to have occurred in the time of David's last sickness, which, notwithstanding remissions, he was aware would terminate in death. He therefore summoned the several descriptions of men, which were mentioned in the preceding chapter, and which formed a convention of the states, or representatives of the people; that he might declare to them the will of God as revealed to him, and engage them to a hearty concurrence in those publick measures, which, in obedience to that will, he had resolved on.—*Princes.*] *Note,* xxvii. 16—22.—*Captains,* &c.] 'That is, those great com-'manders of 24,000 a piece, mentioned in the beginning 'of the foregoing chapter. ...The commanders of every 'one of those thousands, with the Centurions, who com-'manded the several companies, consisting of an hundred.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note,* xxvii. 1—15.)—*Stewards,* &c.] *Note,* xxvii. 25—31.—Many of the chief priests and Levites generally resided with David at Jerusalem; but it is not expressly said, that they were present on this occasion.

V. 2. David, finding himself able, and being animated by the solemn occasion, stood up on his feet, to express his earnestness in this address, and his affection and respect for the people; and especially as intending to honour the Lord, by whose authority and commission he spake. Moses and Joshua had, just before their death, assembled the people for similar purposes. (*Deut.* xxxi. 28—30. *Notes, Deut.* xxxii. 45—52. *Josh.* xxiii. xxiv.)—David used the most endearing language in this parting interview, begging their attention, as his "brethren and "his people."—The ark is here called "the footstool of "our God." Heaven, where the Lord unveils his glories, is his *throne;* the earth is his *footstool;* and the place of the ark was, as it were, the *centre of that footstool,* where the gracious presence of God on earth was chiefly displayed, and before and toward which all his people worshipped. (*Marg. Ref.* l.—*Notes, Ps.* xcix. 5. *Is.* lxvi. 1, 2. *Lam.* ii. 1.)

V. 3. *Notes,* xxii. 6—10. xxix. 1. 2 *Sam.* vii. 1—1 .. 1 *Kings* viii. 15—21.

V. 4—6. *Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xvi. 6—11. 2 *Sam.* vii. 12—

7 Moreover [z] I will establish his kingdom for ever, [a] if he be [*] constant to do my commandments and my judgments, [b] as at this day.

8 Now therefore [c] in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the LORD, and [d] in the audience of our God, [e] keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God: [f] that ye may possess this good land, and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.

9 And thou, Solomon my son, [g] know thou [h] the God of thy father, and [i] serve him with a perfect heart, and with [k] a willing mind: for [l] the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all [m] the imaginations of the thoughts: [n] if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but [o] if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

z Ps. lxxxix. 28—37. cxxxii. 12. Dan. ii. 44.
a xxii. 13. 1 Kings vi. 12, 13. ix. 4, 5. xi. 9—13.
* Heb. *strong.* 10. Josh. i. 6, 7. 1 Kings ii. 2—4.
b 1 Kings viii. 61. xi. 4.
c Deut. iv. 6. Matt. v. 16. Phil. ii. 15, 16. Heb. xii. 1, 2.
d Deut. iv. 26. xxix. 10. 15. Acts x. 33.
e Ps. cxix. 4. 10, 11. 27. 33, 34. 44. Prov. ii. 1—5. iii. 1.
f Deut. iv. 1. v. 32, 33. vi. 1, 2.
g Deut. iv. 35. 1 Kings viii. 43. Ps. ix. 10. Jer. ix. 24. xxii. 16. xxiv. 7. xxxi. 34. Hos. iv. .. 6. John viii. 55. xvii. 3. Acts xvii. 23. 30. Rom. i. 28. 1 Cor. xv. 34. 2 Cor. iv. 6.
h Gen. xxviii. 13. Ex. iii. 16. xv. 2. 1 Kings iii. 6. Ps. xviii. 2. lxxxix. 26.
i xxix. 9. 17—19. 1 Kings viii. 61.
k 2 Cor. viii. 12. ix. 7. 1 Pet. v. 2.
l 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Kings viii. 39. Ps. vii. 9. Prov. xvii. 3. Jer. xi. 20. xvii. 10. xx. 12. John ii. 25. xxi. 17. Acts i. 24. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
m Gen. vi. 5. viii. 21. Deut. xxxi. 21. Ps. cxxxix. 2. Ez. xxxviii. 10.
n 2 Chr. xv. 2. Prov. ii. 1—6. Is. xlv. 19. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 13. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Jam. iv. 8—11.
o Deut. xxxi. 16, 17. 1 Kings ix. 6—9. Ezra viii. 22. Is. i. 28. Heb. x. 38, 39.

16. xii. 24, 25. 1 *Kings* i. 5, 6. 15—18.—*For ever.* (4) That is, permanently in his posterity, and to the end of the world, yea, to eternity, in Christ, of whom David and Solomon were remarkable types.—It was not known till David's time, from which family in Judah the Messiah would descend. (*Notes, Gen.* xlix. 8—10.)

V. 7, 8. David had committed several great transgressions, and he every where speaks the language of conscious sinfulness. Yet the people had been preserved from idolatry, and retained in the worship and service of God, during his whole reign; and at this time they, as well as Solomon, appeared well disposed to true religion. If therefore they continued constant, "as at that day," to keep the Lord's commandments and judgments; their national covenant remaining unviolated, would secure their possession of Canaan and other important advantages. Yet they were exhorted not only to "keep," but "to seek for, all "the commandments of the LORD;" that they might know them more exactly, and perform them more entirely. David therefore exhorted the princes to engage themselves to this, as "in the sight of all Israel, even the congrega- "tion of the LORD, and in the audience of their God," who was especially present in that solemn assembly; that they might be the more impressed, and that their example might have a salutary effect on others also.—'It is not 'enough to know the will of God, if we do not *keep* it; 'that is, observe his commands, and live in the practice of 'our duty. But that we may know it, it is necessary to '*seek* it; that is, to enquire after it and to study the laws 'of God: for no man, as Grotius here observes, shall be 'excused by a supine ignorance.' *Bp. Patrick.* It is as necessary to pray humbly and continually for divine teaching, in "seeking the commandments of God," as to study the laws of God, and search the scriptures: for proud, and learned, and self-wise error, will no more excuse a man, than a supine ignorance. (*Notes, Prov.* ii. 1—9.)

V. 9. The being and perfections of God are made known by his works, and by his word: and we ought diligently to seek the knowledge of him from both these sources. That discovery of some of the divine perfections, which may be made by studying the works of creation and providence, may be naturally delightful to man; because it gratifies his love of knowledge, and excites his surprise, without affronting his pride, alarming his conscience, or offending his prejudices. But revelation gives us the whole character of God, as connected with his natural perfections, and mysterious subsistence: and this not only in plain declarations, but in an historical and prophetical view of his providential government of the universe; in his holy law, "the ministration of condemnation and death;" and in his blessed gospel, "the ministration of righteous- "ness and of the Spirit." (*Note,* 2 *Cor.* iii. 7—11.) This knowledge of God the natural man cannot receive. (*Note,* 1 *Cor.* ii. 14—16.) It implies the infinite justice and holiness of God, and the entire apostasy, rebellion, pollution, and misery of man; and shews every person on earth to be a criminal condemned to everlasting punishment, from which he cannot be delivered, except by the unmerited mercy of the Father, through the atonement of the Son, and by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit. All men therefore oppose, neglect, or pervert this knowledge of God, except as they are taught by him. Some notions of these things may be attained by an unhumbled sinner: but he does not see them as they really are, according to their nature and value; and his ideas no more agree with the true meaning even of his own words, than the words of a man born blind do with his ideas, when he speaks about light and colours. This knowledge therefore will have no effect, unless a bad one, on the state of his heart, and the conduct of his life. But where God is truly known, he is also feared, believed, trusted, loved, worshipped, and obeyed, in proportion to that knowledge. Self-abasement, hatred of sin, indifference about worldly objects, and general benevolence from the purest principles, will uniformly attend and grow with it; and all true religion may be resolved into it. (*Notes, Ps.* ix. 7—12. *v.* 10. xci. 14—16. *Jer.* xxiv. 7. xxxi. 33, 34. *Matt.* xi. 27. *John* xvii. 1—3. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3—6.)—This knowledge of God is, under the inward teaching and illuminating influence of the Spirit of truth, received by faith simply crediting "the testimony "of God," and diligently appropriating the information which he communicates in Scripture. As far as acquired, it regulates the understanding, judgment, conscience, will, affections, and all the powers and operations of the soul; and consequently, all the intentions, dispositions, words, and actions. It brings a man acquainted with God in Christ, as a Father and Friend, in a way of experience and communion. It discovers what we may expect from him, and what he must approve or abhor in us; and consequently what is requisite to his saving sinners in a way that is honourable to his own great name, and to our being capable of happiness in his favour and service. Thus we learn the inestimable value of the Saviour's atonement, and of the sanctification of the Holy Ghost, and are influenced

p 6. xxii. 16—19. 1 Tim. iv. 16.

10 P Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do *it*.

q 19 Ex. xxv. 40. xxvi. 30. xxxix. 42, 43. 2 Chr. iii. 3. Ez. xliii. 10, 11. Heb. *vau.* 6.

r 1 Kings vi. 3. 2 Chr. iii. 4. Ez. xl 8, 9. 15. 48, 49.

s 1 Kings vi. 16—20. 2 Chr. iii. 5—10. Ez. xli. 13, &c. Heb. ix. 2—8.

11 ¶ Then David gave to Solomon his son q the pattern of r the porch, and of s the houses thereof, and of t the treasuries thereof, and of the u upper chambers thereof,* and of the inner parlours thereof, and of x the place of the mercy-seat,

t ix. 26—29. xxvi. 20—27. Luke xxi. 1.

u 1 Kings vi. 5, 6. 10. 2 Chr. iii. 9. Neh. x. 38, 39. xiii. 5. Jer. xxxv. 2. Ez. xli. 6, &c.

x Ex. xxv. 17—22. xl. 20, 21. 1 Kings vi. 19. 2 Chr. v. 7. Heb. ix. 5.

* Heb. *that was with him by.*

12 And the pattern of all * that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of y the treasuries of the dedicated things:

y xxvi. 26—28. 1 Kings xiv. 26. xv. 15. 18. 2 Kings xvi. 8. xviii. 15.

13 Also for z the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all a the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

z xxiv. 1, &c. xxv. 1, &c.

a ix. 29. Ezra viii. 25—30. 33.

14 *He gave* of gold by weight for *things* of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; *silver also* for all instruments of silver by weight for all instruments of every kind of service:

15 Even the weight for b the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof; and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, *both* for the candlestick, and *also* for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.

b Ex. xxv. 31—39. 1 Kings vii. 49. 2 Chr. iv. 7. Zech. iv. 2, 3. 11—14. Rev. i. 12. 20. ii. 1.

16 And by weight *he gave* gold for the c tables of shew-bread, for every table; and *likewise* silver for the tables of silver:

c Ex. xxv. 23—30. 1 Kings vii. 48. 2 Chr. iv. 8. 19.

17 Also d pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and e the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons *he gave gold*

d 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. iv. 20—22.

e Num. vii. 13, 14. 1 Kings vii. 48—50. x. 21.

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to walk conscientiously in all his ordinances and commandments. It brings a sinner to his proper place, at the foot of the cross, and prostrate before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God; as a poor, helpless, lost sinner, an ignorant child, a humble suppliant, a condemned criminal, deserving nothing but wrath, yet expecting every thing needful or desirable, from the infinitely free mercy and grace of God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Having been forgiven much, and receiving much, the pardoned sinner learns to love much: and experiencing the blessed effects of this knowledge of God on his own soul, he declares its excellency to others, that they too may seek and find so inestimable a treasure.—Thus David had known the Lord; and having for many years feared, trusted, loved, and worshipped him, he was about to remove to that better world, where knowledge, holiness, love, and felicity are perfected: but before he departed, he desired to give it, as his dying counsel to his beloved Solomon, to cultivate the acquaintance of so kind, merciful, faithful, and powerful a Friend; (*Note, Job* xxii. 21—30;) and to "serve him with a perfect "heart and a willing mind," or inward delight. But he also reminded him at the same time of the Lord's heart-searching knowledge, and of his justice and holiness, as well as of his mercy. (*Marg. Ref.* l.) A formal service therefore would not profit: if he sought God in a proper manner, he would be found of him; but if he finally renounced his service, he would "cast him off for ever," notwithstanding all his former kindness to him.

V. 10. Solomon was thus exhorted to be very circumspect, and attentive to the directions and commandments of God, in that important service to which he was called; yet not to be discouraged respecting it. 'Being a young man, he might be discouraged from 'undertaking so great a work: but he bids him go about it 'strenuously, because God had chosen him to do it.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11—13. David was divinely instructed, probably by immediate revelation, or else by some prophet, (perhaps Nathan,) in what form the temple was to be built, and how to regulate every thing respecting it, and its chambers, and courts, and treasuries. (*Notes*, ix. 22. xv. 16. xvi. 1—3. xxiii—xxvi.) "The LORD made him understand it "in writing by his hand upon him" (19). And in what way soever this writing was made and sent to him, he gave it to Solomon just before his death: so that nothing was left even to "the wisdom of Solomon," but all was done by rule, even to the quantity of metal used in each vessel. (*Notes*, 14—18.) Moses had been instructed in the same manner in erecting the tabernacle. For both the tabernacle and temple were typical of Christ, and heavenly things. (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 9. 40. xxxi. 6.)—In vain do men of opposite sentiments contend for such uniformity in the circumstances of our worship, under the New Testament; seeing it is manifest, that exact, precise, and express rules are no where to be found, in respect of every particular. —It is, however, most evident, that to model divine ordinances according to man's imagination, would have been the height of presumption even in Solomon himself.

V. 14—16. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 1 *Kings* vii. 48—51.) The candlesticks of silver, and tables of silver, are not elsewhere mentioned, and it is not known to what use they were put. 'The former'...(the candlesticks of silver) 'were lesser, to be carried in their hands from place to 'place, as there was occasion.' *Bp. Patrick.* It seems there were in the temple several tables of gold for the shew-bread, and the vessels belonging to that part of the stated service. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* iv. 19.)

V. 17. The word, rendered *basons*, seems to be derived from the *atonement* made by the blood of the sacrifices, which was received into them till it was sprinkled. (*Note, Num.* vii. 13, 14.)

by weight for every bason; and *likewise silver* by weight for every bason of silver;

18 And for [f] the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of [g] the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out *their wings*, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

19 All *this, said David,* [h] the LORD made me understand in writing [i] by *his* hand upon me, *even* all the works of this pattern.

20 ¶ And David said to Solomon his son, [k] Be strong, and of good courage, and do *it:* [l] fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God *even* my God, *will be* with thee; [m] he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work of the service of the house of the LORD.

21 And, behold, [n] the courses of the priests and the Levites, *even they shall be with thee* for all the service of the house of God: and *there shall be* with thee, for [o] all manner of workmanship, every [p] willing skilful man, for any manner of service: [q] also the princes and all the people *will be* wholly at thy commandment.

f Ex. xxx. 1—6. 1 Kings vii. 48.
g Ex. xxv. 18—22. 1 Sam. iv. 4. 1 Kings vi. 23—30. Ps. xviii. 10. lxviii. 17. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1. Ez. i. 15—24. x. 2, &c.
h 11, 12. Ex. xxv. 40. xxvi. 30.
i Ez. i. 3. iii. 14. 22.
k 10. xxii. 13. Deut. xxxi. 7, 8. Josh. i. 6—9. 1 Cor. xvi. 13.
l Ps. xxvii. 1, 2. Is. xli. 10. 13. Rom. viii. 31.
m Josh. i. 5. Heb. xiii. 5.
n xxiv. xxv. xxvi.
o Ex. xxxi. 3.
p Ex. xxxv. 25, 26. 35. xxxvi. 1—4. Ps. cx. 3.
q xxii. 17, 18. Tit. iii. 1.

V. 18. Above the ark, between the cherubim, the glory of the Lord appeared, as a mighty warrior riding in his chariot of war, to the assistance of Israel his people. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex.* xxv. 10—21.) As the cherubim of gold made by Moses were joined to the mercy-seat, which covered the ark; it has been thought, that Solomon was directed to make two additional cherubim, after the same pattern. These must, however, be distinguished from those made of olive-trees covered with gold. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* vi. 23—28.) And it is not absolutely certain, that amidst the many removals of the ark which had taken place, the cherubim had not been separated from it; and whether Solomon did any thing more than make two others in the stead of them.

V. 19. (*Note,* 11—13.) This comprises all the particulars, mentioned in the preceding verses.—'God made 'him to understand all this so plainly and distinctly, as 'if it had been written on his mind, as the ten command-'ments were upon the tables of stone in the mount.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 20, 21. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* 10.) There appeared, in all the several orders of men, a very promising disposition to harmony among themselves, and loyalty to their prince; and David foresaw that God would dispose them to cordial obedience to Solomon, though a younger brother, and in his youth.—'This was one reason, no doubt, of 'calling this assembly together, that they might be en-'gaged to be aiding to Solomon, in promoting so pious a 'work.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

While life continues, it is desirable to spend it in promoting the peace, prosperity, and spiritual good, of those who may remain behind. (*Notes, Ec.* ix. 10. *2 Pet.* i. 12—15.)—To treat inferiors with condescending respect and affection, is the way to gain love, without losing any due honour: and to address subjects as rational creatures, shewing them the propriety and advantage of proposed measures, and persuading them to a willing concurrence, is far preferable to the exercise of despotick authority. Indeed kings and their meanest subjects are all brethren in fallen Adam: and believers, on a throne or in a cottage, are all brethren in Jesus Christ, and should mutually seek each other's welfare.—In that monarchy, which God established in Israel and sanctioned by his approbation, we see no traces of the *unalterable right of primogeniture,* or of ruling with absolute authority. Rather we perceive a resemblance of that limited, moderate, and equitable authority, which a kind Providence has established over these kingdoms; for which we can never be sufficiently thankful, and for the continuance of which to our latest posterity, we should most fervently pray. The wickedness of man indeed, and the experience of ages, have taught the friends of liberty to secure that blessing by many regulations, which were not thought of, nor needful, in the happy days of "the man after God's own heart:" and prudence dictates the *general expediency of hereditary succession.* Yet surely the conduct of David at the beginning, in the middle, and at the close of his reign, greatly resembled that of a British monarch meeting his Parliament, and doing all things by their concurrence and assistance.—It may be comfortable to us in a dying hour, to recollect the plans which we had framed to promote true religion, though we have been unable to accomplish them: from hence we may infer, that we are the chosen and called of God; as such designs prove, that he has given us a heart to account his service a delightful privilege, and to long and love to be employed in it. But, in the nature and measure of our services, we must learn acquiescence in his will, whose choice of us is the source of all our grace, comfort, or usefulness: he was pleased to make us Christians, or ministers, and to employ us in various ways; but he does not generally acquaint us with the reason of it. Happy are they, whom he has "chosen in Christ...unto the adoption of "children unto himself, according to the good pleasure "of his will:" (*Note, Eph.* i. 3—8:) from their almighty Father they will "receive a kingdom that cannot be "moved," and he will establish it to them for ever. And it will be manifest, that this is their felicity, by their constancy in keeping his commandments, and doing their proper work in his church, after the example and by the grace of the Saviour. Let us then "give diligence to make our "calling and election sure:" and, as in the presence of God, and in the sight of his people, let us "seek out "that we may do all his commandments," sincerely, unreservedly, and in humble imitation of our perfect pattern. Let us seek the knowledge of God, as the most valuable

CHAP. XXIX.

David shews the princes and people what treasures he had prepared for the building and service of the temple, 1—5. After his example, and at his exhortation, they offer liberally, 6—9. He adores and blesses God, and prays for the people and for Solomon, 10—19. The people worship, sacrifice, and feast with joy; and then make Solomon king the second time, 20—22. He reigns in majesty and prosperity, 23—25. David's long and prosperous reign, and happy death, 26—30.

FURTHERMORE, David the king said [a] unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, [b] whom alone God hath chosen, *is yet* [c] young and tender, and the work *is* great: [d] for the palace *is* not for man, but for the LORD God.

2 Now [e] I have prepared [f] with all my might for the house of my God: [g] the gold for *things to be made* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver, and the brass for *things* of brass, the iron for *things* of iron, and wood for *things* of wood; [h] onyx-stones, and *stones* to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble-stones in abundance.

3 Moreover, because [i] I have set my affection to the house of my God, [k] I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, *which* I have given to the house of my God, [l] over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,

a xxviii. 1. 8.
b xxviii. 5, 6. 1 Kings viii. 19, 20.
c xxii. 5. 1 Kings iii. 7. 2 Chr. xiii. 7. Prov. iv. 3. Jer. i. 6, 7.
d xxviii. 10. 2 Chr. ii. 4, 5.
e xxii. 3—5. 14—16.
f 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Ec. ix. 10. 2 Cor. viii. 8. Col. iii. 22. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
g xxviii. 14—18.
h Gen. ii. 12. Ex. xxviii. 20. xxxix. 13. Job xxviii. 16. Is. liv. 11, 12. Rev. xxi. 18—21.
i Ps. xxvi. 8. xxvii. 4. lxxxiv. 1. 10. cxxii. 1—9.
k xxi. 24. Prov. iii. 9, 10.
l xxii. 4, 5. 14—16.

of all treasures; and acquaint ourselves with him, as the God of all those in every age and nation, who "through "faith and patience inherit the promises." Let us seek grace from him by earnest prayer, that we may serve him with an upright, undivided heart, and a willing, cheerful mind. Let us beware of hypocrisy; "for the Lord search-"eth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of "the thoughts." Let us fear coming short, growing negligent, or turning aside; for "if we forsake him, he will "cast us off for ever." But let us hope also in his mercy; for if we seek him he will be found of us: and we shall be strong in accomplishing the services to which we are called; we shall live in good measure in the enjoyment of our privileges, and may hope to leave them for an inheritance to our children. In this "fear of the LORD, there is strong "confidence:" and by attaining to an assurance that we are his people, we may be assured also that he will not fail us nor forsake us; we may then bid defiance to all our enemies, and be of good courage in the prospect of difficulties and dangers.

V. 11—21.

If the Lord employ us and be with us, he will raise us up helpers, both willing and skilful, as far as we want them: and thus he will carry us through the duties of our several stations, and, these being finished, will receive us unto himself.—Nobles, ministers, and people should be wholly at the command of those rulers especially, who boldly and zealously endeavour to promote true religion; using their influence and authority to lead all their subjects to a willing attendance to things evidently scriptural, and of acknowledged excellence and importance.—But we should never forget, that the whole of the salvation for sinners, is of the Lord: the wondrous plan, the great and glorious Redeemer, and Redemption, and the revelation of it in the scriptures of truth; the way of access, the ministry of the gospel, the throne of grace also, the publick ordinances, the sacramental seals, and every thing pertaining to our reconciliation and walk with God, are from him; and may not be modelled by human authority. Even mere circumstances, which must be regulated by man's discretion, and in which every society has a right to judge for its *willing* members, are not to be imposed on our brethren: and we are accountable to God, though not to man, for that judgment and practice which we ourselves form and adopt. We should therefore in every thing be circumspect, and not leave the Scripture in any particular, where it affords us directions; yet we should not endanger the peace of the church, for the sake of minute external regulations. Hitherto much has been amiss in every age, in every state, and in every division of the church: ere long our Prince of Peace, the Builder of the true temple, the Son of God, will come, and set all right. In the mean time let us judge for ourselves, and bear with each other; let us cease from self confident boastings, and acrimonious controversies; and, in our several places, let us endeavour to serve God, and to help one another, and to promote the common cause of truth and holiness.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1. *Whom alone God,* &c.] David by this expression declared, that God had chosen Solomon in preference to the rest of his sons; and that this was the sole reason of his succession to the throne, and not any partial affection of his own towards him. This would tend to satisfy the people, and to induce David's other sons to submit to the divine appointment. (*Notes,* xxii. 2—10.)

V. 2. The peculiar use made of the precious stones of various kinds, mentioned in this verse, in decorating the temple, or in adding to the magnificence of the service there performed, is not known. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3—9. David seems to have dedicated a certain proportion of all his spoils and gains to God, before he considered the residue as his own; and this proportion constituted the treasure before spoken of; (xxii. 14;) but besides this, he gave, from his own treasury, about eighteen millions sterling of gold and silver. This he offered, not by constraint, or from ostentation; but because "he had "set his affection to the house of his God," and thought he could never do enough towards promoting that good work. He was likewise desirous to see his subjects "abound in this grace also;" as they had been enriched by his victories, and never burdened with taxes: and he knew that it would be "fruit, which would abound to

4 *Even* three thousand talents of gold, of the [m] gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses *withal:*

5 The gold for *things* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver, and for all manner of work *to be made* by the hands of artificers. And [n] who *then* is willing to [*] consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?

6 Then [o] the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly,

7 And gave for the service of the house of God, of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron.

8 And they with whom *precious* stones were found gave *them* to the treasure of the house of the LORD, by the hand of [p] Jehiel the Gershonite.

9 Then the people rejoiced, for that [q] they offered willingly; because with [r] perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and [s] David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

10 ¶ Wherefore [t] David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, [u] Blessed *be* thou, [x] LORD God of Israel, [y] our Father, for ever and ever.

11 Thine, O LORD, [c] *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and [d] the victory, and the [e] majesty: for [f] all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine;* [g] thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art [h] exalted as head above all.

12 Both [i] riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou [k] reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* [l] power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to [m] give strength unto all.

13 Now therefore, our God, [n] we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

14 But [o] who *am* I, and what *is* my people, [p] that we should [†] be able to offer so [q] willingly after this sort? for [r] all things *come* of thee, and [s] of thine own have we given thee,

15 For [s] we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: [t] our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none [§] abiding.

16 O LORD our God, [u] all this store, that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name, *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own.

m 1 Kings ix. 28.
n Ex. xxv. 2—9. xxxv. 5, &c. Num. vii. 2, 3. 10—14, &c. Ezra i. 4—6. ii. 68, 69. vii. 15, 16.
* Heb. *to fill his hand.*
o xxvii. 1. Is. ix. 3—10.
p xxvi. 21, 22. *Jehieli.*
q Deut. xvi. 10, 11. Judg. v. 9. Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor. viii. 3. 12. ix. 7, 8.
r 17. 1 Kings viii. 61.
s Prov. xxiii. 15, 16. Luke xv. 6. John xv. 11. Phil. ii. 15—17. iv. 1, 10. 1 Thes. iii. 6—9.
t 20. 2 Chr. xx. 26, 27. Ps. cii. 1, 2. cxxxviii. 1. cxlvi. 2.
u 1 Kings viii. 15. 2 Chr. vi. 4. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. Ez. iii. 12. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
x Gen. xxxii. 28. xxxiii. 20.
y Is. lxiii. 16. Matt. vi. 9. Luke xi. 2. Rom. i. 7. viii. 15. Phil. iv. 20. 2 Thes. ii. 16.
c Dan. iv. 30. 34, 35. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 15, 16. Jude 25. Rev. iv. 10, 11. v. 12, 13. vii. 9—12. xix. 1.
d 1 Sam. xv. 29. *Marg.* Ps. xcviii. 1.
e Job xxxvii. 22. Ps. xxix. 4. xlv. 3, 4. civ. 1. cxlv. 12. Is. ii. 10. Heb. i. 3
f Gen. i. 1. xiv. 19. 22. Ps. cxv. 15, 16. Is. xlii. 5. lxvi. 1. Jer. x. 10—12. xxvii. 5. Dan. iv 32. 34, 35.
g Ps. xcvii. 1. xciii. 1. cxlv. 1. 12, 13. Dan. iv. 3. Rev. xi. 15.
h Neh. ix. 5. Ps. xxi. 13. xlvi. 10. xlvii. 9. lvii. 5. 11. xcvii. 9. Is. ii. 11. xii. 4.
i Deut. viii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Job xli. 10. Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. cxiii. 7, 8. Prov. x. 22. Luke i. 51—53. Rom. xi. 35, 36.
k Dan. vi. 26.
l Job ix. 19. Ps. lxii. 11. Is. xliii. 13. xlvi. 10. Dan. v. 18—21. Matt. xxviii. 18. John xix. 11. Eph. iii. 20. Rev. xi. 17.
m 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xviii. 31, 32. xxviii. 8. xxix. 11. lxviii. 34, 35. cxliv. 1, 2. Is. xlv. 24. Eph. iii. 16. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11.
n Ps. cv. 1. cvi. 1. Dan. ii. 23. 2 Cor. ii. 14. viii. 16. ix. 15. 1 Thes. ii. 13.
o Gen. xxxii. 10. 2 Sam. vii. 18. Dan. iv. 30. 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10. 2 Cor. iii. 5. xii. 9—11.
p Ps. cxv. 1. Rev. iv. 10.
† Heb. *retain,* or *obtain strength.*
q 9. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 17.
r Gen. xxviii. 22. Ps. l. 10—12. Rom. xi. 36. 1 Cor. xvi. 2.
s Gen. xlvii. 9. Ps. xxxix. 12. cxix. 19. Heb. xi. 13—16. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
t Heb. *of thine hand.*
xiv. 2. Ps. xc. 9. ciii. 11. cxliv. 4. Ec. vi. 12. Jam. iv. 14.
§ Heb. *expectation.*
u 14. 2 Chr. xxxi. 10. Ps. xxiv. 1. Hos. ii. 8. Luke xix. 16.

"their own account." Having set them the example, he only enquired who was willing to assist, and to consecrate his service unto the Lord, by contributing part of his wealth to that holy use: and immediately they offered about thirty millions of gold and silver, besides brass, iron, and precious stones; and instead of grudging the expense, the king and people all rejoiced together; for they were cordial in it, and offered willingly themselves, and rejoiced to see all the others offering with the same liberality.—The prosperity of Israel must have been immense, under the reign of David; and it seems that there was also much true piety among the people, especially towards the close of his reign. We can scarcely form a conception of the magnificence of the temple and adjacent edifices, about which such immense quantities of gold and silver were employed. (*Note, Ez.* xli. 22.) But "the unsearchable "riches of Christ" excel the splendour of the temple, infinitely more than that surpassed the meanest cottage on earth.—The *refined silver* seems to have been used, in covering the inner walls of the chambers and other outbuildings; for those of the temple itself were plated with gold. (1 *Kings* vi. 21, 22.) *Mine own proper* good. (3) סְגֻלָּה: rendered *a peculiar treasure, Ex.* xix. 5: *special, Deut.* vii. 6: *jewels, Mal.* iii. 17. (*Note, Tit.* ii. 14.)—*The chief,* &c. (6) *Notes,* xxvii. xxviii. 1.

With perfect heart, &c. (9) 'This is the virtue which 'St. Paul calls ἁπλότης, *singleness of heart*; which hath 'respect purely to the service of God, the honour of re'ligion, and the good of the church: 2 *Cor.* viii. 2. ix. '11. 13.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes,* 2 *Cor.* i. 12—14. *Eph.* vi. 5—9.)—'It was a singular comfort to him' (David) 'in his 'old age to see the people so well disposed, and his ex'hortation so effectual upon their heart.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 10—19. Instead of boasting of these extraordinary oblations; (*Note, Num.* xxiii. 4—6;) David gave solemn thanks to the Lord, with much enlargement of heart and copiousness of expression.—"LORD, God of Israel, our "Father," may mean, either the 'God of our father Israel, or Jacob' (18); or, 'JEHOVAH our Father, the God of Israel.' In this last view, the words may be considered, as the first instance in scripture, of God being addressed in prayer, as "Our Father." (*Note, Matt.* vi. 9.) This is properly the language of the Spirit of adoption. (*Note, Rom.* viii. 14—17.) As king of Israel David was become great, powerful, and honourable; he had obtained victories, taken immense spoils, and been crowned with royal ma-

17 I know also, my God, that thou [x] triest the heart, and [y] hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, [z] in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with [a] joy thy people, which are [*] present here, to offer willingly unto thee.

18 O [b] LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, [c] keep this for ever [d] in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and [†] prepare their heart unto thee.

19 And [e] give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all *these things*, and to build the palace, *for* [f] the which I have made provision.

20 ¶ And David said to all the congregation, [g] Now bless the LORD your God. And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and [h] bowed down their heads, and [i] worshipped the LORD, and the king.

21 And they [k] sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their [l] drink-offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel;

22 And did [m] eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king [n] the second time, [o] and anointed *him* unto the LORD *to be* the chief governor, and [p] Zadok *to be* priest.

23 Then Solomon [q] sat on the throne of the LORD, as king instead of David his father, and [r] prospered; and [s] all Israel obeyed him.

24 And [t] all the princes, and the mighty men, and [u] all the sons likewise of king David, [‡] submitted themselves unto Solomon the king.

x xxviii. 9. Deut. viii. 2. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. vii. 9. ii. 6. Prov. xvi. 2. xxi. 2. Jer. xvii. 10. Heb. iv. 12. Rev. ii. 23.
y Prov. xi. 20. xv. 8, 9. John i. 47.
z Acts xxiv. 16. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Thes. ii. 10.
a 2 Chr. ix. 8. Philem. 7, 20.
* Heb. *found.*
b Ex. iii. 6. 15. iv. 5. Matt. xxii. 32. Acts iii. 13.
c Deut. xxx. 6. Ps. ii. 10. cxix. 116, 117. Jer. x. 23. xxxii. 39, 40. Phil. i. 6. 9—11. 1 Thes. iii. 11, 12. Heb. xiii. 21.
d xxviii. 9. Gen. vi. 5. Ps. cxix. 113.
† Heb. *stablish.* Ps. x. 17. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. 1 Pet. v. 10.
e xxviii. 9. Ps. lxxii. 1. cxix. 80. Jam. i. 17.
f 2. xxii. 14
g xvi. 36. 2 Chr. xx. 21. Ps. cxxxiv. 2. cxxxv. 19—21. cxlvi. 1, 2. cxlviii. 13, 14, &c.
h Gen. xxiv. 26. 48. Ex. iv. 31. Ps. xxix. 1, 2. xcv. 6.
i Ex. xiv. 31. 1 Sam. xii. 18. Prov. xxiv. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 17.
k 1 Kings viii. 62—65. 2 Chr. vii. 4—9. Ezra vi. 17.
l Lev. xxiii. 13. Num. xv. 5. 7. 10.
m Ex. xxiv. 11. Deut. xii. 7. 11, 12. xvi. 14—17. 2 Chr. vii. 10. Neh. viii. 12. Ec. ii. 24. iii. 12, 13. viii. 15. ix. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.
n xxiii. 1.
o 1 Kings i. 35—39.
p 1 Kings ii. 35.
q xvii. 11, 12. xxviii. 5. Ps. cxxxii. 11. Is. ix. 6, 7.
r xxii. 11.
s Ec. viii. 2—5. Rom. xiii. 1.
t xxii. 17. xxviii. 21.
u iii. 3—9. 1 Kings i. 50—53. ii. 24, 25.
‡ Heb. *gave the hand under.* Gen. xxiv. 2. xlvii. 29. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. *marg.* Ez. xvii. 18.

jesty: but what was all this, before him who "inhabiteth "eternity," and filleth immensity, and is underived and independent of all; who possesses immutably every glorious and adorable perfection, and exercises almighty power and absolute universal authority; and who, victorious over all his enemies, reigns in majesty which exceeds all description or imagination! for his "is the kingdom, and the power, "and the glory for ever, Amen." (*Note, Matt.* vi. 13.) From this God alone, David had received his wealth, his honour, and power: this he acknowledged with grateful praise; but, contemplating the infinite glories of his great Benefactor, and then turning his thoughts to himself and his people, the comparison affected him with a deep conviction of their meanness, weakness, and unworthiness; and he could not but wonder, that the glorious God would condescend to notice such indigent and sinful creatures. "LORD," says he, "what are we, that we should offer so "willingly after this sort!" Their existence was derived from God: he had graciously given them these treasures, and had disposed their hearts willingly to make this use of them; so that in every way the whole praise belonged to him. 'In the Targum it is thus paraphrased, *Who hast* 'given us such plenty, that we are able to offer these gifts. 'He should have added, and also given us an heart to part 'with them for thy service. ....The highest satisfaction 'was, that God had bestowed upon him an heart, to do 'what he had done, willingly, with a sincere respect to the 'service of God, and not out of vain glory.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Ps.* cx. 3.) As for David and his people, they were strangers and sojourners; *dying*, because *sinful* creatures. Though settled and prospered very greatly in Canaan, they still were strangers before God, and sojourners, as really, (though in rather a different sense,) as their fathers were, when they dwelt in the promised land in tents, or wandered in the desert. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxix. 12. *Heb.* iv. 3—11. xi. 13—16. 1 *Pet.* ii. 11.) Indeed all that treasure, which they gave to the Lord to build his temple, was his own before; if they had attempted to keep it, death would soon have removed them: so that the only use, which they could make of it, to their own real advantage, was thus to consecrate it to the service of him who gave it, and whose gracious acceptance of their oblation would add still more to their obligations. At the same time David was conscious of his own uprightness and willingness in this oblation, as in the presence of that heart-searching God who "hath pleasure in uprightness;" and with great joy he beheld his people shewing every token of the same disposition. He well knew, that this, as far as genuine, was the effect of a sacred influence from God upon the heart, "preventing them, that they might have a good 'will:' and he most fervently prayed, that it might be evermore kept there, by the same grace 'working in them 'when they had that good will:' and that the Lord would prepare the hearts of them all, but especially the heart of Solomon, for himself; and that he might accomplish the arduous important service before him.—Such is this address of David to the LORD God of Israel; and *nothing* on this side heaven can be conceived, more humble, pure, evangelical, spiritual, devout, or exalted, than the praise, adoration, gratitude, confidence, love, zeal, and philanthropy, which it breathes throughout.—*None abiding.* (15) *No expectation.* (*Marg.*) *Notes, Ps.* xxxix. 7, 8. lxii. 1, 2. 5—7.

V. 20. David, having concluded his act of worship, called upon the people to bless the LORD with him: and when they had rendered their adoring praises and thanksgivings unto God, they performed obeisance to their aged and pious king. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21—25. Besides the burnt-offerings, which were entirely consumed on the altar, numerous peace-offerings

25 And the LORD [x] magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and [y] bestowed upon him *such* royal majesty, as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

26 ¶ Thus David the son of Jesse reigned [z] over all Israel.

27 And the time that he reigned over Israel *was* [a] forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three *years* reigned he in Jerusalem.

28 And he died in [b] a good old age, [c] full of days, riches, and honour; and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

29 Now [d] the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the [*] book of [e] Samuel the seer, and in the book of [f] Nathan the prophet, and in the book of [g] Gad the seer,

30 With all his reign and [h] his might, and [i] the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

x Josh. iii. 7. iv. 14. 2 Chr. i. 1. Job vii. 17. Acts xix. 17.
y 1 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chr. i. 12. Ec. ii. 9. Dan. v. 18, 19. Heb. ii. 9.
z xviii. 14. Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72.
a iii. 4. 2 Sam. v. 4, 5. 1 Kings ii. 11.
b Gen. xv. 15. xxv. 8. Job v. 26. Prov. xvi. 31. Acts xiii. 36.
c xxiii. 1. Gen. xxxv. 29.
d 1 Kings xi. 41. xiv. 29. Heb. xi. 32, 33.
* Or, *history*. Heb. *words*.
e 1 Sam. ix. 9.
f 2 Sam. vii. 2—4. xii. 1—7.
g xxi. 9—11.
h 2 Kings x. 34. xiv. 28.
i Dan. ii. 21.

were sacrificed, on the flesh of which the assembled multitudes joyfully feasted. (*Notes, Deut.* xii. 5—7. 1 *Kings* viii. 63—65. *Neh.* viii. 10—12.)—Solomon had been hastily, and by a few persons, anointed king, during Adonijah's usurpation; (*Notes*, 1 *Kings*, i. 38, 39;) but he was at this time anointed in a more solemn and publick manner. As Abiathar was removed from the high priesthood, and Zadok substituted in his place, after David's death; it has been thought, that the second anointing of Solomon was also subsequent to that event. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27.) He was anointed unto "the LORD to be the chief governor," and "he sat on the throne of the LORD." For the LORD was in an especial manner the king of Israel; the princes received their authority from him by peculiar designation; and they were expressly required to support his worship and law. They also were all types of Christ, who "sat "down with his Father on his throne."—We may suppose that every kind of personal accomplishment united with justice, wisdom, and prosperity, in that royal majesty which the Lord bestowed upon Solomon, and by which he magnified him in the sight of all Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26—28. (*Marg. Ref.*) When we read the eleventh chapter of the second book of Samuel, and the sequel of that melancholy narration, we could scarcely expect to behold David appear so illustrious in his closing scene, in which every thing heavenly and excellent is combined; and the people seem to have considered him with a veneration and affection, which language fails to express. But his repentance had been as remarkable as his sins; and his conduct, during his afflictions, and towards the end of his life, seems to have had more effect on his subjects, than all that they had before witnessed.—It is indeed hard to say, which shines the brightest in this chapter, the *rising, or the setting sun*: but it is better to rise behind clouds, and to be much obscured in the course of our lives, and to set, like David, with splendour; than with Solomon to rise very bright, and shine very splendid, and then to set behind an almost impenetrable cloud. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xi. 42, 43.)

V. 29, 30. It is plain from these verses, that the contemporary prophets were the historians, or annalists, of God's people; and that they left far more copious records of publick transactions, both in respect of Israel and the adjacent countries, than have come down to us. (*Note, 2 Sam.* xxiv. 11.)—Learned men may indeed regret the loss of these histories; but 'God knows better than we, 'what was most fit to be preserved for the use and benefit 'of his church.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The due support and scriptural promotion of religion, is always more important, and in many cases more arduous, than the administration of civil government: because the honour of God, and the most essential interests of immortal souls, are concerned in it; compared with which all other interests are trivial. They alone, whom the Lord hath chosen for such a work, will prosper in it; and it is the duty of all to assist by every proper means in their power.—Strong affection to God, and to all that relates to him for his sake, will constrain men to the most disinterested, self-denying, and liberal services; and they will never think, that they have done, or can do, enough to promote his glory; but, with all their might, will abound in every good work, and make more and more preparation for the carrying on of the same great and holy design. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* v. 13—15.)—Those who would excite others to consecrate their service to the Lord, either in feeding his poor children, or in spreading his truth and supporting his worship, must set the example: and then a hint from them will go further, than a laboured and eloquent oration from a man, who persuades others to those things, which he himself evidently does not practise.—Our holy joy in God will commonly bear proportion to the willingness, uprightness, and liberality, with which we devote our all to him: and that rejoicing is peculiarly pure and heavenly, which springs from beholding those whom we greatly love, giving evidence of their real devotedness to God, and their delight in his ways. (*Notes, Phil.* iv. 14—20. 1 *Thes.* iii. 6—10. 2 *John* 4. 3 *John* 1—4.) The bodily pain and infirmities of age, and the chilling hand of death, while they indispose us for all other enjoyments, or separate us from them, cannot preclude or extinguish this, which emulates that of angels, who "rejoice over one sinner "that repenteth."

V. 10—19.

Those, who are most "zealous of good works," will never boast of them, or trust in them. Sensible of their indigence as creatures, and conscious of their guilt and defilement as sinners, they will allow that "it is of the "LORD's mercies they are not consumed." To them it appears an unspeakable favour, that a holy God will accept any worship or service from such polluted creatures:

they know that all their ability of every kind is from him; and they account it their chief pleasure, honour, and privilege to be employed by him, who needs not and cannot be profited by their services. They are conscious that their best needs forgiveness, falls infinitely beneath his glorious majesty, and is utterly unworthy of his acceptance, "whose is the kingdom, and who is exalted as Head above "all." 'In like manner, we ought to acknowledge God 'in all spiritual things: referring every good thought, 'good purpose, good work, to his divine grace, from whom 'we receive it; beseeching him, as David doth, ... to pre-'serve it in us.' *Bp. Patrick.* Thus our best and most useful works will terminate in admiration of his inconceivable majesty, goodness, power, and holiness; in unfeigned praises and thanksgivings; and in the deepest self-abasement before him. This is genuine grace: but when we are proud of our services, (which we are very prone to be,) what is it, but sacrilegiously to rob God of what belongs to him alone, and sacrifice it to the most hateful of our own lusts? We may indeed "rejoice in the testimony "of our consciences," when we have acted with "simplicity and godly sincerity," in the presence of that God who trieth the heart, and hath pleasure in uprightness; (*Note, 2 Cor.* i. 12—14;) and should joyfully observe the indications of the same disposition in others: but we must remember, that this also is the gift of God, and that we can no more offer the sacrifice of a broken heart, or a thankful heart, than we can present ten thousands of bulls and goats, except as we give unto him his own, which he has previously conferred upon us. All comes from him, and to him belongs "the kingdom, and the power, and "the glory for ever."—While we bless the Lord for putting good desires into our hearts, or the hearts of others, we should never forget to pray to him to preserve and fix them there, and to bring them to good effect.—When we feel that there is no abiding for us on earth, but that we are departing as a shadow, and following our fathers, who have been strangers and sojourners before us; we should be peculiarly fervent in our prayers that those who are to succeed us, or whom we consider as having profited by our instructions, may have their "hearts prepared unto "the LORD," and disposed for the work to which they are called. Parents and ministers also, when they perceive any of their children or people under serious impressions, should "travail in birth for them till Christ be formed in "them," by earnest constant prayer, that "the LORD "would keep for ever in the imaginations of the thoughts "of their hearts," those good desires which he has excited, "and prepare their hearts unto himself." (*Notes, Gal.* iv. 17—20. *Col.* ii. 1—4.) We should also call upon them to pray and to bless the Lord for themselves: and when our examples prove that we are deeply in earnest in these great concerns, we may hope that our exhortations will have a permanent and most beneficial effect.

V. 20—30.

They, who render God the honour due unto his name, will seldom fail duly to respect those, who have been the instruments of his kindness to them, or to honour those whom God has placed in authority over them.—All our obedience and communion with God must have a believing reference to that one great sacrifice, which infinitely more honours his law and justice, than all the oblations which shadowed it forth to ancient believers: thus, peace with him, peace of conscience, and gladness of heart will make sacred ordinances pleasant to us; and even render our ordinary meals subservient to our spiritual improvement and the honour of God; while they are attended with gratitude, temperance, liberality, and a heavenly mind. These are the pleasures and employments, which add dignity to prosperity, rank, and eminence for wisdom; which adorn every personal accomplishment, and increase the enjoyment of sprightly youth and vigorous health. These are essential to that royal majesty, which God bestows on those whom he loves: and without these there can be no durable prosperity, honour, comfort, or usefulness. Unless we have some acquaintance with these pious exercises, riches, honour, and prosperity only render "the "king of terrors" more tremendous; but these are sufficient to deprive death of his sting: and when we read or hear of one, who has been taken away from the midst of such employments, we readily conceive of his soul, as escaped out of prison, mounting up to heaven, and joining immediately with ineffable delight in the worship of angels. May we "die the death of the righteous, and "may our latter end be like his!" Blessed be God, the chief of sinners may hope for such a glorious exit, when brought to repent, and to flee for refuge to the Saviour's atoning blood. Nay, even those who have grievously sinned, after a long profession of godliness, to the triumphing of the wicked, and so as to bring on themselves the most severe and complicated chastisements, may possibly retrieve all; may have their broken bones made to rejoice; may recover "the joy of God's salvation;" may "have their lips opened to shew forth his praises, that "sinners may be converted unto him;" and may regain the entire confidence of those, who had been the most stumbled by their fall. (*Notes, Ps.* li. *title.* 11—13.) But this cannot be done without deep humiliation before God and man, resigned patience under correction, and redoubled watchfulness and diligence in the Lord's ways. Let us then mark the difference between the spirit and character of the man after God's own heart, living and dying; and those of such worthless professors, as resemble him in nothing but his sin, and who apologize for their crimes by his example. Let us also compare him with those presumptuous cavillers, who profanely carp at the blemishes in illustrious scriptural characters; but never raise their minds to an idea of such exalted excellency, piety, and philanthropy, as David shewed. We cannot too closely imitate the general example of this most eminent saint: but let us watch and pray, lest we be overcome by temptation and overtaken with sin, to the dishonour of God, and the wounding of our own consciences: and if we have offended, let us copy his example of repentance and patience, still hoping to close our days like him; and, having "served our own genera-"tion by the will of God," to fall asleep, with the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE SECOND BOOK

OF THE

CHRONICLES.

THIS book is a continuation of the history, begun in the former book. It in some respects coincides with the books of Kings. But there, the histories of Judah and Israel are carried on together; as those of England and Scotland are by some of our historians: here, the affairs of Judah are more fully and distinctly recorded, while those of Israel are only mentioned occasionally, when required by the main subject; as an English historian would sometimes digress concerning the affairs of France or Germany, in elucidating his narrative. 'There are several things contained in this 'book, of which no mention is made there,' (in Kings,) 'particularly in the history of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah: 'and many other things there mentioned, are here more fully and clearly explained, as will be observed in the acts of 'Abijah, Asa, Joash, and other kings of Judah.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The history opens with the accession of Solomon, and contains a narrative of the several kings of his race, who reigned in succession, till the Babylonish captivity; and it concludes with an intimation of Cyrus's decree for the restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of the temple, about four hundred and eighty years after.—Besides the additional practical instruction here afforded, especially in respect of the different effects of piety, or profaneness, in the affairs of nations favoured with revelation; this history throws great light on the prophetical writings, which can by no means be well understood without constantly adverting to it. The prophecies contained in it, either were fulfilled soon after they were spoken, or coincide with those before considered: and it is not always easy to determine concerning subsequent scriptural references, whether they relate to this book or to the books of Kings.

B. C. 1015.

CHAP. I.

Solomon, established as king, calls on his nobles and people, to join in sacrificing at Gibeon, 1—6. The Lord appears to him there by night, and allows him to choose what blessing to ask: he asks wisdom, and is promised also riches and honour, 7—12. Solomon's forces, riches, and commerce, 13—17.

1 AND Solomon the son of David [a] was strengthened in his kingdom; and [b] the LORD his God *was* with him, and [c] magnified him exceedingly.

2 Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, [d] to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, [e] the chief of the fathers.

3 So Solomon and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that *was* at [f] Gibeon; for there was [g] the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses [h] the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness.

4 But [i] the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim, to *the place which* David had prepared for it: [k] for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.

5 Moreover, [l] the brazen altar that [m] Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, [*] he put before the tabernacle of the LORD: and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.

6 And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered [n] a thousand burnt-offerings upon it.

a 1 Kings. ii. 12. 46.
b Gen. xxi. 22. xxxix. 2. 21. Ex. iii. 12. 1 Chr. xvii. 8. Matt. xxviii. 20.
c 1 Chr. xxix. 25. Phil. ii. 9—11.
d xxix. 20. xxx. 2. xxxiv. 29, 30. 1 Chr. xiii. 1. xv. 3. xxviii. 1. xxix. 1.
e 1 Chr. xv. 12. xxiv. 4. 31.
f 1 Kings iii. 4. 1 Chr. xvi. 39. xxi. 29.
g Ex. xxvi. 1, &c. xl. 2. 34. Lev. i. 1.
h Deut. xxxiv. 5.
i B. C. 1045. 2 Sam. vi. 2. 17. 1 Chr. xiii. 5, 6. xv. 25—28.
k 1 Chr. xvi. 1. Ps. cxxxii. 5, 6.
l Ex. xxvii. 1—8. xxxviii. 1—7.
m Ex. xxxi. 2. 1 Chr. ii. 19, 20.
* Heb. was there.
n 1 Kings iii. 4. viii. 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 21. Is. xl 16.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. *Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxix. 21—25.

V. 2. This seems to have taken place a short time after David's decease; when Solomon, being established in his kingdom, convened his chief men, and spake to them concerning the solemn sacrifice, in honour of God, which he purposed to offer.

V. 3—6. *Notes, Ex.* xl. 1—33. 2 *Sam.* vi. 1 *Kings* iii. 4. viii. 4. 1 *Chr.* xvi. 37—43. xxi. 28—30. xxii. 1.

o 1 Kings iii. 5—15. Prov. iii. 5, 6.
p Matt. vii. 7, 8. Mark x. 36, 37. 51. John xvi. 23. 1 John v. 14, 15.
q 2 Sam. vii. 8, 9. xii. 7, 8. xxii. 51. xxiii. 1. Ps. lxxxvi. 13. lxxxix. 20—28. 49. Is. lv. 3.
r 1 Chr. xxviii. 5. xxix. 23.
s 2 Sam. vii. 12—16.25—29. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14. 23—27. xxviii. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxix. 35—37. cxxxii. 11, 12.
* Heb. *much as the dust of the earth.* Gen. xiii. 16. xxii. 17. Num. xxiii. 10.
t Ps. cxix. 34. 73. Prov. ii. 2—6. iii. 13—18. Jam. i. 5.
u Num. xxvii. 17. Deut. xxxi. 2. 2 Sam. v. 2.
x 2 Cor. ii. 16. iii. 5.
y 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Kings viii. 18. 1 Chr. xxviii. 2. xxix. 17, 18. Acts v. 4.
z 1 Kings iii. 28. Prov. xiv. 8. Jam. iii. 13. 17.
a Matt. vi. 33. Eph. iii. 20.
b ix. 22. 1 Chr. xxix. 25. Ec. ii. 9.

7 °In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, ᵖAsk what I shall give thee.

8 And Solomon said unto God, ᵠThou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me ʳto reign in his stead.

9 Now, O LORD God, ˢlet thy promise unto David my father be established; for thou hast made me king over a people, *like the dust of the earth in multitude.

10 ᵗGive me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may ᵘgo out and come in before this people: ˣfor who can judge this thy people *that is so* great?

11 And God said to Solomon, Because ʸthis was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, ᶻthat thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king;

12 Wisdom and knowledge *is* granted unto thee: and ᵃI will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, ᵇsuch as none of the kings have had, that *have been* before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

13 ¶ Then Solomon came *from his journey* to the high place that *was* ᶜat Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and ᵈreigned over Israel.

c 3.
d 1 Kings iv. 24, 25.

14 And ᵉSolomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he placed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

e ix. 25. Deut. xvii. 16. 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 26.

15 And, ᶠthe king †made silver and gold at Jerusalem *as plenteous* as stones, and cedar-trees made he as the ᵍsycamore-trees that *are* in the vale for abundance.

f 12. ix. 27. 1 Kings x. 27. Job xxii. 24, 25. Is. lx. 17.
† Heb. *gave.*
g ix. 27. Is. ix. 10. Am. vii. 14.

16 And ‡Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

‡ Heb. *the going forth of the horses which was Solomon's.* ix. 28. 1 Kings x. 28, 29.

17 And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt, a chariot for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so brought they out *horses* for all ʰthe kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, by their ᵎmeans.

h 2 Kings vii. 6.
ᵎ Heb. *hand.*

V. 7—12. *Note,* 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14.—*This was in thine heart.* (11) This does not occur in Kings: and it implies that the request of Solomon, as arising from a spiritual judgment and heart, was peculiarly acceptable to that God, who searches, regards, and demands the heart. God promised Solomon all the things which he had not asked, except the life of his enemies: but he was to be a peaceable king, a type of the Prince of peace (12).

V. 14—17. *Notes,* 1 *Kings* x. 24—29.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The presence and blessing of God give strength, honour, happiness, and stability; and to whom he has given much, from them he requires the more.—It would be a comely sight to the spiritually minded, to behold kings with their nobles, and the chief estates of their dominions, assembling together for the purposes of religious worship, stirring up each other by the fervency of their devotions, and giving evident demonstrations how generally and deeply their hearts were engaged in the sacred services. Alas! even in Christian countries such scenes are seldom, if ever, exhibited! But the example, the influence, and the exhortations of princes, who greatly fear and love the Lord, and who are eminent for piety and wisdom, may effect very great things; especially when one succeeds to another, walking before God, in the steps of his predecessor: and those, who love the truths and service of God, should unite in praying, not *formally,* but *fervently,* for all in authority; that, being enriched with grace and wisdom, they may become instruments of extensive good to their dominions.—To us the desires of men's hearts can only be known by their habitual conduct; but in themselves they as certainly distinguish characters, as actions do: and if the Lord see, that it is in our heart to desire wisdom and grace, more than riches, honour, or pleasure, he will delight to fulfil all our mind. His promises should form the rule and measure of our prayers: and when they respect any important end, they may be pleaded as engaging him to grant all things requisite in order to it.—To know and to do our duty in the station of life assigned us, to the glory of God and the benefit of our connexions in society, requires much wisdom, and is one principal exercise and evidence of it: and if we humbly feel our need of this wisdom, and faithfully ask it of God, he will give it liberally, and not upbraid our former folly. (*Note, Jam.* i. 5—8.)—Those secular employments, which are commenced by the worship and service of God, are likely to be well managed and to be prosperous: and as he "gives grace "and glory; so he will withhold no good thing from them "that walk uprightly."—But alas! prosperity is always dangerous, because our hearts are extremely deceitful: and it is with great propriety, that we pray, 'in all time of our 'wealth, ... Good Lord deliver us,' from pride, ostentation, indolence, self-indulgence, and a worldly mind. Let us then improve our present talent, seek heavenly blessings, and be contented without those great things, which men

CHAP. II.

Solomon purposes to build the temple, and a palace, 1. His workmen, 2. He sends to Huram for skilful artificers, and for timber, 3—10. Huram's friendly answer, 11—16. Solomon employs strangers, as labourers and overseers, 17, 18.

[a] AND Solomon determined to build an house [b] for the name of the LORD, and [c] an house for his kingdom.

2 And Solomon [d] told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.

3 And Solomon sent to [e] Huram the king of Tyre, saying, [f] As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, *even so deal with me.*

4 Behold, [g] I build an house to the name of the LORD my God, [h] to dedicate *it* to him, *and* [i] to burn before him [*] sweet incense, and for [k] the continual shew-bread, and for [l] the burnt-offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on [m] the solemn feasts of the LORD our God. This *is an ordinance* for ever to Israel.

5 And the house which I build *is* [n] great: for [o] great *is* our God above all gods.

6 But [p] who is [†] able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? [q] who *am* I then, that I should build him an house, [r] save only to burn sacrifice before him?

7 Send me now therefore a man [s] cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill [‡] to grave with the cunning men that *are* with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, [t] whom David my father did provide.

8 [u] Send me also cedar-trees, fir-trees, [x] and [§] algum-trees, out of Lebanon: for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon: and behold, my servants *shall be* with thy servants,

9 Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build *shall be* [‖] wonderful great.

10 And, behold, [y] I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand [z] baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.

11 ¶ Then Huram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, [a] Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them.

12 [b] Huram said moreover, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, [c] that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, [*] endued with prudence and understanding, that might build [d] an house for the LORD, and an house for his kingdom.

a 1 Kings v. 5.
b Deut. xii. 5. 11. xxviii.58. 1 Kings viii. 18. 20. 1 Chr. xxii. 10. Matt. vi. 9, 10.
c 1 Kings vii. 1. ix. 1.
d 18. 1 Kings v. 15, 16.
e 1 Kings v. 1. *Hiram.*
f 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Chr. xiv. 1.
g 1. 1 Kings viii. 18.
h 1 Kings viii. 63.
i Ex. xxx. 7. * Heb. *incense of spices.*
k Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 5—8.
l Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 3, 4. 9—11.
m Lev. xxiii. Num. xxviii. xxix.
n 9. 1 Kings iv. 8. 1 Chr. xxix. 1. Ez. vii. 20.
o Ex. xv. 11. 1 Chr. xvi. 25. Ps. lxxxvi. 8, 9. cxxxv. 5. cxlv. 3. Jer. x. 6.
p vi. 18. 1 Kings viii. 27. Is. lxvi. 1. Acts vii. 48, 49.
† Heb. *hath retained,* or, *obtained strength.*
q i. 10. Ex. iii. 11. 2 Sam. vii. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 14. 2 Cor. ii. 16. Eph. iii. 8.
r Deut. xii. 5, 6. 11. 14. 26.
s Ex. xxxi. 3—5 1 Kings vii. 14. Is. xxviii. 26. 29. lx. 10.
‡ Heb. *to grave gravings.*
t 1 Chr. xxii. 15, 16.
u 1 Kings v. 6.
x 1 Kings x. 11. *almug-trees.*
§ Or, *algummim.*
‖ Heb. *great and wonderful.* 5. vii. 21. 1 Kings ix. 8.
y 1 Kmgs v. 11. Luke x. 7. Rom. xiii. 7, 8.
z 1 Kings vii. 26. 38. Ezra vii. 22.
a ix. 8. Deut. vii. 7, 8. 1 Kings x. 9.
b 1 Kings v. 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. Luke i. 68. 1 Pet. i. 3.
c Gen. i. ii. Ps. xxxiii. 6. cii. 25. cxxiv. 8. cxxxvi. 5, 6. cxlvi. 5, 6. Jer. x. 11. Acts iv. 24. xiv. 15. Col. i. 16, 17. Rev. iv. 11. x. 6.
* Heb. *knowing prudence, &c.* 1 10—12.
d 1.

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generally covet, but which commonly prove fatal snares to their souls.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.—Note,* 1 *Kings* v. 13—18.

V. 3—10. We have here a more particular account of Solomon's message to Huram, (or Hiram,) king of Tyre, than was before given; (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* v. 1—11;) and it appears, that he thought it no impropriety to speak freely and particularly on religious subjects, in treating with a heathen prince about secular business. On the contrary, he laboured to give him very high and honourable thoughts of Israel's God, as great above all gods, and as one whom "the heaven of heavens could not contain:" he particularly explained to him his intentions in building a temple to the name of the Lord; viz. that it was to be the stated place of those instituted ordinances, which were required by the law of God, given to Israel; that he might not misapprehend him, as if he supposed that JEHOVAH could be circumscribed in a temple, like the idols of the heathen: and he represented to him his own inability and unworthiness for such a service, except as mercifully assisted and accepted in it, by that gracious God, who had chosen him for the work. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. The just sentiments contained in these verses, with the pious and benevolent spirit which they breathe, leave no doubt, that Huram was himself a spiritual worshipper of the true God. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* x. 6—9.) 'He ... owns the God of Israel to be JEHOVAH, 'the Maker of heaven and earth. ...The Israelites, ... when 'they would distinguish him from idols and creatures, ...

13 And now I have sent a cunning
[e] iv. 16. man, endued with understanding, [e] of
Huram my father's,

[f] 1 Kings vii. 13, 14. 14 [f] The son of a woman of the
daughters of Dan, and his father *was*
[g] 7. Ex. xxxi. 3, 4. a man of Tyre, [g] skilful to work in gold,
and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone,
and in timber, in purple, in blue, and
in fine linen, and in crimson; also to
grave any manner of graving, and to
find out every device which shall be
put to him, with thy cunning men,
and with the cunning men of my lord
David thy father.

15 Now therefore the wheat, and the
[h] 10. 1 Kings v. 11. barley, the oil, and the wine, [h] which
my lord hath spoken of, let him send
unto his servants:

[i] 1 Kings v. 8, 9. 16 And [i] we will cut wood out of
* Heb. *according to all thy need.* Lebanon, * as much as thou shalt need;
† Heb. *Japho.* Josh. xix. 46. Ezra iii. 7. Jon. i. 3. Acts ix. 36. x. 32. and we will bring it to thee in floats
by sea to [†] Joppa, and thou shalt carry
it up to Jerusalem.

17 And Solomon [k] numbered all [‡] the
[k] 2. viii. 7, 8. 1 Kings v. 13—16. ix. 20, 21.
[‡] Heb. *the men the strangers.* [l] 1 Chr. xxii. 2
strangers that *were* in the land of Israel,
[l] after the numbering wherewith David
his father had numbered them; and
they were found an hundred and fifty
thousand, and three thousand and six
hundred.

18 And he set [m] threescore and ten
[m] 2. thousand of them *to be* bearers of bur-
dens, and fourscore thousand *to be*
hewers in the mountain, and three
thousand and six hundred overseers to
set the people a-work.

CHAP. III.

The place of the temple, and the time when the building of it was begun, 1, 2. Its dimensions and ornaments, 3—7. Those of the most holy place, 8—10. The cherubim placed in it, 11—13. The veil, 14. The two pillars, 15—17.

THEN [a] Solomon began to build the
[a] 1 Kings vi. 1, &c.
house of the LORD at Jerusalem [b] in
[b] Gen. xxii. 2. 14.
mount Moriah, * where *the LORD* ap-
* Or, *which was seen of David.*

'confess him to be the Creator of the world. ...And... 'he' (Huram) 'congratulates the Israelites on the happi- 'ness they enjoyed under such a king, which was the 'effect of his love to God and his church.' *Victorinus Strigelius in Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13. *Of Huram my father's.*] Or, *Huram-abi.* It seems that this man, being the most eminent in his line of business, was called *father*, or *my father Huram.* King Huram called him so, and Solomon did the same. (*Note*, iv. 16.) For it is evident that the artist's name is here meant, and not that of the king's father.

V. 14—16. *Marg. Ref.—Note*, 1 *Kings* vii. 14.—*My lord David.* (14) An honourable title given by Huram to David, expressive of his veneration and affection for him: for, probably, he had derived his knowledge of the true God, and of his holy worship, from his intercourse with David, to whom on that account he looked up, as to a superior.

V. 17—18. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 *Kings* v. 13—18. ix. 20—22.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought always to attend to the work of God, in decided preference to our own indulgence or accommodation: and our hearts should be resolved for every service, that we may endure hardship, struggle with difficulties, and not yield to weariness or discouragement.—The greatest monarchs on earth are as nothing, in comparison with the God of heaven; and they should deem it their highest honour to be his servants, and to speak of his glorious majesty.—The genuine love of God, abounding in the heart, infuses the savour of piety into the ordinary concerns and converse of life. Indeed, we should be neither afraid nor ashamed, to embrace every opportunity of speaking honourably of him, and of impressing the minds of men with a deep sense of his majesty and excellency, and of the importance of his favour, worship, and service. (*Note, Ps.* cxix. 46.)—It is a great part of our "wisdom "towards them that are without," so to explain our meaning in every doctrine and ordinance, and so to guard our discourses about them, as may best prevent misapprehension or prejudice: and the neglect of this rule is not boldness or faithfulness, as some well meaning zealots suppose, but indiscretion and folly.—In pleading the cause of God and religion, we should always speak humbly of ourselves; but, unless we be humbled, our temper and conduct will betray the hypocrisy of our self-abasing language. May the Lord himself therefore "clothe us with humility!" —Possessions, endowments, or royal authority, are given men for the sake of others; and a wise and pious king is an evidence of the Lord's special love to the people. Who then can express the greatness of his love to his people, in giving them his only begotten Son, to be their Prince and Saviour! It is also a great mercy to have children endued with wisdom and understanding: and we should all desire to be blessings to those among whom we live, that they may bless God for us. We ought also to praise him for those blessings which are exclusively bestowed on others: and it is pleasant to observe how the friendship of pious men becomes the means of bringing those who were far off, to know, love, and worship our God and Saviour. Let us then be unwearied in spreading the knowledge of his name and truth; and let us devote our several talents to his service; endeavour to be helpful to one another in this good work; and be thankful that poor heathens, and even the meanest slaves, may be usefully and acceptably employed by our great and gracious Lord!

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 2. 1 *Chr.* xxi. 18—30. xxii. 1.) It is thought, that the temple and its

peared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of [c] Ornan the Jebusite.

[a] 2 Sam. xxiv. 18, —26. *Araunah.* 1 Chr. xxi. 18. xxii. 1.

2 And he began to build [d] in the second *day* of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.

[d] 1 Kings vi. 1.

3 ¶ Now these *are the things wherein* [e] Solomon was [†] instructed for the building of the house of God. [f] The length by cubits after the first measure *was* threescore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.

[e] 1 Chr. xxviii. 11 —19.

[†] Heb. *founded.*

[f] 1 Kings vi. 2, 3.

4 And the porch that *was* in the front *of the house,* the length *of it was* according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the height *was* an hundred and twenty: and he overlaid it within with pure gold.

5 And [g] the greater house he ceiled with fir-tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm-trees and chains.

[g] 1 Kings vi. 15—17. 21, 22.

[‡] Heb. *covered.*

6 And he [‡] garnished the house with [h] precious stones for beauty: and the gold *was* gold of Parvaim.

[h] 1 Chr. xxix. 2. 8. Is. liv. 12. Rev. xxi. 19, 20.

7 He [i] overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and [k] graved cherubims on the walls.

[i] Ex. xxvi. 29. 1 Kings vi. 20—22. 30. Ez. vii. 20.

[k] Ex. xxvi. 1. 1 Kings vi. 35.

8 And he made [l] the most holy house, the length whereof *was* according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, *amounting* to six hundred talents.

[l] Ex. xxvi. 33. 1 Kings vi. 19, 20. Heb. ix. 3. 9. x. 19.

9 And the weight of the nails *was* fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

10 And in the most holy house he made [m] two cherubims of [§] image-work, and overlaid them with gold.

[m] 1 Kings vi. 23—28.

[§] Or, *moveable work.*

11 And the wings of the cherubims *were* twenty cubits long: one wing *of the one cherub was* five cubits reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing *was likewise* five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.

12 And *one* wing of the other cherub *was* five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing *was* five cubits *also* joining to the wing of the other cherub.

13 The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces *were* [‖] inward.

[‖] Or, *toward the house.* Ex. xxv. 20.

14 ¶ And he made [n] the veil *of* blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and [*] wrought cherubims thereon.

[n] Ex. xxvi. 31—35. Matt. xxvii. 51. Heb. ix. 3. x. 20.

[*] Heb *caused to ascend.*

15 Also he made before the house [o] two pillars of thirty and five cubits [†] high, and the chapiter that *was* on the top of each of them *was* five cubits.

[o] 1 Kings vii. 15—24. Jer. lii. 21—23.

[†] Heb. *long.*

16 And he made [p] chains, *as* in the oracle, and put *them* on the heads of the pillars; and made [q] an hundred pomegranates, and put *them* on the chains.

[p] 1 Kings vi. 21.

[q] 1 Kings vii. 20.

17 And he [r] reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand [‡] Jachin, and the name of that on the left [§] Boaz.

[r] 1 Kings vii. 21.

[‡] That is, *He shall establish.*

[§] That is, *In it is strength.*

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courts were situated, partly in the lot of Judah, and partly in that of Benjamin. (*Notes, Deut.* xxxiii. 12. *Ps.* lxxviii. 67—69.)—*Began to build,* &c. (2) *Note,* 1 *Kings* vi. 1.

V. 3, 4. "The first measure" seems to mean the *original plan.* 'He projected the sanctuary, and the oracle, 'both together; and in their first description they were to 'be in length sixty cubits: that is, forty for the sanctuary, 'and twenty for the most holy place.' *Bp. Patrick.* The height of the porch is not mentioned in Kings; but the description given of the temple, in the exposition, takes in this account. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* vi. 2, 3. 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 11—13. 19.)

V. 6—8. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is not known on what account the gold, here mentioned, is called gold of Parvaim; that word not elsewhere occurring in Scripture: probably it was brought from a place so called.

V. 9. Some by the word rendered "the upper chambers," suppose the ceiling of the most holy place to be meant; but perhaps some of the upper chambers, on the outside of the temple, were thus decorated; the lower being used for more common purposes. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* v. 5—10.)

V. 10—13. The meaning of the word rendered "image-work" (10), is not well known; but it implies something highly ornamented.

V. 14—17. *Notes,* 1 *Kings* vi. 23—28. vii. 15—22.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Proper instructions, well understood, enable us to go about our work, without hesitation or uncertainty, and to proceed in it with confidence and comfort. Blessed be God, the sacred Scriptures are sufficient to render "the "man of God throughly furnished for every good work:" and all our mistakes and embarrassments, in matters of

CHAP. IV.

The altar of brass, 1. The molten sea supported by twelve oxen, 2—5. The lavers, candlesticks, and tables, 6—8. The two courts of the temple, 9, 10. The vessels, furniture, and instruments of brass, 11—18. Those of gold, 19—22.

MOREOVER, he made [a] an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.

[a] i. 5. Ex. xxvii. 1—8. 1 Kings viii. 22. 64. ix. 25. 2 Kings xvi. 14, 15. Ez. xliii. 13—16.

2 Also he made [b] a molten sea of ten cubits from [*] brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.

[b] Ex. xxx 18—21. 1 Kings vii. 23—26. Zech. xiii. 1. Tit. iii. 5. Rev. vii. 14.
[*] Heb. *his brim to his brim.*

3 And under it *was* [c] the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about: ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen *were* cast, when it was cast.

[c] Ez. i. 10. x. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. Rev. iv. 7.

4 It [d] stood upon twelve oxen, [e] three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward.

[d] Matt. xvi. 18. Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14.
[e] Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15. Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Acts ix. 15.

5 And the thickness of it *was* an hand-breadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, [†] with flowers of lilies: *and* it received and held [f] three thousand baths.

[†] Or, *like a lily-flower.*
[f] 1 Kings vii. 26.

6 He made also [g] ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: [‡] such things as they offered for the burnt-offering, they washed in them; [h] but the sea *was* for the priests to wash in.

[g] Ex. xxx. 18—21. 1 Kings vii. 38. 40. Ps. li. 2. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 1 John i. 7.
[‡] Heb. *the work of burnt offering.* Lev. i. 9. 13. Ez. xl. 38.
[h] 2. Ex. xxix. 4. Heb. ix. 14. Rev. i. 5, 6. vii. 14.

7 ¶ And he made [i] ten candlesticks of gold [k] according to their form, and set *them* in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left.

[i] 1 Kings vii. 49. 1 Chr. xxviii. 15. Zech. iv. 2, 3. 11—14. Matt. v. 14—16. John viii. 12. Rev. i. 20.
[k] Ex. xxv. 31—40.

8 He made also [l] ten tables, and placed *them* in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left. And he made an hundred [§] basons of gold.

[l] Ex. xxv. 23—30. xxxvii. 10—16. 1 Kings vii. 48. Is. xxv. 6. Ez. xliv. 16. Mal. i. 12. 1 Cor. x. 21.
[§] Or, *bowls.* Jer. lii. 18, 19. Zech. xiv. 20.

9 ¶ Furthermore, he made [m] the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass.

[m] 1 Kings vi. 36. vii. 12.

10 And [n] he set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south.

[n] 1 Kings vii. 39.

11 And Huram made [o] the pots, and the shovels, and the [‖] basons. And Huram [*] finished the work, that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God:

[o] 1 Kings vii. 40. 45.
[‖] Or, *bowls.*
[*] Heb. *finished to make.*

12 *To wit,* [p] the two pillars, and [q] the pommels, and the chapiters, *which* were on the top of the two pillars, and the two wreaths to cover the two pom-

[p] iii. 15—17.
[q] 1 Kings vii. 41.

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importance, arise from not knowing the Scriptures, or not attending to this our heavenly rule. Let us then search them daily; and beseech the Lord to enable us to understand, believe, remember, and obey his whole word; that our way may be made plain before us. Let us endeavour, that all our works may be 'begun, continued, and ended 'in him:' let us seek his grace to adorn our souls with the beauties of holiness, and his strength to establish us in faith and steady obedience, and to prosper our labours for his glory. Beholding God in Christ, his true Temple, infinitely more glorious than that of Solomon, may we too become "a spiritual house," "an habitation of God "through the Spirit," and "an holy priesthood;" that here on earth we may begin to join the worship of cherubim and seraphim before the throne; and at length in his courts above, sing "praises to him, who sitteth upon the throne, "and to the Lamb for ever and ever."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. This altar is not mentioned in the book of Kings. It was four times as long and four times as broad, and above three times as high, as that made by Moses; (*Notes, Ex.* xxvii. 1—8. *Ezra* iii. 2, 3. *Ez.* xliii. 13—17;) and it formed a scaffold, above eleven yards square, and five yards high.—It might be supposed that the Israelites, now that they were settled, multiplied, and enriched in Canaan, would bring far more numerous sacrifices, than they could have done in the wilderness; and the altar was formed accordingly, to be capable of containing many more. As it was so high, all the worshippers in the most distant parts of the courts of the temple, might behold, and be affected with, this representation of the Lord's wrath against sinners, and his way of shewing mercy through the sufferings of the promised Saviour. This was continually shadowed forth, by the innocent animals consumed by the fire which came down from heaven, while the guilty offerers were spared. (*Notes, Gen.* iv. 3—5. *Lev.* i. 4.)

V. 2—6. *Notes,* 1 *Kings* vii. 23—39. *Jer.* lii. 17—23. *Zech.* xiii. 1. *Tit.* iii. 4—7.

V. 7. *Form.*] Either the *form,* in which Moses had been taught to make the golden candlestick for the tabernacle: (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 31—39. 1 *Kings* vii. 48—51:) or, according to the pattern which David gave him. (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 11—19.)

V. 8. *Marg. Ref.—Note,* 1 *Kings* vii. 48—51.

V. 9. *Note,* 1 *Kings* vi. 36.

V. 10—12. *Marg. Ref.—Pommels.* (12) Or *Globes.*

mels of the chapiters which *were* on the top of the pillars;

13 And [r] four hundred pomegranates on the two wreaths; two rows of pomegranates on each wreath, to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which *were* upon the [*] pillars.

14 He made also [s] bases; and [†] lavers made he upon the bases;

15 [t] One sea, and twelve oxen under it.

16 The [u] pots also, and the shovels, and the [x] flesh-hooks, and all their instruments, did [y] Huram [z] his father make to king Solomon, for the house of the LORD, of [‡] bright brass.

17 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the [§] clay-ground between Succoth and [a] Zeredathah.

18 Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance: for [b] the weight of the brass could not be found out.

19 And Solomon made [c] all the vessels that *were for* the house of God, [d] the golden altar also, and [e] the tables whereon the shew-bread *was set*;

20 Moreover [f] the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should [g] burn after the manner, before [h] the oracle of pure gold;

21 And [i] the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, *made he of* gold, *and* that [‖] perfect gold,

22 And the [k] snuffers, and the [*] basons, and the spoons, and the censers, *of* pure gold: and [l] the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy *place*, and the doors of the house of the temple, *were of* gold.

r Ex. xxviii. 33, 34. 1 Kings vii. 42. Cant. iv. 13. Jer. lii. 23.
* Heb. *face of the.*
s 1 Kings vii. 27—43.
† Or, *caldrons.* 6.
t 2—5.
u 11. Ex. xxvii. 3. xxxviii. 3. Zech. xiv. 20, 21.
x 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14. 1 Chr. xxviii. 17.
y 1 Kings vii. 13, 14. 45. *Hiram.*
z ii. 13.
‡ Heb. *made bright,* or *scoured.*
§ Heb. *thicknesses of the ground.*
a 1 Kings vii. 46. *Zarthan.*
b 1 Kings vii. 47. 1 Chr. xxii. 3. 14. Jer. lii. 20.
c xxxvi. 10. 18. 1 Kings vii. 48—50. 2 Kings xxiv. 13. xxv. 13—15. Ezra i. 7—11. Jer. xxviii. 3. lii. 18, 19. Dan. v. 2, 3. 23.
d xxvi. 16—18. Ex. xxx. 1—10. xxxvii. 25—29. Rev. viii. 3. ix. 13.
e Ex. xxv. 23—30. Lev. xxiv. 5—8. 1 Chr. xxviii. 16.
f 7. Ex. xxv. 31—37.
g Ex. xxvii. 20, 21.
h 1 Kings vi. 5. 16, 17. viii. 6. Ps. xxviii. 2.
i 5. Ex. xxv. 31. xxxvii. 20. 1 Kings vi. 18. 29. 35.
‖ Heb. *perfections of.*
k Ex. xxxvii. 23. 1 Kings vii. 50. 2 Kings xii. 13. xxv. 14. Jer. lii. 18.
* Or, *bowls.*
l 1 Kings vi. 31. 32.

CHAP. V.

The temple is finished, and the dedicated treasures deposited *in it*, 1. The ark is brought into the most holy place, 2—10. While the Levites sing praises to God, a cloud fills the temple, 11—14.

THUS all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished: and Solomon [a] brought in *all* the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

2 [b] Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the

a 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr. xxii. 14. xxvi. 26—28.
b 2. 2 Kings viii. 1—11. 1 Chr. xxviii. 1.

These are called *bowls*, 1 *Kings* vii. 41. Perhaps they were globes placed above the chapiters, which were seen through the ornaments with which they were decorated. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* vii. 15—22.)

V. 16. 'Some think, Solomon calls him *his father*, out 'of great respect to him, or because he was the inventor 'of all this excellent work, as in *Gen.* iv. 20, 21.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, ii. 13.)

V. 17, 18. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 19. It is probable, that but one table was used for the shew-bread: but the rest might be placed near it, for other purposes; or, perhaps some of the tables, as well as of the other vessels, were kept against future emergencies. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 15, 16.)

V. 22. *The inner doors*, &c.] *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 1 *Kings* v. 31—35.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The furniture of the temple, compared with that of the tabernacle, plainly instructed God's ancient people, that his church would be gradually enlarged, and his worshippers immensely multiplied: and, blessed be God, in the person, sacrifice, and offices of Christ, there is an abundant sufficiency for any multitudes, however large, who can ever come to the Father through him.—May the preaching of the gospel hold him forth, as crucified for sinners, to all the nations of the earth; and may his Spirit prepare the hearts of all the inhabitants, to welcome his salvation; for all things else are now ready. Whilst we thus pray for others, may we be found humble penitents, by faith beholding Jesus, as "the Lamb of God that taketh away "the sin of the world:" may we daily wash our souls, and our services, in that "fountain which he hath opened for "sin and for uncleanness:" may we find continual access to the Father, through our heavenly Advocate, and receive continual supplies of his Spirit: may we walk in the light of his word, feast upon the provisions of his house, and be "constrained by his love, to live no longer to ourselves, "but unto him who died for us and rose again."—Nothing can be too precious to be consecrated to his service; but he will not reject the meanest abilities, the feeblest endeavours, or the most trivial oblations, which are offered in faith and love: yet he requires the very best of our affections and of all we have; and he will much more readily bear with external meanness in our services, than with an insincere heart, however covered with specious and pompous professions and performances. The nearer we approach him in privilege and external worship, the more holy we should be; (*Note*, *Lev.* x. 3;) and the nearer we really approach to him in knowledge and communion, the more holy we shall become: till at length faith shall be changed for vision, and we shall be made perfectly and eternally like him, and fitted for the full fruition of his favour and glory. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 17, 18. 1 *John* iii. 1—3.)

NOTES

CHAP. V. V. 1. *Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 9—11. 1 *Kings* vii. 48—51. *v.* 51. viii. 4. 1 *Chr.* xxvi. 28. xxix. 3—9.

V. 2—5. *Marg. Ref.*—*Levites.* (4) Perhaps the Le-

tribes, [c] the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD [d] out of [e] the city of David, which *is* Zion.

3 Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king, [f] in the feast which *was* in the seventh month.

4 And all the elders of Israel came; and [g] the Levites took up the ark.

5 And they brought up the ark, and [h] the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, these did the priests *and* the Levites bring up.

6 Also [i] king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

7 And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, [k] to the oracle of the house, into the most holy *place, even* under the wings of the cherubims.

8 For the cherubims spread forth *their* wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and [l] the staves thereof above.

9 And they drew out the staves *of the ark*, that [m] the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And * there it is unto this day.

10 *There was* nothing in the ark [n] save the two tables which Moses put *therein* at Horeb, † when [o] the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place;* (for all the priests *that were* ‡ present were [p] sanctified, *and* did not *then* [q] wait by course:

12 Also [r] the Levites *which were* the singers, all of them of [s] Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* [t] arrayed in white linen, having [u] cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them [x] an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:)

13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* [y] as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up *their* voice with [z] the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, *saying*, For [a] *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: that [b] *then* the house was filled with a cloud, *even* the house of the LORD;

14 So that [c] the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for [d] the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.

c 1 Chr. xv. 12. xxiv. 6. 31. xxvi. 26.
d i. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 12. 1 Chr. xvi. 1.
e 2 Sam. v. 7.
f vii. 8—10. Lev. xxiii. 34—36. 1 Kings viii. 2.
g Num. iv. 15. Josh. iii. 6. vi. 6. 1 Kings viii. 3. 1 Chr. xv. 2. 12—14.
h i. 3. 1 Kings viii. 4. 6.
i 2 Sam. vi. 13. 1 Kings viii. 5. 1 Chr. xvi. 1, 2. xxix. 21.
k iv. 20. Ex. xxxvii. 6—9. 1 Kings vi. 23—28. viii. 6, 7.
l Ex. xxv. 12—15. xxxvii. 3—5. Num. iv. 6.
m 1 Kings viii. 8, 9.
* Or, *they are there:* as, 1 Kings vi. 8.
n Ex. xxxi 18. xxxii. 15, 16. 19. xxxiv. 1. xl. 20. Deut. x. 2—5. Heb. ix. 4.
† Or, *where.*
o Ex. xix. 5. xxiv. 7, 8. Deut. xxix. 1. 10—14. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Heb. viii. 6—13.
‡ Heb. *found.*
p xxix. 5. 15. 34. xxx. 15. 17—20. Ex. xix. 10. 14, 15. Job i. 5.
q xxxv. 4. 1 Chr. xxiv.
r xxix. 25. 1 Chr. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4—6. 41, 42. xxiii. 5. 30. xxv. 1—7. Ezra iii. 10, 11.
s 1 Chr. vi. 33. 39. xxv. 6. Ps. l. lxxxviii. *titles.*
t 1 Chr. xv. 27. Rev. xv. 6. xix. 8.
u Ps. xcii. 3. cxlix. 3. cl. 3—5.
x Num. x. 1—5. Josh. vi. 6—20. 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi. 6.
y Ps. xcv. 1, 2. c. 1, 2. Is. lii. 8. Jer. xxxii. 39. Acts iv. 32. Rom. xv. 6. Rev. v. 8—14.
z Ps. lxviii. 25, 26.
a vii. 3. xx. 21. 1 Chr. xvi. 34. 41. Ezra iii. 11. Ps. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
b Ex. xl. 34, 35. 1 Kings viii. 10—12.
c vii. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 16.
d Ex. xl. 35. Is. vi. 1—4. Ez. x. 4. Rev. xv. 8.

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vites, of the family of Kohath, carried the ark into the courts of the temple, and then the priests conveyed it into its proper place. (*Notes, Num.* iv. 6—18. 1 *Kings* viii. 1—3.)

V. 6. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 5.) 'The observation of Victorinus Strigelius upon this history is very pious; That 'nothing is more lovely in human things than such concord, as here appeared among all orders of men; both of 'teachers and learners, magistrates, soldiers, and people, 'who were all combined to promote the honour and service of God. *Such unity ought to be studied by Christian 'people, that we may be all one, as our Saviour prayed.*' Bp. Patrick.

V. 7—10. *Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 7—9.—*Unto this day.* (9) That is, *The day when these events were recorded; not* the day when these extracts were made, after the captivity.

V. 11. So great a multitude of sacrifices were to be offered on this occasion, that the whole body of the priests, who were capable of service, were employed at once; and not only those who attended in their courses.

V. 12, 13. (*Marg. Ref.*) These particulars are not mentioned in Kings. (*Notes, Lev.* xxiii. 24, 25. *Num.* x. 2—10. *Josh.* vi. 3—16. 1 *Chr.* xv. 17—24. xvi. 4—6. xxv. 1—6.)—It is remarkable, that the Lord took possession of his temple by the cloud, at the moment when, with one consent, the Levites were singing the praises of his everlasting goodness and mercy. (*Notes,* vii. 1—3. xx. 21—25. *Ezra* iii. 8—11. *Ps.* cxxxvi. 1—3. *Jer.* xxxiii. 10, 11.)

V. 14. *Marg. Ref.* b—d. *Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 10—14.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The gracious presence of God renders his ordinances far more glorious, and is more essential to their efficacy, than any conceivable external order or magnificence: and he is as really present with two or three humble worshippers in a mean and obscure corner, as with tens of thousands assembled with every possible accommodation, or every kind of solemn grandeur and magnificence. (*Notes, Matt.* xviii. 19, 20. *John* iv. 21—24.) Yet, on some occasions, the concurrence of vast multitudes, under the direction of pious princes, has been made extensively useful to man-

Ps. xviii. 8—11. xcvii. 2. Nah. i. 3. Heb. xii. 18.
hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

b ii. 4—6. 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Kings viii. 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 12. xxii. 10, 11. xxviii. 6. 20. Ps. cxxxii. 5. 13, 14. John iv. 21—23. Heb. ix. 11, 12. Rev. xxi. 3.
2 But [b] I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.

c 1 Kings viii. 14. d xxix. 20. Josh. xxii. 6. 1 Kings viii. 55—61. 1 Chr. xvi. 2. Luke xxiv. 50, 51.
3 And the king [c] turned his face, and [d] blessed the whole congregation of Israel: and [e] all the congregation of Israel stood.

e 1 Kings viii. 14. Neh. viii. 5—7. Matt. xiii. 2.
4 And he said, [f] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, [g] who hath with his hands fulfilled *that* which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying,

f 1 Kings viii. 15. 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20. Ps. xli. 13. lxviii. 4. 32—35. lxxii. 18, 19. Luke i. 68. Eph. i. 3.
g 1 Chr. xvii. 12. Ps. cxxxviii. 1, 2. Matt. xxiv. 35. Luke i. 70.
5 [h] Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt, I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that [i] my name might be there; [k] neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel:

h 2 Sam. vii. 6, 7. 1 Kings viii. 16. i Ex. xx. 24. xxiii. 21. Deut. xii. 5. 11. Dan. ix. 19. k 1 Sam. x. 24. xiii. 13, 14. xv. 23. 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. l xii. 13. Ps. xlviii. 1. lxxviii. 68—70. cxxxii. 13. Is. xiv. 32. m 1 Sam. xvi. 1. Ps. lxxxix. 19, 20. n 2 Sam. vii. 2, 3. 1 Kings v. 3. viii. 17. 1 Chr. xxii. 7. xxviii. 2.
6 But I have [l] chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have [m] chosen David to be over my people Israel.

7 Now [n] it was in the heart of David

8. 2 Cor. viii. 12.

9 Notwithstanding, thou shalt not build the house; but [p] thy son which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name.

p 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 4. 11, 12.

10 The LORD therefore hath [q] performed his word that he hath spoken: for [r] I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, [s] as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel:

q See on 4.
r i. 1. 1 Kings ii. 12. iii. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. 23. Ec. i. 4. ii. 18, 19.
s 1 Chr. xxviii. 5.

11 And in it have [t] I put the ark, wherein *is* the covenant of the LORD, that he made with the children of Israel.

t v. 10. Ex. xl. 20. 1 Kings viii. 9. 21. Heb. ix. 4.

12 ¶ And [u] he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and [x] spread forth his hands;

u 1 Kings viii. 22. 2 Kings xi. 14. xxiii. 3. Ps. xxix. 1, 2.
x Ex. ix. 33. Job xi. 13. Ps. xxviii. 2. lxiii. 4. lxviii. 31. cxli. 2. cxliii. 6. Is. i. 15. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

13 (For Solomon had made a brazen [y] scaffold, of five cubits [*] long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of [z] the court: and upon it he stood, and [a] kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven;)

y Neh. viii. 4.
* Heb. *the length thereof*, &c.
z iv. 9. 1 Kings vi. 36. vii. 12.
a 1 Kings viii. 54. Ezra ix. 5. Ps. xcv. 6. Dan. vi. 10. Luke xxii. 41. Acts xx. 36. xxi. 5.

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kind, and greatly honourable to God and honoured by him.—The eye of our faith must, in every service, be primarily directed to the atoning sacrifice of Christ: but in subordination to it, our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving are peculiarly well pleasing unto God; if the harmony of our voices, or musical instruments, is really accompanied with the sweet melody of a humble and grateful heart.—All the divine perfections are glorious in themselves: but the Lord's goodness and ever enduring mercy are peculiarly endearing to the broken-hearted, humble penitent; and he especially delights in the exercise and in the glory of his mercy, in harmony with his wisdom, truth, and justice, through the merits of the Saviour. This should encourage all who feel their need of abounding mercy; being conscious that their sins have greatly abounded.—The ministers of God should always be ready, both in body and soul, for every service, ordinary or extraordinary: and it has a very unfavourable appearance, even in the eyes of men in general, when they manifest an unwillingness, or even backwardness, to exceed that measure, which entitles them to their emoluments. (*Note, Mal.* i. 9—11.)—When the worshippers of God are of one mind, as well as in one place, they may expect his more immediate presence and blessing: if he take possession of our hearts to sanctify them, he will exclude whatever interferes with his design of filling them with his glory; and though darkness now rests upon our views of heavenly things, yet, in the temple above, "the LORD "himself will be our everlasting Light," and we shall know even as we are known. (*Notes, Rev.* xxi. 22—27. xxii. 2—5.) May he prepare us for that land of perfect knowledge, purity, and felicity!

NOTES

CHAP. VI. V. 1—3. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 10—14.

V. 4—11. *Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 15—21.—*Neither chose I,* &c. (5) The judges and Saul were chosen by God, for a season, to be rulers of Israel; but not *to establish a permanent and hereditary authority over that people,* as was the case with David.—*Jerusalem.* (6) This is not found in Kings.—Jerusalem was expressly marked out, *by the building of the temple,* to be the centre of the worship of Israel; as the Lord had before spoken by Moses. (*Marg. Ref.* l. —*Note, Deut.* xii. 5—7.)

V. 12, 13. *Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 22.

14 And said, [b] O LORD God of Israel, *there is* [c] no god like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which [d] keepest covenant, and *shewest* [e] mercy unto thy servants, that [f] walk before thee with all their hearts:

15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and [g] spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

16 Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, [h] keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, [i] saying, [*] There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way [k] to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

17 Now then, [l] O LORD God of Israel, [m] let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

18 But [n] will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, [o] heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: [p] how much less this house which I have built!

19 [q] Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, [r] to hearken unto the cry and the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee:

20 That [s] thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest [t] put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth [†] toward this place.

21 Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall [‡] make toward this place: hear thou from [u] thy dwelling place, *even* from heaven; and when thou hearest, [x] forgive.

22 ¶ If a man [y] sin against his neighbour, [§] and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and [z] the oath come before thine altar in this house;

23 Then hear thou [a] from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by [b] requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by [c] justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

24 ¶ And if thy people Israel be [‖] put to the worse before the enemy, [d] because they have sinned against thee; and [e] shall return and confess thy name, and [f] pray and make supplication before thee [*] in this house;

25 Then hear thou from the heavens, and [g] forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land [h] which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.

26 ¶ When [i] the heaven is shut up, and [k] there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; *yet* [l] if they pray towards this place, and confess thy name, and [m] turn from their sin, when [n] thou dost afflict them;

27 Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, [o] when thou hast taught them the [p] good way wherein they should walk; and [q] send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

28 ¶ If there be [r] dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, [s] locusts, or caterpillars; if [t] their enemies besiege them in the [†] cities of their land; [u] whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness *there be:*

29 *Then* [x] what prayer *or* what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall [y] know his own sore and his own grief, and shall [z] spread forth his hands [‡] in this house:

30 Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and [a] ren-

b Gen. xxxiii. 20. xxxv. 10. Ex. iii. 15. 1 Kings viii. 23. xviii. 36. 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20.
c Ex. xv. 11. 2 Sam. vii 22. Ps. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6. 8. Jer. x. 6. 16.
d Deut. vii 9. Neh. i. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 28. Dan. ix. 4. Mic. vii. 18—20. Luke i. 72.
e Ps. ciii. 17, 18. Luke i. 50. 54, 55.
f Gen. v. 24. xvii. 1. 1 Kings iii. 6. vi. 12. Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. ii. 12.
g 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings viii. 24. 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10.
h Ez. xxxvi. 37. John xv. 14, 15.
i vii. 18. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 1 Kings ii. 4. Ps. cxxxii. 12.
* Heb. *There shall not a man be cut off.*
k Ps. xxvi. 3. cxix. 1.
l 4. 14. Ex. xxiv. 10. Is. xii. 17. xlv. 3.
m 2 Sam. vii. 25—29. Jer. xi. 5.
n 1 Kings viii. 27. Ps. cxiii. 5, 6. Is. lvii. 15. lxvi. 1. Acts vii. 48, 49. xvii. 24.
o ii. 6. Ps. cxxxix. 7—10. Jer. xxiii. 24. 2 Cor. xii. 2.
p xxxii. 15. Job iv. 19. ix. 14. xxv. 4—6. Matt. vii. 11.
q 1 Kings viii. 28. Ps. lxxiv. 20. cxxx. 2. Dan. ix. 17—19. Luke xviii. 1—7.
r Ps. iv. 1. v. 1, 2 xx. 1—3. Job xvii. 20.
s xvi. 9. 1 Kings viii. 29, 30. 2 Kings xix. 16. Neh. i. 6. Ps. xxxiv. 15.
t 6. Deut. xxvi. 2. Col. ii. 9.
† Or, *in this place.* Dan. vi. 10.
‡ Heb. *pray.*
u 39. Job xxii. 12—14. Ps. cxxiii. Ec. v. 2. Is. lvii. 15. Matt. vi. 9.
x Ps. lxxv. 2, 3. cxxx. 3, 4. Is. xliii. 25. Dan. ix. 19. Mic. vii. 18, 19. Matt. vi. 12.
y 1 Kings viii. 31, 32.
§ Heb. *and he require an oath of him.* Ex. xxii. 11. Lev. v. 1. Prov. xxx. 9.
z Num. v. 19—22. Matt. xxiii. 16.
a 21.
b Num. v. 27. Prov. i. 31. Is. iii. 11. Rom. ii. 9.
c Deut. xxv. 1. Prov. xvii. 15. Is. iii. 10. Ez. xviii. 20. Rom. ii. 10.
‖ Or, *be smitten.* Lev. xxvi. 17. 37. Deut. xxviii. 25. 48. Josh. vii. 8. 1 Kings viii. 33, 34. Ps. xliv. 10.
d Josh. vii. 11, 12. Judg. ii. 11. 14, 15. 2 Kings xvii. 7—18.
e Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 1—6. Neh. i. 8, 9. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. iii. 12, 13.
f Ezra ix. 5, &c. Neh. ix. 1, &c. Is. lxiii. lxiv. Dan. ix. 3, &c.
* Or, *toward.* 20.
g Ezra i. 1—6. Ps. cvi. 47. Jer. xxxiii. 6—13.
h Gen. xiii. 15. Ex. vi. 8. Josh. xxi. 43.
i Lev. xxvi. 19 Deut. xi. 17. xxviii. 23. 1 Kings xvii. 1. Luke iv. 25.
k Is. i. 1, 2 Ez. xiv. 13. Am. iv. 4—9. Rev. xi. 6.
l Jer. xiv. 1—9. Joel i. 13—20. ii. 15—17.
m Prov. xxviii. 13. Ez. xviii. 27—32.
n xxxiii. 12, 13. Hos. v. 15. vi. 1.
o 1 Kings viii. 35, 36. Ps. xxv. 4, 5. 8. 12. xciv. 12. cxix. 33. Mic. iv. 2. John vi. 45.
p Is. xxx. 21. Jer. vi. 16. xlii. 3.
q 1 Kings xviii. 40—45. Job xxxvii. 11—14. Ps. lxviii. 9. Jer. xiv. 22. Joel ii. 23. Zech. x. 1. Jam. v. 17, 18.
r Lev. xxvi. 16. 25, 26. Deut. xxviii. 21—61. Ruth i. 1. 1 Kings viii. 37—40. 2 Kings vi. 25—29. viii. 1.
s Ex. x. 12—15. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25. Rev. ix. 3—11.
t xii. 2—5. xx. 9—13. xxxii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 25. Deut. xxviii. 52—57.
† Heb. *land of their gates.*
u 1 Kings viii. 37. 39.
x Ps. xxxiii. 12, 13. 1. 15. xci. 15.
y Prov. xiv. 10.
z 12, 13. Is. i. 15.
‡ Or, *toward.*
a Ps. xviii. 20—26. Jer. xvii. 10. Ez. xviii. 30. Matt. xvi. 27.

V. 14—21. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* 1 *Kings* viii. 23—30.

V. 22—40. *Notes,* 1 *Kings* viii. 31—53.—*Turn from their sin.* (26) All the prayers contained in these verses, for deliverance from suffering, imply that sin would be the cause of that divine anger, which inflicted the suffering, and are connected with prayers for the repentance and conversion of the sufferers. (24, 25. 36, 37. 39. vii. 14.) The prophecies of Israel's restoration are all connected in a similar manner. (*Notes, Is.* lix. 20, 21. *Jer.* xxxi. 18—20. 33, 34. xxxii. 37—41. *Ez.* xxxvi. 25—32. *Mic.* vii. 14—20. *Zech.* xii. 9—14. xiii. 1.)—*Bethink themselves.* (37) *Notes, Ps.* cxix. 57—63. *v.* 59, 60. *Ez.* xviii. 28. *Hag.* i. 5—11. *Luke* xv. 17—19.

der unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for [b] thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men:)

31 That they may [c] fear thee, to walk in thy ways, [*] so long as they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

32 ¶ Moreover, concerning [d] the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but [e] is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and [f] thy mighty hand, and thy stretched-out arm; [g] if they come and pray in this house;

33 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; [h] that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as *doth* thy people Israel, and may know that [†] this house which I have built is called by thy name.

34 ¶ If [i] thy people go out to war against their enemies [k] by the way that thou shalt send them, and [l] they pray unto thee [m] toward this city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name;

35 Then [n] hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and [o] maintain their [‡] cause.

36 ¶ If [p] they sin against thee, ([q] for *there is* no man which sinneth not,) and [r] thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before *their* enemies, and [s] they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near;

37 Yet [s] *if* they [||] bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, [t] We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly:

38 If they [u] return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul, in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and [x] pray toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, and *toward* [y] the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name:

39 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their [*] cause, and [z] forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

40 Now, [a] my God, let, I beseech thee, [b] thine eyes be open, and *let* [c] thine ears *be* attent unto the prayer [†] *that is made* in this place.

41 Now therefore [d] arise, O LORD God, into [e] thy resting place, thou, and [f] the ark of thy strength: let [g] thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let [h] thy saints rejoice in goodness.

42 O LORD God, turn not away the face of [i] thine anointed: [k] remember the mercies of David thy servant.

b 1 Kings viii. 39. 1 Chr. xxviii 9. xxix. 17. Ps. xi. 4, 5. John ii. 25. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
c Ex. xx. 20. 1 Sam. xii. 24. Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxxviii. 1. cxxx. 4. Acts ix. 31.
* Heb. *all the days which they live upon the face of the land.*
d Ex. xii. 48, 49. Ruth i. 16. ii. 11, 12. 1 Kings viii. 41—43. x. 1, 2. Is. lvi. 3—7. Matt. ii. 1. viii. 10, 11. John xii. 20. Acts viii. 27. x. 1—4. Eph. ii. 12, 13.
e Ex. xviii. 8—12. Josh. ii. 9. ix. 9. 2 Kings v. 3. 8. 15. Is. lx. 1—10. Zech. viii. 22. Matt. xii. 42.
f Ex. iii. 19, 20. xiii. 14. Ps. lxxxix. 13.
g Is. lxvi. 20. Zech. xiv. 16, 17. Acts ii. 10.
h 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 19. Ps. xxii. 27. lxvii. 2. cxxxvii. 4, 5. Is. xi. 10. xlix. 6. liv. 1—3. Rev. xi. 15.
† Heb. *thy name is called upon this house.* Num. vi. 27. 1 Kings viii. 16.
i Deut. xx. 1—4. Josh. i. 2—5.
k 1 Kings viii. 44, 45.
k Num. xxxi. 2—6. Josh. viii. 1—8. Judg. i. 1, 2. 1 Sam. xv. 3. 18.
l xiv. 9—12. xviii. 31. xx. 6—18. xxxii. 20, 21.
m 6. 1 Kings viii. 18. Is. xiv. 32. Dan. vi. 10.
n Dan. ix. 17—19.
o Is. xxxvii. 21—36.
‡ Or, *right.* Ps. ix. 4. Jer. v. 28.
p 1 Kings viii. 46. 50.
q Job xv. 14—16. Ps. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Prov. xx. 9. Ec. vii. 20. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.
r Lev. xxvi. 34—44. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 36. 64—68. xxix. 24—28. 2 Kings xvii. 6. 18. 23. xxv. 21. Dan. ix. 7—14. Luke xxi. 24.
s Heb. *they that take them captives carry them away.*
s Lev. xxvi. 40—45. Deut. iv. 29, 30. xxx. 1—3. Luke xv. 17.
‖ Heb. *bring back to their heart.*
t Ezra ix. 6, 7. Neh. i. 6. ix. 26—30. Job xxxiii. 27, 28. Ps. cvi. 6. Is. lxiv. 6—12. Jer. iii. 12—14. xxxi. 18—20. Dan. ix. 5—11. Luke xv. 18, 19.
u Deut. xxx. 2—6. Jer. xxix. 12—14. Hos. xiv. 1—4. Joel ii. 12, 13.
x xxxiii. 11—13. Dan. ix. 3, 4.
y 34.
* Or, *right.* 36. Zech. i. 15, 16.
z Ps. xxv. 18. Mic. vii. 18—20.
a Ps. vii. 3. xiii. 3. xxii. 1, 2. lxxxviii. 1.
b vii. 15. xvi. 9. 1 Kings viii. 52. Ps. xxxiv. 15. Is. xxxvii. 17. Dan. ix. 17—19.
c Ps. xvii. 1. xxxi. 2. cxvi. 2.
† Heb. *of this place.*
d Ps. cxxxii. 8—10. 16.
e 1 Chr. xxviii. 2. Josh. iii. 13. vi. 4, 5. Ps. cx. 2. Rom. i. 16.
f Is. lix. 16—18. lxi. 3. 6. 10. Rom. xiii. 14. Gal. iii. 27. Eph. iv. 22—24. Rev. xix. 8. 14.
g Neh. ix. 26. Is. lxv. 18, 19. Phil. iii. 3. iv. 4.
h 1 Kings i. 34. Ps. ii. 2. Is. lxi. 1.
i Ps. cxxxii. 1. Is. lv. 3. Acts xiii. 34.

V. 41, 42. These concluding words are not in the book of Kings; but are taken, with some variation, from the hundred and thirty-second Psalm, which probably was composed with reference to the removal of the ark at this time. (*Notes, Ps.* cxxxii. 1. 7—9.)—The temple was called the resting place of the ark, because it there had a permanent settlement. The temple likewise typified the human nature of Christ, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" the ark typified his meritorious obedience and sufferings, by which the holy law was magnified, and through which believing sinners approach, and hold communion with a reconciled God. The ark, the sacramental pledge of JEHOVAH's strength engaged for Israel's help, would not avail without his actual presence. This might be expected, and indeed would be visible in its effects, if "his priests were clothed with salvation," or righteousness. If they were partakers of salvation in their souls, and brought forth the fruits of it in their holy lives and conversation: then, their example, instructions, and ministrations, would be greatly blessed, and made very successful. Those who, as penitent believers, have obtained mercy, and are separated from the love and spirit of the world, by the influences of the sanctifying Spirit of God, are *saints*. Their edification, comfort, and joy, in subserviency to the glory of God, and in connexion with the conversion of sinners, form the great object of religious ordinances: and the faith and piety of ministers, the purity and solemnity of their services, and the flourishing of true religion, cause them "to rejoice in goodness," even the goodness of the LORD; by enlarging and gratifying all their holy, pious, and benevolent affections.—These seem, therefore, the blessings peculiarly intended; though the outward protection and prosperity, of both priests and people, were also implied.—Solomon further prayed, that God would not reject his prayer, which he made for a blessing on that work to which he had called him, and for which he had caused him to be "anointed:" for that would be "to turn away his face," and to send him away

CHAP. VII.

God testifies his acceptance of Solomon's prayer by fire from heaven; the glory of the Lord fills the temple, and the people worship, 1—3. Solomon's numerous sacrifices at the dedication, 4—7. The congregation keep the feast of tabernacles, and the feast of the dedication, fourteen days, 8, 9. He dismisses the people joyful, and is prospered, 10, 11. God again appears to Solomon, and makes a covenant with him, 12—22.

a 1 Kings viii. 54. Is. lxv. 24. Dan. ix. 20. Acts iv. 31. xvi. 25, 26.
b Gen. xv. 17. Lev. ix. 24. Judg. vi. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 24. 38. 1 Chr. xxi. 26.

NOW [a] when Solomon had made an end of praying, [b] the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and [c] the glory of the LORD filled the house.

c v. 13, 14. Ex. xl. 34, 35. Lev. ix. 23. 1 Kings viii. 10, 11. Is. vi. 1—4. Ez. x. 3, 4. xliii. 5. xliv. 4. Hag. ii. 7—9. Rev. xxi. 23.

2 And [d] the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house.

d v. 14. Ex. xxiv. 17. Is. vi. 5. Rev. xv. 8.

3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, [e] they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, *saying*, [f] For *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

e Ex. iv. 31. Lev. ix. 24. Num. xiv. 5. xvi. 22. 1 Kings xviii. 39. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. Ps. xcv. 6.
f v. 13. xx. 21. Ezra iii. 11. Ps. ciii. 17. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Is. lxiii. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Luke i. 50.

ashamed and discouraged. But in this, he was a type of, and probably had reference to, the promised Messiah. He also intreated the Lord, to remember the mercies which he had promised to David, and through him to his people and posterity; and to continue and perfect them. This also may be applied to the mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of God the Father through him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

It is a great mercy to be enabled to go through important services to the church, in simple obedience, and in dependence on the Lord; and to witness the accomplishment of them, with humble gratitude to the Giver of both the will, the ability, and the success; adoring his power, faithfulness, and goodness in every part of it, without expressing self-importance or self-complacency. For pride and ostentation, if allowed to intrude, rob God of his glory, and mar the acceptance, or the comfort, of the most useful and excellent undertakings. Here then the main guard should be placed, by those who are employed as instruments for the good of others: this, this above all the rest, should dictate their constant prayers; and all, who wish success to their attempts, should join in prayer for them, that they may be kept humble, and rendered more and more humble, in proportion as they are honoured by God for usefulness.—When a good work is well finished, it is not done with: when the sermon is preached, the letter written, or the book sent to the press, or even well received by the publick, its real utility depends on the Lord's subsequent effectual blessing. It ought therefore to be dedicated to him, committed to his hands, and his blessing sought upon it; and in this case we may confidently expect, that the fruit, which by his grace we have produced, will remain for the durable good of many, when we are gone to our home, "the rest re-"served for the people of God." (*Note, Ec.* xii. 2—7.)

V. 18—42.

The more we know of God and religion, *spiritually and experimentally*, the more humbly we shall think of ourselves and of all our performances; the more reverentially we shall adore the infinitely glorious God, and the more entirely we shall trust to his covenant of mercy and grace, made with believing sinners in Jesus Christ.—We may and ought, unworthy as we are, to expect large answers to all our prayers, which we present for ourselves and others, through the Saviour's intercession. They are greatly favoured who have pious friends to pray for them; and it is an inestimable mercy for us all, that "we have "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," who is "the propitiation for our sins; and not for our's "only; but for the sins of the whole world." (*Note, 1 John* ii. 1, 2.) Yet this will not prevent the destruction of any who never pray for themselves: not that the Saviour pleads in vain, but that the event shews he does not intercede for them. (*Notes, John* xvii. 6—10. 20, 21.)—In times of prosperity, personal or publick, we should expect adversity, and pray with reference to it: and in seasons of deep distress and temptation, we ought still to hope and pray for deliverance and comfort.—Blessed be God, sinners of every description, when they bethink themselves, and humbly pour out their prayers, in dependence on the Saviour's merits, may be assured of forgiveness, acceptance, and all the blessings of salvation.—JEHOVAH has made our nature his resting place for ever, in the person of Emmanuel; and through him he dwells and delights in his church of redeemed sinners. May all his ministers, of every name, be clothed with righteousness and salvation; may all his saints be made joyful in his goodness; may the numbers of both be continually increasing, till the boundaries of his church extend as wide as those of the human species! May the hearts of the writer and of every reader become his resting place; may Christ dwell in us by faith, casting out every idol, cleansing us from all filthiness, consecrating us as his temples, and shedding abroad his love in us: may the Father look upon us, in and through his Anointed, whose face he never turns away, and whose petitions meet with no repulse; and may he remember and bless us in all things, according to his mercies to sinners through him. Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. Fire, descending and consuming the sacrifices, was the customary token of the divine acceptance. This represented the righteous displeasure of God against man's sin, as the cause of the sufferings of our holy Surety; and perhaps, the sanctification of our souls by the power of the Holy Spirit, like purifying fire, consuming our carnal and corrupt affections. (*Marg. Ref.* b.

4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD.

5 And king Solomon offered [g] a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep: so the king and all the people [h] dedicated the house of God.

6 And [i] the priests waited on their offices: [j] the Levites also with instruments of musick of the LORD, [k] which David the king had made to praise the LORD, [l] because his mercy *endureth* for ever, when David praised by their [*] ministry: and [m] the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.

7 Moreover Solomon [n] hallowed the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, because [o] the brazen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt-offerings, and the meat-offerings, and the fat.

8 Also at the same time Solomon [p] kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, [q] a very great congregation, from [r] the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.

9 And in the eighth day they made a [†] solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the altar [s] seven days, and the feast seven days.

10 And on the [t] three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, [u] glad and merry in heart [x] for the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.

11 Thus [y] Solomon finished the house of the LORD, and the king's house: and [z] all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the LORD, and in his own house, he prosperously effected.

12 ¶ And [a] the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, [b] I have heard thy prayer, and [c] have chosen this place to myself, for [d] an house of sacrifice.

13 If [e] I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if [f] I command the locusts to devour the land, or if [g] I send pestilence among my people;

14 If [h] my people, [‡] which are called by my name, shall [i] humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and [k] turn from their wicked ways; then [l] will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will [m] heal their land.

15 Now [n] mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer [§] *that is made* in this place.

16 For now [o] have I chosen and sanctified this house, that [p] my name may be there for ever: and [q] mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

17 And as for thee, [r] if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt [s] observe my statutes and my judgments;

18 Then [t] will I establish the throne of thy kingdom, according [u] as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There [x] shall not [‖] fail thee a man *to be* ruler in Israel.

g i. 6. v. 6. xv. 11. xxix. 32, 33. xxx. 24. xxxv. 7—9. 1 Kings viii. 62, 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 21. Ezra vi. 16, 17. Ez. xlv. 17. Mic. vi. 7.
h ii. 4. Num. vii. 10. 1 Kings viii. 63. Ezra vi. 16. John x. 22.
i 1 Chr. xvi. 39, 40. xxiv. 1—3.
j xxix. 25. 1 Chr. vi. 31, 32. xv. 16—21. xvi. 4—6. 41, 42. xxv. 1—7.
k Am. vi. 5.
l *See on* f. 3.—1 Chr. xvi. 34. Ps. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxviii. 1—4. cxxxviii. 8.
* Heb. *hand.* Is. lii. 6.
m v. 12. Num. x. 1—10. Josh. vi. 4. 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xv. 24. xvi. 6. 42.
n xxxvi. 14. Num. xvi. 37, 38. 1 Kings viii. 64. Heb. xiii. 10—12.
o iv. 1.
p Lev. xxiii. 34—43. Num. xxix. 12—38. Deut. xvi. 13—15. 1 Kings viii. 65. Neh. viii. 13—18. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John vii. 2. 37—39.
q xxx. 13.
r Gen. xv. 18. Num. xxxiv. 5—8. Josh. xiii. 3—5. 1 Kings iv. 21—25. Am. vi. 14.
† Heb. *restraint.* Lev. xxiii. 36. Deut. xvi. 8. Neh. viii. 18. Joel i. 14. *margins.*
s xxx. 23. 1 Kings viii. 65.
t 1 Kings viii. 66.
u xxix. 36. xxx. 26. Deut. xii. 7. 12. 18. xvi. 11. 14. Neh. viii. 10. Ps. xxxii. 11. xxxiii. 1. xcii. 4. c. 2. cv. 3. cvi. 5. Acts ii. 46. xvi. 34. Phil. iv. 4.
x vi. 41. Ex. xviii. 1.
y ii. 1. 1 Kings ix. 1.
z Ec. ii. 4. 10, 11.
a i. 7. Gen. xvi. 1. 1 Kings ix. 2.
b 2 Kings xx. 5. Ps. x. 17. lxvi. 19. Luke i. 13. Acts x. 31. 1 John v. 14, 15.
c 16. Deut. xii. 5. 11. Ps. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14.
d ii. 6. Deut. xii. 6.
e vi. 26—28. Deut. xi. 17. Job xi. 10. xii. 14. Luke iv. 25. Rev. iii. 7. xi. 6.
f Ex. x. 4—6. Ps. cv. 34. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25.
g Num. xiv. 12. xvi. 46, 47. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13—15. Ez. xiv. 19—21.
h Is. lxiii. 19.
‡ Heb. *upon whom my name is called.*
i vi. 37—39. xxxiii. 12, 13. 18, 19. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Deut. iv. 29, 30. xxx. 1—6. Ez. xxxiii. 11. Jam. iv. 9, 10.
k Prov. xxviii. 13. Is. lv. 6, 7. Ez. xviii. 27—30.
l *See on* vi. 39.
m Ps. lx. 2. Jer. viii. 22. xxxiii. 6. li. 9.
n vi. 20. 40. Deut. xi. 12. Neh. i. 6. Ps. lxv. 2. cxxx. 2. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
§ Heb. *of this place.* vi. 40.
o Deut. xii. 21. xvi. 11. 1 Kings viii. 16. 44. 48. Ps. cxxxii. 14. Zech. iii. 2.
p *See on* vi. 5, 6. 20. xxxiii. 4—7. 1 Kings viii. 35. ix. 3. 2 Kings xxi. 4. 7, 8.
q *See on* 15.—Matt. iii. 17. John ii. 19—21. Col. ii. 9.
r Deut. xxviii. 1, &c. 1 Kings ii. 3. iii. 14. viii. 25. xi. 38. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Zech. iii. 7.
s Deut. iv. 40. Ps. cv. 45. Ez. xxxvi. 27. John xiv. 21. xv. 10.
t *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 13—16.
u Ps. lxxxix. 28—40. cxxxii. 11, 12.
x 1 Kings ix. 5. Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21. 25, 26.
‖ Heb. *be cut off to thee.* vi. 16.

—*Notes, Gen.* iv. 3—5. *Lev.* ix. 24. 1 *Chr.* xxi. 26. *Matt.* iii. 11, 12.)—'This is added to what is recorded in that book' (of Kings). '...By fire sent down from heaven 'to consume the sacrifices... the first sacrifice that we read 'of in Scripture, (that of Abel,) it is generally thought 'was declared to be acceptable unto God.' *Bp. Patrick.* The visible displays also of the divine glory still continued, or were renewed after some intermission; or perhaps were sensibly augmented. (v. 13, 14. *Note,* 1 *Kings* viii. 10—14.) But it is probable, the people expected these tokens of the Lord's acceptance; and the awful sight did not terrify them, but only disposed them to the most reverential adoration, united with reiterated praises of his goodness and mercy that endureth for ever. No similar tokens of the divine acceptance attended the dedication of the second temple, after the captivity; nor was the ark restored to its place, but finally lost. (*Notes, Ezra* iii. 12, 13. vi. 16—21.)

V. 4—10. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 1 *Kings* viii. 63—66.) Solomon's blessing the people, when risen from his knees; praising God for performing his promises to them; and praying that God would incline their hearts to obedience, that all the earth might know that JEHOVAH alone is God; is here omitted. (1 *Kings* viii. 54—61.)—*The priests,* &c. (6) *Marg. Ref.—Notes,* v. 11—13.

V. 11—22. *Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 1 *Kings* ix. 1—9.—*If I shut,* &c. (13) This is not found in Kings. Solomon connected the repentance of the people, with their deliverance from divine judgments, in his prayers; and God does the same in his gracious answer. "If my people...

19 But [y] if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and [z] shall go and serve other gods, and worship them;

20 Then [a] will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it *to be* [b] a proverb and a by-word among all nations.

21 And [c] this house, which is high, shall be [d] an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, [e] Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this house?

22 And it shall be answered, [f] Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: [g] therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.

y Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. 1 Sam. xii. 25. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9.
z *See on* Deut. iv. 23—27. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16.—1 Kings ix. 6, 7. xi. 4—8.
a 2 Kings xvii. 20. Ps. lii. 5. Jer. xii. 17. xviii. 7. xxxi. 28. xlv. 4. Jude 12.
b Deut. xxviii. 37. 1 Kings ix. 7. Neh. iv. 1—4. Ps. xliv 14. Jer. xxiv. 9. Lam. ii. 15, 16.
c 1 Kings ix. 8.
d xxix. 8. Jer. xix. 8. xlix. 17. l. 13.
e Deut. xxix. 24—28. 1 Kings ix. 8, 9. Jer. v. 19. xiii. 22. xvi. 10—12. xxii. 8, 9. 28.
f Judg. ii. 12, 13 Jer. i. 16. Lam. ii. 16, 17. iv. 13—16. Ez. xiv. 23. xxxvi. 17—20.
g xxxvi. 17. Dan. ix. 12.

CHAP. VIII.

The cities built by Solomon, 1—6. The remnant of the devoted nations are subjected to tribute, and the Israelites employed in honourable services, 7—10. Pharaoh's daughter removes to her house, 11. Solomon's daily sacrifices, and those on festival days, 12, 13. He appoints the priests and Levites to their services in order, 14, 15. The work of the house of God is finished, 16. Solomon's navy brings gold from Ophir, 17, 18

AND it came to pass [a] at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house,

2 That [b] the cities which Huram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.

3 And Solomon went to [c] Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.

4 And [d] he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store-cities, which he built in Hamath.

5 Also he built [e] Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars;

6 And [f] Baalath, and all [g] the store-cities that Solomon had, and all the [h] chariot-cities, and the cities of the horsemen, and [*] all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, [i] and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.

7 ¶ *As for* [j] all the people *that were* left of [k] the Hittites, and the Amorites,

B. C. 992.
a *See on* 1 Kings ix. 10.
b *See on* 1 Kings ix. 11—13.
c Num. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 8. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Kings xi. 23—25. 1 Chr. xviii. 3.
d 1 Kings ix. 17—19.
e Josh. xvi. 3. 5. 1 Chr. vii. 24.
f Josh. xix. 44. 1 Kings ix. 18.
g 4. xvii. 12. 1 Kings ix. 19.
h i. 14. 1 Kings x. 26.
* Heb. *all the desire of Solomon which he desired to build.* 1 Kings ix. 19. Ec. ii. 10.
i 1 Kings vii. 2. Cant. iv. 8.
j *See on* 1 Kings ix. 20—22.
k Gen. xv. 19—21. Deut. vii. 1.

"shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and "turn from their wicked ways." (*Notes*, vi. 22—40, *v.* 26. 1 *Kings* viii. 23—26.)—*Pluck*, &c. (20) *Notes, Deut.* xxix. 19—26. *Jer* xlv. 4, 5, *v.* 4. *Lam.* ii. 7. 15, 16.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The mercies of God to sinners are communicated in a manner suited to impress all who receive them, with the most profound reverence of his majesty, justice, and holiness; thus leading them to unite humble confidence with fear of offending so holy a God. Especially, whoever beholds, with true faith, the divine Saviour agonizing and dying for man's sin, will, by that view, find his godly sorrow enlarged, his hatred of sin increased, his soul made more watchful, and his life more holy: and they are speculating hypocrites, who profess to expect salvation by the cross of Christ, while the world has their hearts, and sin is allowed in their habitual conduct.—The Lord's ready answers to our prayers should animate us to repeat, with deeper reverence and more lively gratitude, our praises of his mercy.—The most endearing displays of the love of God, rightly understood, speak terror to hypocrites and presumptuous offenders; but the most tremendous discoveries of his righteous vengeance need not discourage the upright, humble believer.—Every token of his favour should enlarge our hearts in his service: and those who are inspired with zeal for his glory, and who taste the joy of his salvation, will never think too much time or expense can be bestowed in communion with him and his saints, provided other duties be not neglected.—In the best state of nations favoured with revelation, there has hitherto been a succession of prosperity, ingratitude, corrections, repentance, forgiveness, renewed mercies and prosperity, and renewed ingratitude and forgetfulness of God. Yet the Lord delights in those places, where his ordinances are maintained and attended on, in some measure of purity and consistency. But in cases of apostasy, or general profaneness, or hypocrisy, he will glorify his justice by tremendous judgments upon those, who have thus abused his mercies, and forfeited their privileges, making them a warning to others, if not an infamy among the heathen. Let us then stand in awe of him; watch against all sin; and copy the examples of the most approved of his saints, in the brightest parts of their characters.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. Perhaps Hamath-zobah had revolted: but Solomon regained possession of it. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 3—11. 1 *Kings* ix. 1, 2. 11—14. xi. 23—25.).

V. 4—6. *Note*, 1 *Kings* ix. 15—22.

V. 7—9. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* v. 13—18.

and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which *were* not of Israel,

8 *But* of their children who were left after them in the land, [l] whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make [m] to pay tribute until this day.

9 But [n] of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work; but [o] they *were* men of war and chief of his captains, and captains of his chariots and horsemen.

10 And these *were* the chief of king Solomon's officers, *even* [p] two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

11 ¶ And Solomon [q] brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David, unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because *the places are* * holy, whereunto the ark of the LORD hath come.

12 ¶ Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD, [r] on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch;

13 Even after a certain rate [s] every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, [t] three times in the year, *even* in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

14 And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, [u] the courses of the priests to their service, and [x] the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required: [y] the porters also by their courses at every gate: for [z] so [†] had David [a] the man of God commanded.

15 And [b] they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning [c] the treasures.

16 Now [d] all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. *So* the house of the LORD was perfected.

17 ¶ Then went Solomon to [e] Ezion-geber, and to [f] Eloth, at the sea-side in the land of Edom.

18 And [g] Huram sent him, by the hands of his servants, ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought *them* to king Solomon.

l Judg. i. 21—36. Ps. cvi. 34.
m ii. 17, 18. 1 Kings v. 13, 14.
n Ex. xix. 5, 6. Lev. xxv. 39—46. Gal. iv. 26. 31.
o 1 Sam. viii. 11, 12.
p ii. 18. 1 Kings v. 16. ix. 23.
q 1 Kings iii. 1. vii. 8. ix. 24.
* Heb. *holiness.* Ex. iii. 5. xxix. 43. Ez. xxi. 2. 2 Pet. i. 18.
r iv. 1. 1 Chr. xxviii. 11. Ez. viii. 16. Joel ii. 17.
s Ex. xxix. 38—42. Lev. xxiii. Num. xxviii. xxix. Ez. xlv. 17. xlvi. 3—15.
t *See on* Ex. xxiii. 14—17. Deut. xvi. 16.—1 Kings ix. 25
u v. 11. xxiii. 4. xxxi. 2. 1 Chr. xxiv. 1—19. Luke i. 5. 8.
x xxxv. 10. 1 Chr. vi. 31, 32, &c. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4—6. 42. xxiii. xxiv. 20—31. xxv. Ezra vi. 18.
y *See on* 1 Chr. xxvi. 1—19.
† Heb. *so was the commandment of David.*
z 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. 1 Chr. xxviii. 19. Acts xiii. 22. 36.
a *See on* Deut. xxxiii. 1. 1 Kings xiii. 1.
b *See on* xxx. 12. Ex. xxxix. 42, 43.
c 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr. ix. 29. xxvi. 20—26.
d 1 Kings v. 18. vi. 7.
e xx. 36. Num. xxxiii. 35. *Ezion-gaber.* 1 Kings ix. 26. xxii. 48.
f Deut. ii. 8. 2 Kings xiv. 22. xvi. 6. *Elath.*
g ix. 10. 13.—*See on* 1 Kings ix. 27, 28. x. 22. *Hiram.*

V. 10. Three hundred overseers, omitted in one place, are added in another, completing the same number. (Compare ii. 18. 1 *Kings* v. 16. ix. 23.)

V. 11. Pharaoh's daughter is supposed to have been a proselyte to the true religion: but she was of heathen extraction, and perhaps attended by many who were not proselyted. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* iii. 1.) If there were no open idolatry or profaneness in her court, there might be many things inconsistent with spiritual religion; and Solomon did not think it right, that she should reside where the ark had been situated, and so near to the continual temple-worship. Perhaps he wanted resolution wholly to suppress all that he did not entirely approve.

V. 12—15. Solomon exactly adhered, both to the law of Moses, and also to all David's regulations: not only because he was his father; but because he was "a man "of God," and acted by his authority in forming them. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxiii.—xxvi.)

V. 16. *Note*, 1 *Kings* vi. 7.

V. 18. *Ships*, &c.] The materials perhaps were ready prepared, and the workmen sent, that the ships might be constructed there; for vessels could not sail from Tyre to Ezion-geber, or Eloth: as there was no communication by water, between the Mediterranean Sea, and the Red Sea, on which these sea ports were situated. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* ix. 26—28. x. 22.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Some difficulty or conflict must be expected in every state on earth: but those whom the Lord loveth, will prevail; and in heaven their peace will be perfect and eternal. —We shall never be satisfied with our possessions, enjoyments, or achievements; unless we limit our desires by the precept and the providence of God: yet, he indulges his people in things indifferent, as far as this is consistent with their real good.—His 'service is perfect freedom;' all else is bondage: but if we, poor condemned criminals and strangers, are brought nigh, pardoned, and employed by our merciful Lord, we shall surely render him our tribute of praise and grateful obedience, though the lowest and most laborious service in his house be allotted to us.—It is hard to keep up a proper distinction between things sacred and common, in the palaces of the great, or in the courts of kings: and it sometimes requires more wisdom and resolution to govern a large family in the fear of God, without conniving at evident evil, than it does to govern a large kingdom with reputation, and in prosperity: (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* iii. 4, 5:) and the difficulty is increased, when by

CHAP. IX.

The queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon; her admiration of his wisdom and magnificence; her presents and return, 1—12. Solomon's annual revenue in gold, 13, 14. His golden shields and targets, 15, 16. His ivory throne, and rich vessels of gold, 17—21. The honour paid him by other kings, 22—24. His stalls, horses, and chariots, 25. The extent and wealth of his dominions, 26—28. He dies, and is succeeded by Rehoboam, 29—31.

AND [a] when the queen of [b] Sheba heard of [c] the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon [d] with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and [e] camels that bare [f] spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, [g] she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

2 And Solomon [h] told her all her questions: and [i] there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

3 And when the queen of Sheba had [k] seen the wisdom of Solomon, and [l] the house that he had built,

4 And [m] the meat of his table, and [n] the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his [*] cup-bearers also, and their apparel; and [o] his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; [p] there was no more spirit in her.

5 And she said to the king, *It was* a true [†] report which I heard in mine own land of thine [‡] acts and of thy wisdom:

6 Howbeit [q] I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it:* and, behold, [r] the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: *for* thou [s] exceedest the fame that I heard.

7 [t] Happy *are* thy men, and happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.

8 [u] Blessed be the LORD thy God, [x] which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, *to be* king for the LORD thy God: [y] because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, [z] to do judgment and justice.

9 And [a] she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and [b] of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice, as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

10 And the servants also of Huram, and the servants of Solomon, [c] which brought gold from Ophir, brought [d] algum-trees, and precious stones.

11 And the king made *of* the algum-trees [§] terraces to the house of the LORD, and to the king's palace, and [e] harps, and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah.

a See on 1 Kings x. 1, 2.—Matt. xii. 42. Luke xi. 31.
b Gen. x. 7. 28. xxv. 3.
c i. 1. 12. 1 Kings iv. 31.
d Ps. xlix. 4. lxxviii. 2. Prov. i. 6. Matt. xiii. 11. 35.
e Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. Is. lx. 6.
f 2. Matt. ii. 11.
g 1 Sam. i. 15. Ps. cxlii. 2. Matt. xii. 34.
h Prov. xiii. 20. Mark iv. 11. 34. John xv. 15.
i 1 Kings iii. 12. iv. 29. Col. ii. 3. Heb. iv. 12, 13.
k See on 1 Kings x. 3, 4. Acts xi. 23.
l iii. iv. 1 Kings vi. vii.
m 1 Kings iv. 22, 23. Prov. ix. 5. John vi. 53—57.
n 1 Kings x. 5. Luke xii. 37. Rev. iii. 20.
* Or, *butlers.* Neh. i. 11.
o xxiii. 13. 2 Kings xvi. 18. 1 Chr. ix. 18. Ez. xliv. 3. xlvi. 2.
p Ps. cxix. 81. cxliii. 7. Cant. v. 8. Dan. x. 17. Rev. i. 17.
† Heb. *word.* See on 1 Kings x. 6.
‡ Or, *sayings.*
q John xx. 25—29.
r See on 1 Kings x. 7.—Ps. xxxi. 19. Zech. ix. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 9. 1 John iii. 2.
s 5. 1 Kings iv. 33. 34. Cant. v. 9—16.
t Deut. xxxiii. 29. 1 Kings x. 8. Ps. xxvii. 4. lxxxiv. 4—12. Prov. iii. 13, 14. viii. 34. x. 21. xiii. 20. Luke x. 39—42. xi. 28.
u 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. 2 Cor. ix. 12—15.
x 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26.—See on 1 Kings x. 9.—Ps. xviii. 19. xxii. 8. Is. xlii. 1. lxii. 4.
y ii. 11. Deut. vii. 8. 1 Chr. xvii. 22.
z 2 Sam. viii. 15. xxiii. 3. Ps. lxxii. 2. xcix. 4. Is. ix. 7. xi. 1—5. xxxii. 1, 2. Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16. Heb. i. 8, 9.
a 24. 1 Kings ix. 14. x. 10.
b See on 1.—Gen. xliii. 11. Ex. xxx. 34.
c See on viii. 18. 1 Kings ix. 27, 28. x. 22.
d 1 Kings x. 11. *almug-trees.*
§ Or, *stays.* Heb. *highways.*
e See on 1 Kings x. 12. 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1. Ps. xcii. 1—3. cl. 3—5.

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any means a man has got a hinderance, instead of a helper, in the wife of his bosom. But the truths, worship, and honour of God, should be nearer our hearts than any relative comforts: and we ought to offend or grieve any one, rather than disobey God and grieve his people, by allowing his ordinances to be profaned.—In all things, which are *expressly directed* in scripture, our religious diligence should be exactly regulated by it: every part of the Lord's service should be attended to, in due succession, order, and proportion; and then we should not find any vacant time lie heavy upon our hands.—In beginning and conducting every undertaking, we should keep the end in view: and from our entrance upon life we should look forward, and be preparing for the close of it; that then we may have peace, and a happy entrance into a better state. Nor ought we to allow ourselves in any pursuit or indulgence, which interferes with that grand object. Thus, "known unto the Lord are all his works from before the "foundation of the world:" every thing respecting his spiritual temple was planned and determined, before he began to work; and "his counsel shall stand, and he will "do all his pleasure."—As men risk much, and undergo great hardship, in obtaining an earthly treasure; may we remember "how much better wisdom is than gold:" and, leaving the children of this world to contend for its toys; may we, as the children of God, "lay up our treasure in "heaven, that where our treasure is, there our hearts may "be also!"

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—11. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* x. 1—12.) 'The 'hard questions, she came to ask, were not the curious 'enquiries into the secrets of natural things, or new poli-'tical matters, but about things pertaining to piety and 'the service of God. For our Saviour saith, she came to 'hear "the wisdom of Solomon," and should therefore 'rise up in judgment against that generation, which would 'not learn of him. And in 1 *Kings* x. 1, it is said, the 'fame that she heard of Solomon was "concerning the '"name of the Lord;" which moved her to this journey.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The throne on which Solomon reigned, was the throne of God: for he was God's vicegerent, and thus

12 And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba, [f] all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside *that* which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.

13 ¶ Now [g] the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold;

14 Besides *that which* chapmen and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia, and [*] governors of the country, brought gold and silver to Solomon.

15 And king Solomon made [h] two hundred targets *of* beaten gold: six hundred *shekels* of beaten gold went to one target.

16 And three hundred shields *made he of* beaten gold: three hundred *shekels* of gold went to one shield. And the king put them [i] in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

17 Moreover the king made [k] a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

18 And *there were* six steps to the throne, with a foot-stool of gold, *which were* fastened to the throne, and [†] stays on each side of the sitting place, and [l] two lions standing by the stays:

19 And [m] twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom.

20 And all [n] the drinking vessels of king Solomon *were of* gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon *were of* [‡] pure gold: [§] none *were of* silver; [o] it was *not* any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

21 For the king's ships went to [p] Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, [‖] ivory, and apes, and [q] peacocks.

22 ¶ And king Solomon [r] passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

23 And all the kings of the earth [s] sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that [t] God had put in his heart.

24 And they brought [u] every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses and mules, a rate year by year.

25 And Solomon had [x] four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

26 And he [y] reigned over all the kings, from [*] the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

27 And [z] the king [†] made silver in Jerusalem as stones; and cedar-trees made he, [a] as the sycamore-trees that *are* in the low plains in abundance.

28 And they [b] brought unto Solomon horses out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

29 ¶ Now [c] the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, *are* they not written in the [‡] book of [d] Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of [e] Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of [f] Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

30 And [g] Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

31 And Solomon [h] slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

f 1 Kings x. 13. Ps. xx. 4. Eph. iii. 20.
g 1 Kings x. 14, 15. Ps. lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10. 15.
* Or, *captains*.
h xii. 9, 10.—*See on* 1 Kings x. 16, 17.
i 1 Kings vii. 2
k *See on* 1 Kings x. 18—20.—Ps. xiv. 8. Rev. xx. 11.
† Heb. *hands*.
l Gen. xlix. 9, 10 Num. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9. Rev. v. 5.
m Matt. xix. 28. Rev. xxi. 12.
n 1 Kings x. 21. Esth. i. 7. Dan. v. 2, 3.
‡ Heb. *shut up*.
§ Or, *there was no silver in them*.
o 27. Is ii. 22. Jer. xxxi. 5.
p *See on* 1 Kings x. 22. xxii. 48. *Tharshish*.
‖ Or, *teeth, elephants'* Job xxxix. 13.
q i. 12. 1 Kings iii. 12, 13. iv. 30, 31. x. 23, 24. Ps. lxxxix. 27. Matt. xii. 42. Col. ii. 2, 3.
r
s 6, 7. 1 Kings iv. 34. Is. xi. 2. 10.
t 10—12.—*See on* 1 Kings iii. 28.—Prov. ii. 6. Dan. i. 17. ii. 21—23. v. 11. Luke xxi. 15. 1 Cor. i. 30. xii. 8. Eph. i. 17. Jam. i. 5. 16, 17. iii. 17.
u 9. 1 Sam. x. 27. 1 Kings ix. 14. x. 10. 25. Job xlii. 11.
x i. 14. Deut. xvii. 16. 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 26.
y 1 Kings iv. 21. 24. Ps. lxxii. 8—11. Dan. vii. 14. Rev. xix. 16.
* That is, *Euphrates*. Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31. Josh. xiii. 2—7.
z 20. i. 15. 1 Kings x. 27. Job xxii. 24, 25.
† Heb. *gave*.
a 1 Chr. xxvii. 28. Ps. lxxviii. 47. Is. ix. 10. Am. vii. 14. Luke xix. 4.
b 25. i. 16. 1 Kings x. 28. Is. ii. 7, 8. xxxi. 1.
c *See on* 1 Kings xi. 41, 42.
‡ Heb. *words*.
d 2 Sam. vii. 1—3. xii. 1. 25. 1 Kings i. 8. 10, 11. 22—27. 32—38. 1 Chr. xxix. 29.
e 1 Kings xi. 29. xiv. 2.
f xii. 15. xiii. 22.
g 1 Kings xi. 42, 43.
B. C. 975.
h *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings i. 21. ii. 10.

"king for the LORD his God," to promote his glory and support religion. (*Note*, ii. 11, 12.)

V. 12. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* x. 13.) 'In 1 *Kings* x. 13,... 'the words are, "besides that which Solomon gave her of '"his royal bounty,"... here explained to have been done, 'to requite her for the great presents she made the king.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13—21. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* x. 14—22.—*Apes*, &c. (21) The imports here mentioned indicate, that prosperity had enervated the minds of Solomon and his subjects, and led them to love things curious and uncommon, though useless in themselves: and indeed the East Indian trade has helped to render every nation luxurious and self-indulgent, which has prospered in it, from the beginning to this day.

V. 22—28. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* iv. 21. x. 23—29.

V. 29—31. Solomon's apostasy and idolatry are not at all hinted at in this narration: and this forms a cogent argument, that, being repented of and forgiven, they would never be remembered against him to his condemnation;

CHAP. X.

The Israelites, at Shechem, make Rehoboam king; and with Jeroboam require him to lighten their yoke, 1—5. Rehoboam, rejecting the advice of his father's counsellors, and consulting with the young men, answers very roughly, 6—15. The ten tribes revolt, kill Hadoram, and drive away Rehoboam, 16—19.

a 1 Kings xii. 1 Chr. iii. 10. Matt. i. 7. *Roboam.*
b Gen. xii. 6. *Sichem.* xxxvii. 12, 13. Josh. xx. 7. xxiv. 1. Judg. ix. 1.
c 1 Kings iv. 1. 1 Chr. xii. 38.
d 1 Kings xi. 26. 28. 40. xii. 2

AND [a] Rehoboam went to Shechem: for to [b] Shechem were [c] all Israel come to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when [d] Jeroboam the son of Nebat, (who *was* in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king,) heard *it*, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.

e 1 Kings xii. 3.

3 And [e] they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all Israel came, and spake to Rehoboam, saying,

f 2 Sam. viii. 11—18. 1 Kings xii. 4. Is. xlvii. 6. Matt. xi. 29, 30. xxiii. 4. 1 John v. 3.
g Ex. i. 13, 14. ii. 23. 1 Kings iv. 20. 25. ix. 22.

4 Thy [f] father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the [g] grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.

h 1 Kings xii. 5. Prov. iii. 28.

5 And he said unto them, [h] Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.

i Job xii. 12, 13. xxxii. 7. Prov. xxviii. 10. Jer. xlii. 2—5. 20.

6 And king Rehoboam [i] took counsel with the old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, [k] What counsel give ye *me* to return answer to this people?

k 2 Sam. xvi. 20. xvii. 5, 6.

7 And they spake unto him, saying, [l] If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and [m] speak good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever.

l 1 Kings xii. 7, 8. Prov. xv. 1.
m Gen. xlix. 21. 2 Sam. xv. 2—6.

8 But [n] he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him.

n xxv. 15, 16. 2 Sam. xvii. 14. Prov. i. 25. ix. 9. xix. 20. xxv. 12. Ec. x. 2, 3. 16.

9 And he said unto them, [o] What advice give ye that we may return answer to this people, which have spoken to me, saying, [p] Ease somewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us?

o 6. 2 Sam. xvii. 5, 6. 1 Kings xxii. 6—8.
p *See on* 4.

10 And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying, [q] Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* somewhat lighter for us: thus shalt thou say unto them, [r] My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

q 2 Sam. xvii. 7—13. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. xix. 11—13.
r 1 Kings xii. 10, 11. Prov. x. 14. xiii. 16. xiv. 16. xviii. 6, 7. xxviii. 25. xxix. 23.

11 For whereas [s] my father [*] put a heavy yoke upon you, [t] I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you

s *See on* 4.
* Heb. *laded.*
t Ex. i. 13, 14. v. 6—9. 18. 1 Sam. viii. 18. Is. xlvii. 6. lviii. 6. Jer. xxviii 13, 14. Matt. xi. 29.

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though they were in one place recorded for a warning to others in all future ages. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi.)

In the book, &c. (29) 'It appears by this, that the prophets...were also historians, who gave an account of what 'passed in their times; out of whose work this short history was extracted. ...These three did not join to make 'one book, but severally and distinctly gave an account of 'such things as occurred to their knowledge; out of which, 'it is probable, Ezra took many things which he hath supplied in this book.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.—Preface to* 1 *Kings.—Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi. 41. xiv. 19. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 19, 20.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In proportion as we possess true wisdom, we shall perceive its excellency, and labour to obtain an increase of it: and in the same proportion we shall become more indifferent about worldly wealth, and more liberal in our use of it to good purposes, if God has bestowed it upon us. For true wisdom and happiness are inseparably combined: but no such alliance is formed between riches and the enjoyment even of this present life. (*Note, Luke* xii. 15—21.) It is therefore far more desirable to be connected with those who can teach us wisdom, than with those who can give us wealth: let us then acquaint ourselves with the divine Saviour, that, becoming his disciples and servants, we may "find rest for our souls;" and we shall in that case see more glory, experience more pleasure, and appropriate more riches, than our hearts can previously conceive. He will and can "do for us exceeding abundantly above "all that we ask or think;" and the meanest of his servants will be great above all the ungodly princes of the earth: nor can they be separated from him; though, whil present with the body they are absent from the Lord, as to the full and immediate enjoyment of his presence and communion with him. Next to this, let us value the acquaintance of those who love and serve him, that we may hear the wisdom that "God hath put into their hearts:" and let us follow them as far as they follow Christ, but no further, whatever may be their reputation in the church.—Seeing God buries in the depth of the sea the sins of his believing servants, we should be tender of their reputations, as well as careful to avoid their mistakes and falls.—As to worldly grandeur, what is it, that we should covet it? Neither authority, wealth, magnificence, nor reputation for wisdom, can ward off the stroke of death, or prepare us for it, or reconcile us to it. But "thanks be to "God, who giveth victory" to the true believer, even over this dreadful enemy, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—19. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* ix. 19. xi. 1—8. 34—40. xii. 1—20.

with whips, but I *will chastise you* with
u Luke x. 19. Rev. ix. 3. 5. 10. u scorpions.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people
x 5. 1 Kings xii. 12—15. came to Rehoboam on the third day,
y Gen. xlii. 7. 30. Ex. x. 28. 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. 1 Kings xx. 6—11. Prov. xv. 1. as the king bade, saying, x Come again
to me on the third day.

13 And the king y answered them
a 8. roughly; and king Rehoboam a forsook
b xxii. 4, 5. Prov. xii. 5. Dan. vi. 7. the counsel of the old men,

c *See on* 10, 11.—Prov. xvii. 14. Ec. ii. 19. vii. 8. x. 16. Jam. iii. 14—18. iv. 1, 2. 14 And answered them after b the
d xxv. 16—20. Deut. ii. 30. Judg. xiv. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 25. 1 Kings xxii. 20. Acts ii. 23. iv. 28. advice of the young men, saying, c My
father made your yoke heavy, but I
will add thereto: my father chastised
you with whips, but I *will chastise you*
with scorpions.

e *See on* 1 Kings xi. 29—39. John xii. 37—39. xix. 24. 32—36. 15 So the king hearkened not unto
f *See on* ix. 29. g 2 Sam. xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 16, 17. the people: for d the cause was of God,
h 1 Sam. xx. 27. 30, 31. xxii. 7. 9. 13. e that the LORD might perform his
i 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. 1 Kings xi. 13. 34—39. 1 Chr. xvii. 14. Ps. ii. 1—6. lxxvi. 10. lxxxix. 29—37. cxxxii. 17. Is. ix. 6, 7. xi. 1. Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21. 25, 26. Ez. xxxvii. 24, 25. Am. ix. 11. Luke i. 32, 33. xix. 14. 27. Acts ii. 30. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Rev. xxii. 16. word, which he spake by the hand of
f Ahijah the Shilonite, to Jeroboam the
son of Nebat.

16 ¶ And when all Israel *saw* that
k 19. Judg. viii. 35. 2 Sam. xv. 13. xvi. 11. John vi. 66. vii. 53. the king would not hearken unto them,
the people answered the king, saying,
g What portion have we in David? and
we have none inheritance in h the son
of Jesse: every man to your tents, O
Israel: *and* now, i David, see to thine
own house. k So all Israel went to their
tents.

17 But l *as for* the children of Israel
l xi. 1. 1 Kings xi. 36. xii. 17. that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent m Ha-
m 1 Kings iv. 6. v. 14. *Adoniram.* xii. 18. *Adoram.* doram, that *was* over the tribute; and
the children of Israel n stoned him with
n xxiv. 21. Acts vii. 57, 58. stones, that he died. But king Reho-
boam * made speed to get him up to
* Heb. *strengthened himself.* *his* chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19 And o Israel rebelled against the
o 16. xiii. 5—7. 1 Kings xii. 19. 20. 2 Kings xvii. 21—23. house of David p unto this day.
p v. 9. Josh. iv. 9. Ezra ix. 7.

CHAP. XI.

Rehoboam, preparing to reduce Israel, is forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah, 1—4. He builds and fortifies several cities, 5—12. The priests and Levites, being cast off by Jeroboam, resort to Jerusalem, attended by other pious Israelites, 13—17. Rehoboam's wives and children, 18—23.

AND a when Rehoboam was come to
a *See on* 1 Kings xii. 21. Jerusalem, he gathered of the house
of Judah and Benjamin b an hundred
b Ps. xxxiii. 10. 16. Prov. xxi. 30, 31. and fourscore thousand chosen *men*,
which were warriors, to fight against
Israel, that he might bring the king-
dom again to Rehoboam.

c xii. 7. 15. 1 Kings xii. 22—24. 2 But the word of the LORD came
d viii. 14.—*See on* Deut. xxxiii. 1.—1 Sam. ii. 27. 1 Tim. vi. 11. e to Shemaiah d the man of God, saying,
3 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The wisest of mere men in some things act imprudently, especially when, by sin, they provoke God to leave them to themselves: nay, the most equitable princes may be betrayed into partial, oppressive, or unwarrantable measures; and this is the general consequence of being drawn, by their favourites, or their passions, into lavish expenses. Thus, some cause of complaint must exist in every kingdom, of which turbulent and ambitious men will avail themselves. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 1—6. *P. O.* 1—12.) For, while we all need so many allowances for *ourselves*, we are naturally indisposed to make allowances for *others*. Indeed, very many would be dissatisfied, even if God were to place over them perfectly wise and righteous governors: for do they not murmur against his own most righteous dispensations? Do they not regard his holy law as a heavy yoke, a grievous servitude? and are not they ungrateful for his manifold goodness? Nay, the very kingdom of the Prince of peace, though his throne is established in mercy, does not give satisfaction. Numbers "will not have him to "reign over them;" numbers of his professed subjects neglect his service because they think him an austere Lord; numbers renounce their professed subjection to him, and prefer the yoke of sin and Satan; and alas! the impatience, the negligence, the reluctancy to his service, which most if not all Christians at some times discover, evince that they want somewhat to be eased even of his yoke. Yet, his wisdom, righteousness, truth, goodness, and mercy are infinite; "his yoke is easy, and his burden "light;" and the whole blame of our uneasiness rests upon ourselves alone. This reflection should teach us to "abhor ourselves," and to pray continually, "Turn thou "me, and so shall I be turned." And, being so culpable ourselves, we should learn to bear with the perverseness of others, and to prefer lenient to violent measures; and experienced, to inexperienced counsellors. But nothing manifests greater folly than affronting, menacing language, when united with indecision and weakness in perilous circumstances.—No man can bequeath his prosperity, any more than his wisdom, to his heirs; though our children will generally be affected by our conduct. Let us then seek those good things which will be our own for ever; and implore the blessing of God upon our posterity, in preference to wealth or worldly exaltation: let us lay our account with vicissitudes and vexations on earth, and with fickleness and ingratitude from man: and let us learn to depend on the power, faithfulness, and love of that God, who, in correcting his children, or punishing his enemies, will never fail of performing his largest promises to those who trust in him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—4. *Note*, 1 *Kings* xii. 21—24.

Solomon, king of Judah, and [e] to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

4 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up nor fight [f] against your brethren: [g] return every man to his house; [h] for this thing is done of me. And [i] they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

5 ¶ And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and [j] built cities for defence in Judah.

6 He built even [k] Beth-lehem, and [l] Etam, and [m] Tekoa,

7 And [n] Beth-zur, and [o] Shoco, and [p] Adullam,

8 And [q] Gath, and [r] Mareshah, and [s] Ziph,

9 And Adoraim, and [t] Lachish, and Azekah,

10 And [u] Zorah, and Aijalon, and [x] Hebron, which *are* in Judah and in Benjamin, fenced cities.

11 And he fortified the strongholds, and put [y] captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine.

12 And in every several city *he* [z] *put* shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, [a] having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

13 ¶ And the priests and the Levites that *were* in all Israel [*] resorted to him out of all their coasts.

14 For the Levites left [b] their suburbs and [c] their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for [d] Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD.

15 And he ordained him priests for [f] the high places, and [e] for the devils, and [f] for the calves which he had made.

16 And [g] after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as [h] set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel, came to Jerusalem, [i] to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.

17 So they [k] strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong three years: for [l] three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.

e Gen. xlix. 28. Ex. xxiv. 4. 2 Kings xvii. 34. Phil. iii. 5. Rev vii. 4—8.
f Gen. xiii. 8. 2 Sam. ii. 26. Acts vii. 26. 1 Cor. vi. 5—8. Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 8.
g 1 John iii. 11—13.
h x. 16. 1 Kings xii. 36.
i *See on* x. 15. Gen. l. 20. 1 Kings xi. 29—38. Hos. viii. 4.
j xxv. 7—10. xxviii. 9—15. viii. 2—6 xiv. 6, 7. xvi. 6. xvii. 12. xxvi. 6. xxvii. 4. Is. xxii. 8—11.
k Gen. xxxv. 19. 1 Sam. xvii. 12. Matt. ii. 5, 6.
l Judg. xv. 8. 1 Chr. iv. 32.
m xx. 20. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. Neh. iii. 5. 27. Jer. vi. 1. Am. i. 1.
n Josh. xv. 58.
o Josh. xv. 35. *Soceh.*
p Josh. xii. 15. xv. 35. 1 Sam. xxii. 1. 2 Sam. xxiii. 13. Mic. i. 15.
q 1 Chr. xviii. 1.
r Josh. xv. 44.
s Josh. xv. 24. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. 19 Ps. liv. *title.*
t xxxii. 9. Josh. x. 5. 11. xv. 39.
u Josh. xv. 33. *Zoreah.* xix. 41, 42. *Ajalon.*
x Gen. xxiii. 2. Num. xiii. 22. Josh. xiv. 14. xx. 7. 2 Sam. ii. 11.
y 23. xvii. 19.
z xxvi. 14, 15. xxxii. 5. 1 Sam. xiii. 19. 22.
a *See on* 1.
* Heb. *presented themselves to him.*
b Num. xxxv. 2—5. Josh. xxi. 2—42. 1 Chr. vi. 66—81.
c Lev. xxvii. 30—34. Num. xviii. 21—29.
d xiii. 9. 1 Kings xii. 28—33. xiii. 33.
e Lev. xvii. 7. Deut. xxxii. 17. 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. 1 Tim. iv. 1. Rev. xvi. 14.
f Ex. xxxii. 4—8. 31. 1 Kings xii. 28. xiv. 9. Ps. cvi 19, 20. Hos. viii. 5, 6. xiii. 2.
g xv. 9. xxx. 11. 18, 19. Josh. xxii. 19.
h Ex. ix. 21. *marg.* Deut. xxxii. 46. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. xxii. 19. Job xxxiv. 14. Ps. lxii. 10. cviii. 1. Dan. vi. 14. Hos. iv. 8. Hag. i. 5. *Marg.* Acts xi. 23.
i Deut. xii. 5, 6. 11. 13, 14. 1 Chr. xvi. 29. xxii. 1.
k xii. 1.
l i. 1—12. vii. 17—19. viii. 13—16. Hos. vi. 4. Matt. xiii. 20, 21.

V. 5—12. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Lord did not permit Rehoboam to wage war against the newly erected kingdom of Israel; yet it was allowable and prudent for him to take all proper measures, for the defence of his remaining dominions; this he did by repairing and fortifying several cities, to obstruct the entrance, or retard the progress, of Jeroboam and his troops, in case he should attempt an invasion.—Perhaps he was become weary of his young counsellors, and disposed to hearken to more sage advisers: and his remaining subjects were very hearty and united in his interests.—Etam (6) belonged to Simeon, (1 *Chr.* iv. 32,) and Zorah and Aijalon (10) to Dan. (*Josh.* xix. 40—42.) So that some cities of the other tribes, beside Judah and Benjamin, remained under the government of Rehoboam.

V. 13—17. When Jeroboam had established the worship of the golden calves, in order to prevent his subjects from going to Jerusalem; (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xii. 25—33;) it is probable, that all the priests and Levites unanimously protested against his idolatry; and were therefore laid aside, to make way for a more compliant priesthood. As Jeroboam established no other idolatry than that of the calves; the language here employed teaches us, that the worship paid to them was actually rendered to devils; though he professed, and probably intended, by them to worship the God of Israel. For it was in a way which he had expressly prohibited, and which was infinitely dishonourable to him; and therefore it was acceptable to Satan alone, and his detestable associates in rebellion. (*Note, Lev.* xvii. 3—7, *v.* 7.)—The word rendered *devils*, in the texts of the New Testament, referred to, is δαιμων *demon*; (*Marg. Ref.* è;) which often in heathen writers, has a good sense; that is, it is used for the objects of their worship: but these were *evil spirits;* and the word has always a bad meaning in scripture, and denotes abominable idols, and evil spirits as worshipped under their names. Holy angels are never called demons.—It is not certain whether Jeroboam had deprived the priests and Levites of their dues, to maintain his new priesthood: but it seems, that, for the present, they might have retained their cities, suburbs, and possessions, if they would have remained inactive; yet, their situation would have been extremely ensnaring and perilous, and it afforded them little or no prospect of usefulness. In the days of David and Solomon, they had become generally attached to the worship of God at the sanctuary, as well as to the royal family of Judah: and, as a body, they seem to have been more pious and zealous, than at any other period: they therefore magnanimously determined, with one consent, to desert their cities and possessions, and entirely to leave the apostate Israelites, thus "shaking off the very dust of their feet for a testi-"mony against them."—Jeroboam probably was glad to be rid of them: but they were cordially welcomed by the king and people of Judah; and doubtless were provided for among their brethren, whose emoluments must thus have been greatly reduced. It is probable, that scarcely any either of the priests or Levites remained behind on this occasion, for we read nothing of them in the subsequent history of Israel. This must be allowed to have been as noble a testimony for the cause of God, against apostates and idolaters, as any history has recorded of a whole body of professed ministers.—Along with them num-

18 ¶ And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David to wife, *and* Abihail the daughter of [m] Eliab the son of Jesse;

19 Which bare him children; Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham.

20 And after her he took [n] Maachah the daughter of [o] Absalom; which bare him [p] Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.

21 And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took [q] eighteen wives, and threescore concubines; and begat twenty and eight sons, and threescore daughters.)

22 And Rehoboam [r] made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, *to be* ruler among his brethren: for *he thought* to make him king.

23 And [s] he dealt wisely, and [t] dispersed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto [u] every fenced city: and he gave them victual in abundance. And he desired * many wives.

m 1 Sam. xvi. 6. xvii. 13. 28. 1 Chr. ii. 13. xxvii. 18. *Elihu.*

n 21. xiii. 2. *Michaiah the daughter of Uriel.*

o 1 Kings xv. 2. *Abishalom.*

p xii. 16. 1 Kings xv. 1. *Abijam* Matt. i. 7. *Abia.*

q 23. Deut. xvii. 17. Judg. viii. 30. 2 Sam. iii. 2—5. v. 13. 1 Kings xi. 3. 1 Chr. iii. 1—9. Cant. vi. 8, 9.

r Deut. xxi. 15—17. 1 Chr. v. 1, 2. xxix. 1.

s x. 8—15. Luke xvi. 8.

t xxi. 3. Gen. xxv. 6. 1 Kings i. 5, 6.

u 11.

* Heb. *a multitude of wives. See on* 21.

bers of the pious Israelites left their estates, and came to unite with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. They might bring away with them many of their effects: and, as the land afforded room enough for them, their numbers and treasures greatly strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and rendered it almost equal in force to that of Israel. But the chief advantage was, that nearly all the true religion of the nation was concentrated in that division of it. Accordingly, for three years the kingdom of Judah was greatly strengthened; while the king and the people in general adhered to the worship of God, as in the days of David, and in the best times of Solomon: but afterwards matters took another turn.—It is not probable, that Solomon would have been thus joined with David, as the good pattern which Rehoboam and his subjects followed, if he had persevered and perished in his apostasy.

Jeroboam and his sons. (14) 'His sons were his principal counsellors, and assistants in the change he made in religion.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 18—21. Rehoboam imitated his father in multiplying wives, but not to the same enormous excess: and he does not appear to have married any heathen women.

Daughter of Eliab. (18) Eliab was David's eldest brother; yet more than eighty years had elapsed, since David, at the age of thirty, began to reign. Abihail must, therefore, have been grand-daughter, or great grand-daughter to Eliab, and this shews the latitude in which the words *son* and *daughter* are used in scripture, for a descendant, even after several intervening generations. (*Note, Ruth* iv. 18—22.)

The daughter of Absalom. (20) It is said of Abijah, that "his mother's name was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel "of Gibeah." (xiii. 2.) Gibeah belonged to Benjamin, and probably Absalom, here mentioned, was a Benjamite. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xv. 1—3.)

V. 22, 23. Rehoboam acted from partial affection, and by his own authority, in advancing Abijah above his elder brethren: whereas, God himself chose Solomon to be king in preference to David's other sons. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* xxix. 1.) It is probable, that Rehoboam's conduct gave umbrage to his other sons; and that he dispersed them, in the fenced cities, in honourable and affluent situations, to prevent their uniting against Abijah: but perhaps he also confided in them to retain these cities in their duty, and to defend them against the common enemy. Whatever were his motive, it was deemed good policy by his contemporaries.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is commonly more prudent to manage moderate possessions well, than to risk losing them by grasping at greater advantages: and when an egregious error has exposed us to some heavy loss, it is generally wisest to sit down by it, lest we be betrayed into still more fatal mistakes.—It is in vain to contend with the purpose of God, when he makes it known unto us: and, as his word declares that none shall enjoy durable peace in the practice of wickedness, it is madness to expect it; yet, by this rule of judgment, what a world of madness and folly do we live in!—Even those who are destitute of true faith and grace, frequently pay some regard to the word of God, and, for a time, are restrained by it from actions, to which they are inclined, and do many things which are disagreeable to them: and even this temporary faith, and external obedience, are often recompensed with temporary and external advantages.—In seasons of prevailing ungodliness and publick disturbances, the ministers of religion will be exposed to peculiar trials; as they must either act contrary to their consciences or expose themselves to great loss and peril. This is the time, when God puts the sincerity of their faith and love to the proof: on these great occasions, he peculiarly calls upon them to bear testimony to his truth, and to protest at all events, against enormous evils, by whomsoever patronized. As connivance and silence in such a case are very criminal: so it is peculiarly honourable to God, and convincing to the consciences of men, when they readily renounce their secular interests, and stand up boldly for the cause of God, without regarding consequences: nor will such behaviour ever lose its reward.—It may be their duty to retire from such places as will not receive their testimony, where they can do no good, where their temptations are great, and where they may be exposed to still fiercer persecutions: and in that case no possessions or connexions ought to be regarded.—When the ministers and ordinances of God are driven from any place, it is time for them, "who set their hearts "to seek the LORD," to come out and be separate, that they may not be seduced to have fellowship with the worshippers and servants of Satan. Trials of this kind, serve to separate the chaff from the wheat; and indeed untried faith is not much to be depended on: but when we have been proved, and it appears, that we are willing to renounce our worldly interests, as far as called to it, for the

CHAP. XII.

Rehoboam forsakes God, and Shishak king of Egypt invades Judah, 1—4. Rehoboam and his princes, being warned by Shemaiah, humble themselves; and, though spoiled, are not destroyed, 5—12. Rehoboam's reign and death. Abijah succeeds him, 13—16.

a 13. xi. 17.
b xxvi. 13—16. Deut. vi. 10—12. viii. 10—14 xxxii. 15. 1 Kings ix. 9. Jer. ii. 31. Hos. xiii. 1. 6—8.
c xi. 3. 1 Kings xii 17. xiv. 22—24. 2 Kings xvii. 19. Hos. v. 10, 11. Mic. vi. 16.
d *See on* 1 Kings xi. 40. xiv. 25, 26.
e vii. 19, 20. xxxvi. 14—19. Judg. ii. 13—15. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Neh. ix. 26, 27. Ps. cvi. 43, 44. Is. lxiii. 10. Jer. ii. 19. xliv. 22, 23. Lam. v. 15, 16.
f Judg. iv. 13. 1 Sam. xiii 5 2 Sam. x. 18.

AND it came to pass, [a] when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, [b] he forsook the law of the LORD, and [c] all Israel with him.

2 And it came to pass, *that*, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, [d] Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, [e] because they had transgressed against the LORD,

3 With [f] twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people *were* [g] without number that came with him out of Egypt: the [h] Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the [i] Ethiopians.

4 And he took [k] the fenced cities which *pertained* to Judah, and [l] came to Jerusalem.

5 Then came [m] Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and *to* the princes of Judah that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, [n] Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also [o] left you in the hand of Shishak.

6 Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king [p] humbled themselves: and they said, [q] The LORD *is* righteous.

g xiv. 9. Judg. vi. 5. Rev. ix. 16.
h xvi. 8 Ez. xxx. 5. Nah. iii. 9.
i xiv. 12. xvi. 8. Is. xliii. 3. Dan. xi. 43. Nah. iii. 9. *Cushim. Heb.* Gen. x. 6—8.
k xi. 5—12. Is. xxxvi. 1. Jer. v. 10.
l 2 Kings xviii. 17. Is. viii. 8. x. 11.
m xi. 2. 1 Kings xii. 22.
n *See on* 1, 2.—xv. 2. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. Judg. x. 9—14. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. ii. 19. iv. 18. v. 19. xxiii. 33.
o 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. Ps. xxxvii. 33.
p xxxii. 26. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. Ex. x. 3. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. 1 Kings viii. 37—39. Ps. lxxviii. 34, 35. Jer. xliv. 10. Dan. v. 22. Hos. v. 15. Luke xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 10.
q Ex. ix. 27. Judg. i. 7. Job xxxiii. 27. Ps. cxxix. 4. Lam. i. 18. Dan. ix. 14. Rom. x. 3.

sake of Christ and the gospel, we have got one good evidence that we are truly his disciples.—Those ministers should be welcomed and encouraged, who evidently prefer their work, with a good conscience, to their possessions; and if things were as they should be, their more affluent brethren would readily share their emoluments with them, if they saw them destitute.—It is genuine policy for any kingdom to entertain such as are willing to leave their estates and native country, purely for conscience-sake; for they will prove the strength and bulwark of the state, which gives them a comfortable asylum. But "*I-chabod*, "the glory is departed," may be written on that kingdom which drives them away, by superstitious or idolatrous impositions, and by persecutions.—Nothing can injure us, while we keep close to the worship and service of God: but without true faith and grace, all apparent zeal and external profession will at length wither. Yet, many deem themselves good and righteous, because they are not so faulty, in the best part of their character, as some eminently godly persons were in the greatest blemishes of their lives!—It is indeed well, when those, who begin foolishly, grow wiser by experience: but alas! that wisdom is of little value, which is engrossed by the care of secular interests, to the neglect of the immortal soul, through the indulgence of worldly lusts, and departing from the living God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. Rehoboam's religion seems to have proceeded wholly from his fears of being given up into the hands of Jeroboam: when therefore he was become so strong, that, as he supposed, he had nothing to apprehend from that quarter, he became openly rebellious and idolatrous. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 22—24.) The leading men also and the bulk of the nation, so generally and openly renounced the worship of God at the temple, that it was adjudged a national apostasy.—The ten tribes had before apostatized with Jeroboam; and when Rehoboam, with Judah and Benjamin, followed their example, "all "Israel," as a nation, "had forsaken the law of the "LORD;" and the pious remnant formed only a few exceptions to the general rule.

V. 2. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 25—28.) It is probable, that Shishak was of another family than Pharaoh, whose daughter Solomon had married; and was excited to this invasion by the reports of the immense treasures, which that prince had collected at Jerusalem, with the division in his dominions, and the weakness of Rehoboam's administration. But the Lord gave him power to execute his rapacious purposes; which he would not have done, if the people had not transgressed against him.

In the fifth year.] 'Their apostasy was in the fourth 'year...; therefore God speedily corrected them, that he 'might reduce them to his service, before they were set-'tled in their impiety.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3, 4. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Lubims were the inhabitants of Lybia, adjoining to Egypt on the west: the Sukkiims are supposed to have been the people called Troglodytes, because they dwelt in caves (τρωγλαις): and the Ethiopians, probably, were the inhabitants of Ethiopia to the south of Egypt.—It is likely that several of Rehoboam's sons were slain, or taken captive, by Shishak, when he took the cities in which they governed. (*Note*, xi. 22, 23.)

V. 5, 6. While the king and his nobles were consulting what measures to adopt, in this dangerous extremity, and perhaps were about to surrender to the conqueror; the prophet, in a few words, reminded them, that Shishak's power over them was the effect of the Lord's righteous indignation, who was contending with them for their apostasy. The time and circumstances indeed of their affliction evidently proclaimed this truth, yet they had not before attended to it: but this message had an immediate effect upon them; for they humbled themselves, and acknowledged the justice of God in their punishment. (*Marg. Ref.* p.) An external reformation, and a regard to the worship at the temple, during the remainder of Rehoboam's reign, followed this humiliation; but it went no further, at least with him.

7 And when [r] the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; *therefore* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them [*] some deliverance; [s] and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

8 Nevertheless, [t] they shall be his servants; that [u] they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

9 So [v] Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and [x] took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also [y] the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

10 Instead of which, king Rehoboam made [z] shields of brass, and committed *them* to the hands of [a] the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house.

11 And when the king entered into the house of the LORD, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard-chamber.

12 And [b] when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy *him* altogether: and [†] also in Judah things went well.

13 So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned: for [c] Rehoboam *was* one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, [d] the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, [e] to put his name there. And his mother's name *was* Naamah, [f] an Ammonitess.

14 And he did evil, because [g] he [‡] prepared not his heart [h] to seek the LORD.

15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, [i] first and last, *are* they not written in the [§] book of [k] Shemaiah the prophet, and of [l] Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? And *there were* [m] wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

16 And Rehoboam [n] slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and [o] Abijah his son reigned in his stead.

V. 7—11. (*Notes, Judg.* iii. 1, 2. 1 *Kings* xxi. 27—29. *Ps.* lxxvi. 10.) It is probable, that Shishak had intended to give up the city to be plundered by his army: but God suddenly disposed him to greater moderation and clemency, than could possibly have been expected from such a man in his circumstances. So that he contented himself with emptying the treasures of the temple and of the king, and carrying away the golden shields which Solomon had made for magnificence rather than for use: (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* x. 16, 17. xiv. 25—28:) and he did not proceed to rob the temple of its sacred vessels. Neither did he deprive the inhabitants of their private property; but perhaps he exacted a sum of money, in token of their becoming his servants. He was, however, permitted thus far to prevail, that Rehoboam and his subjects might experience the different effects of keeping close to the worship of God, as in the prosperous days of David and Solomon; and of renouncing his service, and in consequence being reduced under the power of the conqueror, and preserved from entire ruin, merely by his unexpected clemency on their unreserved submission. 'He resolved to let them feel the 'difference between him, and all other lords and masters: 'and how much more happy they were while they con-'tinued to worship and serve him, than when they fell 'under a foreign yoke.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12. *Things went well.*] Or, "yet in Judah there "were good things:" (*marg.*) that is, there were a number of true believers, spiritual worshippers, and servants of God, especially such as came out of Israel; for whose sake Rehoboam and the kingdom were spared: so that we read no more of Shishak, who, by one means or other, was kept from coming to extort any further tribute or services from them. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxii. 6—28. xxxiii. 4.)

V. 13. *The city,* &c.] It was a peculiar honour conferred on Rehoboam for his fathers' sake, and his greatest advantage, that he reigned in that city which the LORD had chosen as the place of his temple, and instituted worship; (*Marg. Ref.* d, e;) but it seems to be here mentioned as an aggravation of the guilt of his ungodliness.

V. 14. Rehoboam's religion was a reluctant, formal service; his heart was not engaged; he never called upon "all that was within him to praise the Lord," and he did not desire that preparation of an humble, believing, and pious disposition of heart, which is requisite in order to worship God spiritually and with delight. This was the source of his instability; and thus he was easily drawn into open ungodliness and wickedness. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* xi. 13—17, *v.* 16. xxx. 16—20, *v.* 19. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19, *v.* 18. *Ps.* lxxviii. 9—11.)

V. 15, 16. *Notes,* ix. 29—31. 1 *Kings* xiv. 30.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is a very common but most lamentable case, that men, who in distress or danger, or apparently near death, seem very much engaged in seeking God, often throw aside their religion when they have received a merciful deliverance. But the warning, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come

CHAP. XIII.

Abijah reigns; he and Jeroboam, with vast preparations, engage in war, 1—3. Abijah shews the justice of his cause, 4—12. Judah, relying on God, gains a signal victory, with immense slaughter of the Israelites, 13—19. Jeroboam dies, 20. Abijah's wives and children, 21, 22.

a *See on* xii. 16.—1 Kings xv. 1. NOW [a] in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.

2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* [b] Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of [c] Gibeah. [d] And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

b xi. 20. *Maachah the daughter of Absalom.* 1 Kings xv. 2. *Abishalom.*

c Josh. xviii. 28 *Gibeath.* Judg xix. 14. 16. 1 Sam. x. 26.

3 And Abijah *set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, *even* [e] four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him, with [f] eight hundred thousand chosen men, *being* mighty men of valour.

B. C. 957.

d 1 Kings xv. 6, 7.

* Heb. *bound together.* 1 Sam. xvii. 1—3.

e xi. 1. xiv. 8 xvii. 14—18 xxvi. 12, 13. 1 Chr. xxi. 5.

f xiv. 9

4 ¶ And Abijah stood up upon

"unto thee," deserves the most serious consideration of all, who are tempted to such base ingratitude. (*Note, John* v. 10—14, *v* 14.) The Lord can soon arrest them by renewed afflictions; reduce them to still greater extremities; and bring trouble upon them from those quarters whence it was least expected.—Ungodly prosperity serves only to increase vain confidence, and to invite rapacity, without affording any real security; and all methods of defence prove ineffectual, when an angry God "arises to that judgment, "which he hath commanded."—Every affliction has a voice, and delivers a message from the Lord; but sinners do not regard or understand: it is therefore, a singular mercy when he sends them "an interpreter," to explain the voice of his rod by that of his word. (*Note, Job* xxxiii. 19—26.)—Humiliation before God for sin, with unreserved acknowledgments that he is just in all that he inflicts or threatens, is essential to true repentance: but this may be counterfeited both by word and deed. Yet, when there are merely external appearances of contrition, our merciful God will often grant respites, in order to encourage true penitents by shewing his readiness to forgive. This is especially the case in his dealings with sinful nations: for a general external humiliation before God, under national judgments, is a good evidence that their iniquities are not yet full: and when there is a number of true believers among them, who are protected from oppression and persecution; the Lord will grant some deliverance, and his "wrath shall not be poured out upon them" as yet.—Amidst all our abounding iniquity, impiety, and infidelity, these kingdoms seem hitherto to have been spared on these accounts: may he reform, and not destroy us!—When the Lord is pleased to shew mercy, he can dispose the hardest hearts to compassion; the most rapacious, to moderation; and the most impious, to fear profaning sacred things: for he rules the impetuous lusts of men as he does the raging ocean, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, "and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." But his wrath may occasion many painful effects, when not poured out unto the uttermost. These are, however, often intended in mercy, and are of salutary tendency: for it is good to be convinced by any sufferings, short of eternal misery, that by forsaking the Lord we are cruel to ourselves; and that his service, which is but another name for liberty, peace, and felicity, cannot be renounced, without our becoming the miserable slaves of the worst of tyrants and oppressors: and whenever the heart is truly humbled, the afflictions will be removed, or alleviated and counterbalanced by divine consolations.—Sin always debases those who commit it, robs them of substantial blessings, and substitutes a mere empty worthless shew of good; and whatever else be preserved or obtained, it will ruin the immortal soul, except true repentance intervene.—Unless "the heart be prepared to seek the LORD," we must perish: and if convinced, that we are unable of ourselves to effect this *preparation*, let us pray fervently, according to the language of Scripture, "Turn thou me, and so shall I be "turned;" "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a "right spirit within me." If we do this in sincerity, using the other means of grace, and watching against sin and temptation; our endeavours will not be in vain. Where these things are wanting, formality and hypocrisy form a man's highest attainments; his chief advantages prove an aggravation of his crimes; and a life of vanity and vexation will be closed by a miserable death. May we then look to our hearts, and keep them with all diligence; for the Lord especially regards them: and may he prepare our hearts unto himself, that we may serve him with perseverance and delight, while we live; possess a strong consolation and joyful hope, when we are called to walk through the valley of the shadow of death; and so have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* xi. 18—23. 1 *Kings* xv. 1—3.

V. 3. The kingdom of the ten tribes had been given to Jeroboam; but he and his people had, by apostasy and idolatry, merited the severest punishment, which Abijah was employed, or permitted, to execute. Rehoboam had aimed to recover dominion over all Israel; but perhaps Abijah only endeavoured to secure his own kingdom. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xii. 21—24.)—The numbers which they brought into the field were immense: but when every man was a soldier, small kingdoms could raise very large armies upon any great emergency. Five hundred thousand had been numbered of Judah in the time of David, and it had received a great increase on the division of the kingdom; yet Israel raised an army twice as large as that of Judah, out of all their tribes. (*Notes,* xi. 13—17. 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 9. 1 *Chr.* xxi. 2—6, *v.* 5. xxvii. 1—15.)

V. 4—12. Jeroboam seems to have been the aggressor in this war: yet Abijah had marched into his country; and from a hill, whence Jeroboam and many of the Israelites could hear him, he spake to them as one who wished to bring the contest to an amicable conclusion. At least this

mount [g] Zemaraim, which *is* in mount Ephraim, and said, [h] Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel;

5 [i] Ought ye not to know, that [j] the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel [k] to David for ever, *even* to him and to his sons by [l] a covenant of salt?

6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath [m] rebelled against his lord.

7 And there are gathered unto him [n] vain men, [o] the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was [p] young and tenderhearted, and [q] could not withstand them.

8 And now ye think to withstand [r] the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye *be* [s] a great multitude, and *there are* [t] with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods.

9 Have ye not [u] cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have [v] made you priests after the manner of the nations of *other* lands? so that whosoever cometh to [*] consecrate himself [x] with a young bullock and seven rams, *the same* may be a priest of *them that are* [y] no gods.

10 But as for us, [z] the LORD *is* our God, and we have not forsaken him; and [a] the priests, which minister unto the LORD, *are* the sons of Aaron, and the Levites *wait* upon *their* business:

11 And [b] they burn unto the LORD, every morning and every evening, burnt-sacrifices, and [c] sweet incense: the [d] shew-bread also *set they in order* upon the pure table; and [e] the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for [f] we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him.

12 And, behold, [g] God himself *is* with us [h] for *our* Captain, and [i] his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, [k] fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for [l] ye shall not prosper.

[g] Gen. x. 18. Josh. xviii. 22.
[h] xv. 2. Judg. ix. 7.
[i] Neh. v. 9. Prov. i. 29. 2 Pet. iii. 5.
[j] Judg. xi. 21—24. Jer. xxvii. 5—7. Dan. iv. 25—32. v. 18.
[k] 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 12. 2 Sam. vii. 12. 16. 1 Kings viii. 20. 1 Chr. xvii. 11. 14. xxviii. 4, 5. Ps. lxxxix. 19—37. Jer. xxxiii. 21, 22. 26. Luke i. 31—33.
[l] Lev. ii. 13. Num. xviii. 19. Ez. xliii. 24. Mark ix. 49, 50.
[m] x. 19. 1 Kings xi. 26. xii. 20. 27.
[n] Judg. ix. 4. xi. 3. 1 Sam. xxii. 2. Job xxx. 8. Ps. xxvi. 4. Prov. xii. 11. xxviii. 19. Acts xvii. 5. Tit. i. 10.
[o] *See on* Deut xiii. 13. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13.
[p] xii. 13. Ec. x. 16. Is. iii. 4. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Heb. v. 12.
[q] xi. 1—4.
[r] ix. 8. Ps. ii. 1—6. Is. vii. 6, 7. ix. 6, 7. Luke xix. 14. 27.
[s] xiv. 9—11. xx. 6. 12. Ps. xxxiii. 16.
[t] *See on* xi. 15. 1 Kings xii. 28. xiv. 9.—Hos. viii. 6.
[u] xi. 14. 15.
[v] 1 Kings xii. 31—33. xiii. 33.
[*] Heb. *fill his hand.* s. xxxii. 29. Lev. xvi. 32. 1 Chr. xxix. 5. *margins.*
[x] Ex. xxix. 1. 35. Lev. viii. 2.
[y] Deut. xxxii. 17. 2 Kings xix. 18. Jer. ii. 11. Hos. viii. 6. Acts xix. 26. Gal. iv. 8.
[z] xi. 16, 17. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Zech. xiii. 9.
[a] Ex. xxix. 1, &c. Num. xvi. 40. xviii. 1—7.
[b] *See on* ii. 4. Ex. xxix. 38—42.
[c] Ex. xxx. 1—10. Lev. ix. 1—3. Num. xvi. 6, 7. 46, 47. Luke i. 9. Rev. viii. 3, 4.
[d] Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 6.
[e] Ex. xxv. 31—39. xxvii. 20, 21. Lev. xxiv. 3, 4.
[f] Gen. xxvi. 5. Num. ix. 19. 23. Ez. xliv. 8. Mal. iii. 7. xviii. 11.
[g] Num. xxiii. 21. 1 Sam. iv. 5—7. Is. viii. 10. Zech. xiv. 5. Rom. viii. 31.
[h] Deut. xx. 4. Josh. v. 13—15. Ps. xx. 7. Heb. ii. 10.
[i] Num. x. 9. xxxi. 6. Josh. vi. 20.
[k] Job xv. 25, 26. xl. 9. Is. xlv. 9. Acts v. 39. ix. 4, 5.
[l] xxiv. 20. Num. xiv. 41. Deut. xxviii. 29. Job ix. 4. Is. liv. 17. Jer. ii. 37. Ezra xvii. 9.

seems to have been his *ostensible* design; though his speech was well suited, and probably intended, to encourage his own troops, and to dismay those of Jeroboam. Abijah bears a bad character in Kings; (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xv. 1—4;) yet on this occasion he spoke religiously; and he seems to have had a strong confidence in God, grounded on the maintenance of his ordinances, and the number of pious worshippers, in his kingdom. The *basis* of his address was truth; but there was much false colouring in his manner of stating it, according to the too general custom of eloquent orators. For the covenant respecting the kingdom over Israel, made with David in behalf of his posterity, (except as it related to the Messiah,) was *conditional;* and neither Solomon, Rehoboam, nor Abijah, had been attentive to the restipulations. (vii. 17, 18. *Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 12—16. 1 *Kings* ix. 4—9. xi. 9—13. *Ps.* lxxxix. 19—37. cxxxii. 11, 12.)—"A covenant of salt" is one solemnly ratified by a sacrifice and a feast, at both of which salt was used; that is to say, an *unchangeable covenant:* (*Notes*, *Lev.* ii. 13. *Num.* xviii. 19:) but the Lord evidently did not consider himself irreversibly engaged to continue the kingdom of all Israel to David's posterity.—Jeroboam had indeed acted very wickedly in his manner of seizing and governing the kingdom of Israel: yet it had been granted to him by God himself, and Abijah never mentioned that circumstance. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi. 29—40.)—The persons, who revolted from Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king, had acted with great precipitation and ingratitude; but perhaps it was not candid to call them indiscriminately "vain men, the children of Belial." Rehoboam had given them no small provocation; he was surely old enough to have behaved more wisely, if he had not been actuated by a proud, domineering disposition; and it was not so much owing either to his lenity, his timidity, or his weakness, that he had not prosecuted his pretensions by war; as to the divine prohibition. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xii. 8—24.)—But Abijah's words were more forcible, when he exposed the apostasy and idolatry of the kingdom of Israel; their impiety and sacrilege in excluding the priests of the Lord from their possessions; and the shameful manner, in which any worthless man was made a priest, who could and would bring the sacrifice appointed by way of consecration: for by these crimes, Jeroboam and his subjects were drawing down the vengeance of heaven upon themselves. (*Notes*, xi. 13—17. 1 *Kings* xii. 26—33. xiii. 33, 34. xiv. 5—16.) But what Abijah urged, concerning the state of true religion in Judah, was not strictly just; and, as spoken by him, it savoured of ostentation. Abijah himself was not a godly man; and idolatry was evidently connived at in his days. Yet it was true, that the men of Judah had the priests, ordinances, and worship of God among them; that there were numbers of pious worshippers in the land; that their's was the more righteous cause; that the LORD was on their side, and their Captain, while the Israelites fought against him; and that the presence of the priests blowing the sacred trumpets, according to the law, was a token of his presence with them and favour to them. (*Notes*, *Num.* x. 2—10.)—The expression, "after "the manner of the nations" (9), shews that the laws of Moses were not made according to the customs of the gen-

13 ¶ But Jeroboam caused [m] an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment *was* behind them.

14 And when Judah [n] looked back, behold, the battle *was* before and behind: and they [o] cried unto the LORD, and [p] the priests sounded with the trumpets.

15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and [q] as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that [r] God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

16 And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and [s] God delivered them into their hand.

17 And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel [t] five hundred thousand chosen men.

18 Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, [u] because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.

19 And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and [x] took cities from him, Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and [y] Ephrain with the towns thereof.

20 Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and [z] the LORD struck him, and [a] he died.

21 But Abijah [b] waxed mighty, and married [c] fourteen wives, and [d] begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.

22 And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, *are* written in the [*] story of the prophet [e] Iddo.

m xx. 22. Josh. viii. 4. Prov. xxi. 30. Jer. iv. 22.
n Ex. xiv. 10. Josh. viii. 20. Judg. xx. 33—48. 2 Sam. x. 8—14.
o xiv. 11. xviii. 31. Ps. l. 15. xci. 5.
p See on 12.
q xx. 21. Josh. vi. 16. 20. Judg. vii. 18—22. Ps. xlvii. 1. 5.
r xiv. 12. Num. xxxii. 4. Josh. xi. 8. Judg. iv. 15. 2 Kings v. 1. Ps. cxviii. 4—7. Is. xxxvii. 36.
s Gen. xiv. 20. Deut. ii. 36. iii. 3. Josh. x. 12. xxi. 44. Judg. i. 4. xi. 21. 1 Sam. xxiii. 7.
t 3. 12. xxviii. 6. Is. x. 16—19. xxxvii. 36. Nah. i. 5. 1 Cor. x. 22.
u xvi. 8, 9. xx. 20. 2 Kings xviii. 5. 1 Chr. v. 20. Ps. xxii. 4, 5. cxlvi. 5. Dan. iii. 28. Eph. i. 12.
x Josh. x. 19. 39. xi. 12. 1 Sam. xxxi. 7.
y xv. 8. Josh. xv. 9. *Ephron.* John xi. 54.
z 1 Sam. xxv. 38. xxvi. 10. Ez. xxiv. 16. Acts xii. 23.
a 1 Kings xiv. 20. xv. 9.
b 2 Sam. v. 12, 13.
c *See on* xi. 21.
d Judg. viii. 30, 31. ix. 5. x. 4.
* Or, *commentary.*
e ix. 29. xii. 15.

tiles, as many suppose; but entirely distinct from them: and that the similarity which in many instances has been traced, actually arose from the idolaters, in several particulars, adopting or imitating the usages of Israel.

Zemaraim. (4) Zemaraim was a city allotted to Benjamin: but mount Zemaraim, no doubt adjacent to it, was in mount Ephraim, on the borders of the two tribes. (*Josh.* xviii. 22.)

V. 13—22. Jeroboam, like a profane politician, (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xii. 26—29,) disregarded all Abijah's pleas, and rested his whole dependence on the valour of his troops, and the skilfulness of his arrangements. Whilst Abijah therefore was speaking about peace, he was preparing for action: and to make, as he supposed, sure of the event, to the superiority of his numbers he added an ambushment, that he might surround and destroy the whole army of Judah, probably intending to seize upon that kingdom also. But the people cried unto the Lord in this extremity, as expecting help and deliverance from him alone; whilst the sounding of the sacred trumpets caused numbers to shout with confidence of success: and, according to their hope, it pleased God to smite the Israelites in such a manner, that they were unable to resist or to escape by flight; and thus five hundred thousand were slain in one day, which is the largest slaughter that history records to have been ever made in any one battle. This decisive blow gave Judah so great a superiority, that it can only be ascribed to a divine interposition, that the kingdom of Israel was not entirely subverted. Many cities, however, were subdued, and among the rest Beth-el fell into the hands of the victor; yet we do not read that he removed the golden calf, and probably the city was soon after conceded to Jeroboam. That prince, however, never recovered from this blow, for the Lord soon after smote him, and he died: (*Note*, *Acts* xii. 20—23:) yet Abijah died nearly two years before him, and did not long enjoy the fruits of his victory, for which he made very ungrateful returns. Though destitute of piety, he seems to have possessed great vigour and capacity. During his short reign he became very powerful; he had a very numerous family; and his ways and sayings were so remarkable as to be particularly recorded by the prophet Iddo. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.* e. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* xv. 1—9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The promptness of mankind to war lamentably proclaims the depravity of our nature, and the influence that the great murderer of bodies and souls possesses over the minds of men, even in the determinations of senates and in the cabinets of kings. Nor can vain-glorious commanders more delight in seeking renown, power, or revenge, by the destruction of the human species, than many of their inferiors do, in listing under their banners, seconding their aims, and rushing upon danger and death, that they may attempt the slaughter of those who never injured or even saw them. Such stubborn facts stand in the page of every history, a confutation of the absurd encomiums, which self-flattering speculators have passed upon the philanthropy of the human heart, and the sufficiency of human reason, for every purpose of virtue and religion. The annals of mankind form one continued narration of blood shed in the most wanton and unnecessary manner, in pursuit of honour and dominion, or in seeking to wrest the sword of vengeance from the hands of the Supreme Judge. The millions, who have thus perished miserably, "hateful, and hating one another," exceed almost imagination: and to crown the whole, the chief actors in this bloody tragedy have engrossed almost the whole applause of their fellow mortals; or shared it with the poets, orators, and historians, who have excited them by infamous panegyricks to such destructive pursuits! Compare the whole with the short command, "Thou shalt love thy

CHAP. XIV

Abijah dies, and Asa succeeds him, 1. He abolishes idolatry, 2—5. Enjoying peace, he fortifies his kingdom, and establishes a large army, 6—8. Being attacked by Zerah, with an immense army of Ethiopians, he calls on God, is victorious, and acquires much spoil, 9—15.

a ix. 31.—*See on* 1 Kings ii. 10. xiv. 31.

SO Abijah [a] slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and [b] Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

b 1 Kings xv. 8. 1 Chr. iii. 10. Matt. i. 7, 8.

c xxxi. 20. 1 Kings xv. 11. 14. Luke i. 75.

2 And Asa did *that which was* [c] good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:

d Deut. vii. 5. 1 Kings xi. 7, 8. xiv. 22—24.

3 For [d] he took away the altars of the strange *gods*, and [e] the high places, and [f] brake down the [*] images, and [g] cut down the groves:

e xv. 17. Lev. xxvi. 30. 1 Kings xv. 12—14.

f xxxiv. 4. Ex. xxxiv. 13. Deut. vii. 5. 25.

* Heb. *statues.* 2 Kings xxiii. 14. *marg.*

4 And [h] commanded Judah to [i] seek the LORD God of their fathers, and [k] to do the law and the commandment.

g Judg. vi. 25—28. 2 Kings xviii. 4. xxiii. 6. 14.

h xxix. 21. 27. 30. xxx. 12. xxxiii. 16. xxxiv. 32. 33. Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. 1 Sam. iii. 13. Ezra x. 7—12. Neh. xiii. 9. 19—22. Ps. ci. 2—8.

5 Also he took away, out of all the cities of Judah, the high places and the [†] images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

i *See on* xi. 16.—xxx. 19. Is. lv. 6, 7. Am. v. 4.

k Neh. x. 29—39. Ps. cxix. 10.

† Heb. *sun-images.* xxxiv. 4. *marg.*

"neighbour as thyself;" and then bring in an impartial verdict concerning the heart of man, and the state of human nature. (*Note, Lev.* xix. 18.)—Yet all the blood thus shed must be one day accounted for, as *murder*, on whomsoever that load of guilt may fall. Surely then, war should be always considered as the last resource, a desperate remedy, never to be used when the welfare of the state can possibly be otherwise secured. A righteous cause, a willingness for peace on reasonable terms, and a well grounded confidence in God, should be considered as the grand requisites, in the management of this direful appeal to the supreme Arbiter of kings and nations.—But, it is easy to speak on these topicks, without the fear of God possessing the heart. Many presume upon external privileges, who disregard his precepts: they boast of the form of godliness, without the power of it; they are justly severe upon the crimes of other men, yet they do not amend their own: but palliate the offences of their own party, while they aggravate the misconduct of their adversaries. These are not only the arts of those, who purposely frame *manifestos* to varnish their ambition with the shew of equity; but are often employed by such as really have justice on their side, yet forget that genuine beauty is disgraced and rendered suspected, by being painted. It is obvious, however, that ungodly princes have often prospered, because their enemies have been still more abandoned; because they had justice on their side; because many of their subjects were pious; because more external honour was paid to the truth and ordinances of God among their subjects; or because the appeal to him, and professed reliance on him, was more openly made in the decision of the contest.

V. 13—22.

The wise politicians of the world generally treat with contempt, all arguments grounded on the state of religion, and the favour of God toward his worshippers: their whole dependence is "on an arm of flesh," and if their confidence be disappointed, they ascribe it to fortune, or to the chance of war. But, the God of battles gives victory to whom he pleases: against him all courage and conduct are vain; and he will appear for those, who rely on and call upon him in the time of distress. He has often brought his people into imminent danger, in order to exercise their faith, and to put vigour into their prayers, which will be sure to terminate in shouts of victory. But, to triumph in those contests, which cause so many thousands and hundreds of thousands of the human species to expire in agony, and their immortal souls to be sent to the tribunal of God and an eternal state, can give little pleasure to a feeling heart; except as his justice, and faithful care of his people, are seen and adored in them. And least of all, can success in *civil wars*, which are commonly conducted with the most unrelenting rancour and most tremendous slaughter, give satisfaction to any benevolent mind. Nor are the victories acquired in those fierce, though unbloody contests, which rend the church of Christ, to the disgrace of the common cause, and the joy of the common enemy, to be more rejoiced in. But to conquer our own passions, to prevail against the tempter and the world, and to overcome evil with good, are victories to be gained by faith, patience, and prayer, in which we may safely and purely rejoice. And when the conquerors and the conquered, in bloody battles, will join in execrating their own and each other's madness; "when "the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more "cover her slain;" then shall we receive the unsullied palm, the conqueror's noblest crown. Nay, death and the grave, which so dreadfully triumph over those whom the Lord smites in his anger, and so speedily wrench the prosperous from all their grandeur, will never hurt us; indeed, we shall *then* gain a complete victory over that last enemy, and mortality shall at length be swallowed up of life.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. *The land*, &c.] Abijah's vigour and success laid the foundation of Asa's peace and prosperity. Jeroboam, and his son Nadab, remained quiet during the short time which they reigned over Israel, after Abijah's victory. Baasha began to reign before the close of Asa's third year; but though "there was war between "him and Asa all their days;" (1 *Kings* xv. 16;) it did not for some time occasion much disturbance to the peace of Judah, through the enfeebled state of Israel.

V. 2—5. Asa not only behaved so well as to approve his conduct to man, but he aimed to act as in the sight of Him, who seeth the secret intentions of the heart; and accordingly "he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (*Notes*, xii. 14. 1 *Kings* xv. 14, 15.) He began his reign by abolishing those idolatries, which had been connived at in the preceding reigns, especially that of the *sun-images*; (5. *marg.*) and by using his authority to retain the people in the worship of God at the temple, and to enforce obe-

6 And [l] he built fenced cities in Judah: [m] for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because [n] the LORD had given him rest.

7 Therefore [o] he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about *them* walls and towers, gates and bars, [p] *while* the land *is* yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, [q] we have sought *him*, and [r] he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered.

8 And Asa had an army *of men* that bare targets and spears: [s] out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these *were* mighty men of valour.

9 ¶ And there came out against them [t] Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto [u] Mareshah.

10 Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of [x] Zephathah at Mareshah.

11 And Asa [y] cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD *it is* [z] nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with [a] them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we [b] rest on thee, and [c] in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou *art* our God; [d] let not [*] man prevail against thee.

12 So [e] the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

13 And Asa and the people that *were* with him pursued them unto [f] Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were [†] destroyed [g] before the LORD and before [h] his host; and they carried away very much spoil.

14 And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for [i] the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was [k] exceeding much spoil in them.

15 They smote also [l] the tents of cattle, and [m] carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

l viii. 2—6. xi. 5—12.
m Judg. iii. 11. 30. n 31. 1 Kings v. 4. 1 Chr. xxii. 9.
n xv. 15. Job xxxiv. 29. Ps. xlvi. 9.
o xxxii. 5. Acts ix. 31.
p John ix. 4. xii. 35, 36. Heb. iii. 13—15.
q *See on* 4.—Chr. xxviii. 9. Ps. cv. 3, 4. Jer. xxix. 12—14. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
r *See on* 6.—Josh. xxiii. 1. Matt. xi. 28, 29.
s xi. 1. xiii. 3. xvii. 14—19. xxv. 5.
t *See on* xii. 2, 3.—xvi. 8. 2 Kings xix. 9. Is. viii. 9, 10. Ez. xxx. 5. Rev. xvi. 14.
u Josh. xv. 44. Mic. i. 15.
x Judg. i. 17. *Zephath.*
y xiii. 14. xviii. 31. xxxii. 20. Ex. xiv. 10. 1 Chr. v. 20. Ps. xxii. 5. xxxiv. 6. l. 15. xci. 15. Acts ii. 21.
z Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 30. Judg. vii. 7. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 1 Kings xx. 27—30. Amos v. 9. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.
a xx. 12. Deut. xxxii. 36. Is. xl. 29—31.
b xxxii. 8. 1 Sam. xvii. 35, 36. Ps. xxxvii. 5. Prov. xviii. 10. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. xli. 10—14. John xiv. 1. 27. Rom. viii. 31
c xiii 12. 18. 1 Sam. xvii. 45, 46. Ps. xx. 5. 7. Is. xxvi. 13. Acts iii. 16.
d Deut. xxxii. 27. Josh. vii. 8, 9. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps. ix. 19. lxxix. 9, 10. Jer. i. 19. Zech. ii. 8. Matt. xvi. 18. Acts ix. 4.
* Or, *mortal man.* Is. ii. 22.
e xiii. 15. xx. 22. Ex. xiv. 25. Deut. xxviii. 7. xxxii. 39. Josh. x. 10. Ps. ix. 12. cxxxvi. 17, 18. 1 Cor. ix. 26. xv. 57.
f 14. Gen. x. 19 xx. 1. xxvi. 1.
† Heb. *broken.*
g Job vi. 9. ix. 4. 2 Thes. i. 9.
h Josh. v. 14. 1 Sam. xxv. 28. 1 Chr. xii. 22. Ps. cviii. 11.
i xvii. 10. xx. 29. Gen. xxxv. 5. Deut. ii. 25. Josh. ii. 9—11. v. 1. 1 Sam. xiv. 15. 2 Kings vii. 6. Job xv. 21.
k xx. 25. Judg. xiv. 19. 2 Kings vii. 7, 8. 16. Ps. lxviii. 12. Is. xxxiii. 23. Rom. viii. 37. 1 1 Chr. iv. 41. m Num. xxxi. 9. 30—47. 1 Sam. xxx. 20. 1 Chr. v. 21.

dience to his commandments. He afterwards carried his reformation still further; (*Notes*, xv. 1—15;) yet at last, the high places, where JEHOVAH was irregularly worshipped, were not removed, though the idolatrous altars were destroyed. (xv. 17. 1 *Kings* xv. 14.)

V. 6—8. The union of piety and prudence, in Asa's conduct, is worthy of notice and commendation. We may suppose that his army generally served in divisions by rotation, but could be marshalled all together upon occasion. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxvii. 1—15.) The number of his soldiers was great, especially that of Benjamin; but probably many from the other tribes were numbered among them. (*Note*, xvii. 13—19.)—*Because the Lord had given him rest.* (6) (*Job.* xxxiv. 29.) Various concurring events formed the *second cause* of this rest, both from external wars, and internal disturbances; but the Lord, the GREAT FIRST CAUSE, directed and over-ruled all, to effect his own merciful purpose to Asa and Judah. This Asa saw, and piously acknowledged (7).

V. 9—15. It is not certain, whether the Ethiopians or Cushites of Africa, or those near Arabia, are here intended, though it is more generally thought that the latter are meant. But they who suppose the former, conjecture that Zerah had subjugated his neighbours, the Egyptians; had taken possession of the cities and territories bordering on Egypt; and intended still further to extend his conquests, when he had seized upon the kingdom of Judah.—Asa's army was formidable, though not equal to Zerah's immense preparations. He, however, placed no confidence in it, but relied only on the protection of God. His prayer is the genuine language of faith. He was conscious that his aim had been to glorify the Lord, and promote his worship, in the time of his prosperity; and this encouraged him to look upon God as his reconciled Friend and Father. Having put himself and his people under his protection, he was persuaded, that none could prevail against them, without seeming at least to prevail against God. If his army had been superior to that of the enemy, it could not have secured the victory; if it had consisted of a few enfeebled, dispirited troops, the Lord could have helped by them: for it was "nothing with him to help "with many, or with them that had no power." (*Notes*, xv. 6—12. xxxii. 6—8, *v.* 8. 1 *Sam.* xiv. 6—10.) Either way he desired to confide wholly in the Almighty, and to give him the glory of the victory. The event accorded to his faith: the Lord fought by Asa's subjects as *his* host (13); the Ethiopians were entirely overthrown, and dispersed; the spoil, which had been deposited in Gerar of the Philistines, and in other cities in that vicinity, was taken; and this most formidable invasion exceedingly enriched Judah. (*Notes*, xvi. 1—10.)—*Asa cried*, &c. (11) 'Before he 'began to fight, he implored the help of heaven; which 'he did, I suppose, in the face of all his army, that they 'might look up to God, as their Strength and Salvation.' *Bp. Patrick.—Thou art our God.*] 'Nothing could more 'inspire them with courage, than to believe, he looked

CHAP. XV.

The encouraging prophecy of Azariah before Asa, 1—7. Asa puts away idolatry, assembles the people, and enters into covenant with God, 8—15. He removes his mother from being queen, for her idolatry; yet the high places are not taken away, 16, 17. He brings the dedicated things into the temple, and enjoys a long peace, 18, 19.

AND [a] the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

2 And he went out [*] to meet Asa, and said unto him, [b] Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamim; [c] the LORD *is* with you, while ye be with him; and [d] if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but [e] if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

3 Now for [f] a long season Israel *hath been* without the [g] true God, and without [h] a teaching priest, and [i] without law.

4 But when they [j] in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was [k] found of them.

5 And in those times *there was* [l] no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but [m] great vexations *were* upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

6 And [n] nation was [†] destroyed of nation, and city of city: for [o] God did vex them with all adversity.

7 Be [p] ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for [q] your work shall be rewarded.

a xx. 14. xxiv. 20. Num. xxiv 2. Judg. iii. 10. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. 2 Pet. i. 21.
* Heb. *before Asa.*
b xiii. 4. xx. 15. 20. Judg. ix. 7. Ps. xlix. 1, 2. Is. vii. 13. Matt. xiii. 9. Rev. ii. 7. 11. 17. 29. iii. 6. 13. 22.
c xiii. 12. xxxii. 8. Deut. xx. 1. Jam. iv. 8.
d 4. 15. xxxiii. 12, 13. Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 13, 14. Matt. vii. 7, 8.
e xii. 1—3. xxiv. 20. 2 Kings xxi 14. 1 Chr. xxviii. *b.* Rom. xi. *1*, 2. Heb. xii. 25.
f 1 Kings xii. 28—33. Hos iii. 4.
g Jer. x. 10. John xvii. 3. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 John v. 20.
h xvii. 8, 9. Lev. x. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 10. Neh. viii. 9. Ez. xliv. 21—23. Mic. iii. 11. Mal. ii. 7. Matt. ii. 4, 5. 1 Tim. iii. 2.
i Rom. ii. 12. vii. 8, 9. 1 Cor. ix. 21.
j Deut. iv. 29, 30. Judg. iii. 9, 10. x. 10—16. Ps. cvi. 44. Hos. vi. 1. xiv. 1—8.
k 15. Is. lv. 6. lxv. 1, 2. Rom. x. 20.
l Judg. v. 6. 1 Sam. xiii. 6. Ps. cxxi. 8.
m Matt. xxiv. 6, 7. Luke xxi. 25.
n xii. 15. xiii. 17. Mark xiii. 8. Luke xxi. 9, 10.
† Heb. *beaten in pieces.*
o xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 17. Judg. ii. 14. Ps. cvi. 41. Is. x. 6. Am. iii. 6. Luke xxi. 22—24.
p Josh. i. 7. 9. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20.
q Gen. xv. 1. Ruth ii. 12. Ps. xix. 11. lviii. 11. Matt. v. 12. 46. vi. 1. 4. 6. 18. x. 41, 42. Luke vi. 35. Rom. iv. 4, *b.* 1 Cor. iii. 8. 14. ix. 17, 18. xv. 58. Col. iii. 24. Heb. vi. 10. x. 35. 2 John 8.

'upon their cause as his own, while they owned him for 'their God.' *Ibid.*—*Camels.* (15) 'The abundance of 'camels which they had, shew they were Arabians.' *Ibid.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The active talents and outward success of ungodly men sometimes make way for the peace and prosperity of those, whose leading aim it is to glorify God and promote true religion; and thus they, whose hearts are "not prepared "to seek the LORD," may be serviceable to others: but nothing will profit our own souls, except that religion, which induces us to "do that which is good and right in "the eyes of the LORD." Indeed, this alone can prepare us for arduous and perilous services; and influence us to undertake, to pursue without weariness, and by cheerful perseverance to accomplish, designs of usefulness in our various situations: and when men in authority, or others according to the duties of their several stations, properly attempt reformation, and support the cause of true religion by scriptural means, they often find less difficulty than they expected: for they are approved even by the consciences of those men, whose sins oppose their designs.—In all our prosperity we should notice and acknowledge the hand of God: if he gives rest, none can cause trouble; and those who uprightly seek him shall find peace and comfort. Yet, while we are in this world, we must prepare for trials and conflicts; we can never be safe except we be watching and praying; and, though the grace of God will indeed be sufficient for his people, none of them will have any strength to spare. Our utmost watchfulness and diligence will not secure us from tribulation: but the consciousness of having heartily served the Lord in prosperity, will turn to us for a testimony, that we are indeed his people and he our God; and this will encourage our confidence in him in the hour of trouble and temptation. When we can clearly see that "God is for "us," we shall be enabled to rest in him, and to call upon him with more vigorous faith and enlarged expectation: and then we shall perceive, that our own weakness, or the power of our assailants, is no good reason for discouragement. Improbabilities, and even apparent *impossibilities*, of help and deliverance, cause no difficulty to an almighty arm: and if the glory of God engage him on our side, no created power can prevail against us. Indeed, it is our duty to employ every prudent precaution, to use all proper means, and to exert the whole strength which he has given us; and in this way he commonly helps us, both in our temporal and spiritual concerns: but he can as readily work without us, as by us; and when we go forth in his name, and are disposed to give him the glory, we shall certainly have all desirable success.—Those, whom the Lord smites, cannot recover their strength, nor they whom he intimidates, their courage; and all things work together for the good of those whom he favours. However he may deal with us in temporal things, if we are indeed the soldiers of Jesus Christ, we must be enriched by every conflict, and prove gainers by all our losses: and the approaching victory over our last enemy death, will make way for our entrance into "his presence, where is fulness of "joy, and pleasures for evermore."

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—7. (*Note* 8.) The prophet met Asa, and his army, as they returned from their victory and triumph over the Cushites; and thus addressed them, with words of warning and encouragement.—It is not easy to determine what times or events were intended by the prophet, in the following verses. Some think, that he referred to the state of Israel, in the days of the judges, when the people for a long time generally forsook, and almost forgot, the true God; the priests were not publick teachers as they ought to have been, and the law was greatly neglected. (*Notes, Deut.* xxxiii. 10. *Josh.* xxi. 1, 2. *Hos.* iv. 6. *Mal.* ii. 4—9.) At the same time the people were exposed to the invasions of various enemies, who destroyed each other, yet alternately harassed and oppressed them: because, for their sins, "God did vex them "with all adversity;" and consequently there was no

8 ¶ And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of [r] Oded the prophet, he [s] took courage, and put away [t] the [u] abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of [u] the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed [x] the altar of the LORD, that *was* before the porch of the LORD.

9 And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and [y] the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for [z] they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when [a] they saw that the LORD his God *was* with him.

10 So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in [b] the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

11 And they [c] offered unto the LORD [†] the same time, of the spoil *which* they had brought [d] seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.

12 And [e] they entered into a covenant to [f] seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul;

13 That [g] whosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, [h] whether small or great, whether man or woman.

14 And [i] they sware unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and [k] with trumpets, and with cornets.

15 And all Judah [l] rejoiced at the oath: for they had [m] sworn with all their heart, and [n] sought him with their whole desire; and [o] he was found of them: and [p] the LORD gave them rest round about.

r 1. xix. 11. Is. xliv. 14. *margins.* Acts xxviii. 15.
s Lev. xviii. 29. Deut. xxvii. 15. Is. lxv. 4. Jer. xvi. 18. Ez. viii. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 3. Rev. xvii. 4, 5.
t Heb. *abominations.* 1 Kings xi. 5. 7. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.
u xiii. 19.
x iv. 1. viii. 12. xxix. 18. 2 Kings xvi. 14 xviii. 22.
y xi. 16. xxx. 1—11. 25.
z 1 Kings xii. 19. 1 Chr. xii. 19.
a Gen. xxxix. 3. 1 Sam. xviii. 28. 1 Kings xi. 28. Zech. viii. 21—23. Acts vii. 9, 10. ix. 31.
B. C. 941.
b Esth. viii. 9.
c xiv. 13—15. Num. xxxi. 28, 29. 50. 1 Sam. xv. 15. 21. 1 Chr. xxvi. 26, 27.
† Heb. *in that day.*
d i. 6. vii. 5.
e xxiii. 16. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31, 32. Deut. xxix. 12. Neh. ix. 38. x. 29. Jer. l. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 5.
f *See on* 4.—Deut. iv. 29. x. 12. 1 Kings viii. 48. Jer. xxix. 12, 13.
g Ex. xxii. 20. Deut. xiii. 5. 9. 15. xvii. 2—5. 1 Kings xviii. 40.
h Gen. xix. 11. Ex. xii. 29. Deut. xxix. 18. Job iii. 19. xxxiv. 19. Ps. cxv. 13. Acts xxvi. 22. Rev. vi. 15. xx. 12.
i Neh. v. 13. x. 29.
k Ps. lxxxi. 1—4
l xxiii. 16—21. xxix. 10. 36. Deut. xxvi. 11. Neh. viii. 9. Ps. xxxii. 11. cxix. 111. Prov. iii. 17. 2 Cor. i. 12.
m Ps. cxix. 106.
n *See on* 2. 4.—Is. xxvi. 8. xlv. 19. Phil. i. 23.
o *See on* 4.
p *See on* 6.—Josh. xxiii. 1. Job xxxiv. 29.

peace to those who journeyed, or went out upon business. Now, these times of trouble and vexation seemed to be returning again, (after the prosperity and peace enjoyed under David and Solomon,) in the divisions, apostasies, idolatries, and calamities of the preceding reigns. And the people might be assured, that the Lord would deal with them by the same measure, as he had dealt with their fathers: if they forsook his worship, and ran into idolatry and impiety, they would be left to all their former miseries; but if they returned to God and served him, he would protect and prosper them: (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 9:) even as when Israel under the judges, in their trouble, sought the Lord, he was always ready to remove their afflictions. This seems the most satisfactory interpretation. But others suppose, that the prophet referred to the state of the kingdom of Israel: they had rejected the true God, expelled the teaching priesthood, and cast off the law of the Lord, and their subsequent calamities were intended as a warning for Judah; yet, even whenever Israel should repent, and seek God, he would be found of them.—Others again suppose the passage to be prophetick of the Babylonish captivity, and even of the present dispersion and future conversion of the Jews, to which the words are doubtless applicable. Perhaps the prophet had some reference to God's general method of dealing with Israel in all ages, and then no wonder that his expressions are descriptive of several distinct transactions.—It is plain, however, that warning and encouragement were intended for Asa and his subjects; and the prophet's scope was to excite them properly to improve their present success, by attempting a more effectual reformation, which would assuredly be rewarded with proportionable prosperity.

V. 8. Perhaps the prophet was called Oded, as well as his father (1), and Azariah by way of distinction: though some think, that Oded confirmed the words of his son by a prophecy to the same effect.—The work of complete reformation appeared to Asa so difficult and perilous, through the inveterate propensity of the people and of the chief persons to idolatry; that he had not courage to attempt it, till thus assured of the divine assistance and acceptance. Accordingly, when he proceeded in his work, many abominable idols were found in every part of the land; which he removed, with those that were in the cities taken from Israel: but, as the golden calf was not removed from Beth-el, it is probable, that city had been previously ceded to the king of Israel, or retaken by him. (*Note*, xiii. 13—22.) He likewise "renewed" the altar of God, in the inner court of the temple; which, it seems, had been left to go to decay, in the preceding reigns, and had not been duly repaired in the preceding years of Asa.

V. 9. *Simeon*, &c.] The situation of this tribe, in part of the lot of Judah, (*Note*, *Josh.* xix. 1—9,) had not prevented them from joining the general revolt. But at this time many of them, with numbers from the other tribes, submitted to Asa, and probably a great part of the tribe of Simeon permanently adhered to Judah.

V. 10, 11. 'This seems to have been a voluntary 'assembly, by common agreement, rather than by the 'king's commandment or invitation; unless we suppose it 'to have been at one of the great festivals.' *Bp. Patrick.*

Fifteenth year, &c. (10) It is said "The land was quiet "ten years" (1): hence it is concluded that Zerah's invasion was in the eleventh year of Asa. Yet that the sacrifices from the spoil should not be offered from the spoil taken, till the fifteenth of Asa, can hardly accord to that supposition.

The same time. (11) 'In the Hebrew, "in that day," 'which the Targum takes to have been in the feast of 'weeks, ... which was kept in the third month, called 'Sivan.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Some previous appointment, however, evidently produced a much more general concourse on this occasion, than would otherwise have taken place.

V. 12—15. The people voluntarily covenanted to seek the Lord, each for himself and all in entire union, with

16 ¶ And also *concerning* [q] Maachah [*] the mother of Asa the king, [r] he removed her from *being* queen, because she had made an [†] idol in a grove: and Asa [s] cut down her idol, and stamped *it*, and burnt *it* at the brook Kidron.

17 But [t] the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless [u] the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

18 And he [x] brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.

19 And there was no *more* war unto the [y] five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.

[*] 1 Kings xv. 13. That is, *grandmother*. 1 Kings xv. 2, 10.

[q] xiv 3—5. Ex. xxxii. 27, 28. Deut. xiii. 6—8. xxxiii. 9. Zech. xiii. 3. Mark iii. 21. 31—35. 2 Cor. v. 16.

[†] Heb. *horror*. *See on* xiv. 3.—xxxiv. 7. Ex. xxxii. 20. Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. vii. 5. 25, 26. ix. 21. 2 Kings xxiii. 6. 12. 15.

[t] xiv. 3—5. Deut. xii. 13, 14. 1 Kings iii. 2—4. xxii. 43. 2 Kings xii. 3. xiv. 4.

[u] xvi. 7—12. 1 Kings xi. 4.

[x] 1 Kings vii. 51. xv. 14, 15. 1 Chr. xxvi. 20—26.

[y] xvi. 1. 1 Kings xv. 16, 17. 32, 33.

all earnestness: and also without respect of persons, to execute the law of God on idolaters; and on those who disregarded the sabbaths and solemn feasts, or refused their attendance on the publick ordinances of religion. (*Notes, Lev.* xxiv. 10—16. *Num.* xv. 31—36. *Deut.* xiii. 1—11.) This covenant they entered into in the most cheerful and open manner; and every one ratified it by a solemn oath, with a loud voice, in the presence of all the people, accompanied by shouting, and the priests sounding with the sacred trumpets, and with cornets: for they were deeply impressed with the kindness which they had experienced, and great numbers were evidently very sincere and earnest in their religion. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'They reaped the happy fruit of this reformation, in the great peace 'which they enjoyed, without disturbance from any of their 'neighbours.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xvi. 23.)

V. 16. *Note*, 1 *Kings* xv. 10—13.

V. 17, 18. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* xv. 14, 15.—*Out of Israel*, &c. (17) Some have thought that this only relates to the cities, which had been taken from the kingdom of Israel: but it is probable that some high places at least were still connived at in Judah; perhaps as a human device, to render the people more willing to renounce idolatry. Yet, upon the whole, Asa meant well and did well, and was cordial in his endeavours for reformation.

V. 19. Baasha died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign: and, as there were wars between Asa and Baasha, (xvi. 1. 1 *Kings* xv. 16, 17. 32, 33;) it seems impossible to reconcile this verse, and the date of the ensuing chapter, with the other history, except by allowing a trivial error of the transcribers, and reading the *twenty-fifth* instead of the *thirty-fifth*, in this verse, and the *twenty-sixth* instead of the *thirty-sixth*, in the first verse of the following chapter. This is the date which Josephus affixes to these events, and it is very probable in itself. Other ways of solving the difficulty have been proposed, but they appear liable to insuperable objections.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Prosperity and comfort should animate us to more diligent obedience; but we need the ministry of the word to remind us of our duty, when successful, as much at least as when afflicted.—The gracious tenour of the gospel authorizes us to assure sinners of every description, that if they "seek the Lord" in a proper manner, he will be found of them; at the same time all should be warned, that if they forsake the Lord, he will cast them off; and we may know that God is with us for every saving purpose, when we are conscious of trusting in his mercy, attending on his ordinances, and walking in obedience to his commandments. But, cautious fear and cheering hope must unite to render us vigilant, active, and stedfast in the ways of God.—The history of the church in all ages, and the experience of every believer, demonstrate, that vexation and distress are the never-failing consequences of negligence and sin, even to those who are not left to final apostasy; and that humiliation before God, and diligent seeking him, uniformly make way for peace and comfort. Hence the benefit of a teaching ministry, of the holy law, and of the blessed gospel. The Lord grant that all, who are called ministers, may become "apt to teach," mighty in the scriptures, men of God, acquainted with him, his truth, and his will, and able to declare his whole counsel to the people! May he send forth such labourers into his harvest, and extend the blessing of them to the remotest nations of the earth! And may the Jews, who have been so long without the "true God and eternal life;" (*Note*, 1 *John* v. 20, 21;) without a teaching priesthood, and without him who is the true and only High Priest of the church, whom "God hath so long vexed with all adversity," at length in their trouble, seek the Lord, be found of him, and be grafted again into their own olive-tree, from which they were broken off through unbelief! —The assured expectation of assistance, acceptance, and a gracious recompence, inspires the soul with courage and strength for present duty: and we ought to exhort and encourage one another, that we may be "strong in the "Lord," and that our hands may not be weak, when we are called to arduous and perilous attempts, for the honour of God, and to promote true religion.—The way to win those, who are of the contrary party, is by shewing them evidently that "the LORD our God is with us." In order to this, all abominable things must be put away, and conscientious obedience must unite with cheerful confidence in God.—Whatever the Lord gives should be employed according to his will: especially we should devote our bodies and souls unto him, according to his everlasting covenant; by accepting of his salvation, and yielding ourselves to his service. Our devotedness to God our Saviour should be avowed and professed, in the most solemn and publick manner. Such obligations indeed bind to no more, than was before our duty: but they have a tendency to fortify the heart against temptation, to excite us in a way of remembrance to every service, and to give us a farther opportunity of watching over each other, and exhorting one another to every good work. Unless, indeed, we sincerely mean to seek and serve God with our whole heart, and our whole soul, such transactions are hypocrisy. But, if we enter into these engagements with uprightness, really purposing to be helpful to others also, we may joyfully expect that the Lord will give rest to our souls.—Every publick transaction should be conducted with cau-

CHAP. XVI.

Asa makes a league with Benhadad against Baasha, who is hindered from building Ramah; and Asa with the stones of it builds Geba and Mizpah, 1—6. Hanani the prophet reproves him for trusting in the Syrians, rather than in God, and is imprisoned by Asa, who at the same time oppressed some of his subjects, 7—10. When sick, Asa seeks to physicians, and not to God, 11, 12. His death and burial, 13, 14.

IN the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa, [a] Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, [b] to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

2 Then Asa [c] brought out silver and gold, out of the treasures of the house of the LORD, and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at [*] Damascus, saying,

3 *There is* [d] a league between me and thee, as *there was* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, [e] break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

4 And Benhadad [f] hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of [†] his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote [g] Ijon, and [h] Dan, and Abelmaim, and all the [i] store cities of Naphtali.

5 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard *it* [j] that he left off building of [l] Ramah, and let his work cease.

6 Then Asa the king took all Judah, and [k] they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building; and he built therewith [l] Geba and [m] Mizpah.

7 ¶ And at that time [n] Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, [o] Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not [p] relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is [q] the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

8 Were not [r] the Ethiopians and the Lubims [‡] a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, [s] because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

9 For [t] the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, [§] to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* [u] whose heart *is* perfect toward him. Herein [v] thou hast done foolishly: therefore from [x] henceforth thou shalt have wars.

10 Then Asa was [y] wroth with the seer, and [z] put him in a prison-house; for *he was* in a rage with him because of this *thing*. And Asa [‖] oppressed *some* of the people [a] the same time.

a *See on* 1 Kings xv. 16—22.
b *See on* xi. 13—17. — xv. 9 1 Kings xii. 27.
c xxviii. 21. 2 Kings xii. 18. xvi. 8. xviii. 15.
* Heb. *Darmesek.*
d xviii. 3. xix. 2. Judg. ii. 2. Is. xxxi. 1—3. 2 Cor. vi. 16.
e Gen. xx. 9, 10. Ex. xxxii. 21. Josh. ix. 19, 20. 2 Sam. xxi. 2. Ps. xv. 4. Ez. xvii. 18, 19. Rom. i. 31, 32. 2 Tim. iii. 3.
f 1 Tim. vi. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 15.
† Heb. *armies which* were *his.*
g 1 Kings xv. 20.
h Gen. xiv. 14. Judg. xviii. 28, 29. xx. 1.
i viii. 6. xvii. 12. 1 Kings ix. 19.
j See on 1.
k 1 Kings xv. 22. Josh. xviii. 24—26. *Gaba.* xxi. 17. 1 Chr. vi. 60. Is. x. 29. Zech. xiv. 10.
l Josh. xv. 38. xviii. 26. 1 Sam. vii. 6. 16. x. 17. *Mizpeh.*
m xix. 2. xx. 34. 1 Kings xvi. 1.
n Ps. cxlvi. 3—6. Is. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 2. Jer. xvii. 5, 6. Eph. i. 12, 13.
o xiii. 18. *xxxii.* 7, 8. 2 Kings xviii. 5. 1 Chr. v. 20.
p See on 3.
q See on xiv. 9—12.
r Heb. *in abundance.*
‡ See on 7.—Ps. ix. 9, 10. xxxvii. 39, 40.
s vi. 20. Job xxxiv. 21. Ps. xxxiv. 15. cxiii. 6. Prov. v. 21. xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. xxxii. 19. Zech. iv. 10. Heb. iv. 13. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
§ Or, *strongly* to *hold with.*
t See on xv. 17. 2 Kings xx. 3.—Ps. xxxvii. 37.
u 1 Sam. xiii. 13. 2 Sam. xii. 7—12. 1 Chr. xxi. 8. Job xxxiv. 18, 19. Jer. v. 21. Matt. v. 22. Luke xii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 36. Gal. iii. 1.
v 1 Kings xv. 32.
x xxv. 16. xxvi. 19. 2 Sam. xii. 13. xxiv. 10—14. Ps. cxli. 5. Prov. ix. 7—9.
y xviii. 26. Jer. xx. 2. xxix. 26. Matt. xiv. 3, 4. Luke iii. 20. Acts xvi. 23, 24.
z Heb. *crushed.* Job xx. 19. *marg.* Is. li. 23. Jer. li. 34. Lam. iii. 34.
‖ a 2 Sam. xi. 4. xii. 31.

tious regard to peace, and to civil subordination in all things lawful, lest our good should be evil spoken of. We are not indeed called on to inflict death, or any secular punishment, on those who are guilty of impiety, apostasy, or idolatry; yet, they who neglect the great salvation of the gospel, will by no means escape a more dreadful doom. —No relative affections are to be indulged, when they interfere with our evident duty to God: but where the heart is upright, there will be peace and acceptance, though we come short of that perfection which is proposed to us, and to which we should continually be pressing forwards.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—6. (*Notes*, xv. 19. 1 *Kings* xvi. 8—14.)—Baasha seems to have meditated war against Judah from the beginning of his reign: and probably he had made some hostile attempts before; but he was not able to make any formidable attack, till the year preceding his death. At that time, he so fortified Ramah, upon the frontiers of the land, that he not only prevented his own subjects from migrating into Judah, but stopped all travellers from passing: and this both hindered the Israelites from going over to the king of Judah, and was likely, it seems, to reduce him and his subjects to distress. In this difficulty, Asa distrusted his own troops, and neglected the proper means of defence; and he likewise gave up his confidence in God, and used very sinful means for deliverance. He tempted a heathen prince, with the consecrated treasures, to break a solemn league, and to turn his arms against his ally: and, by making a league with him to this effect, he became accessary to all the treachery, perjury, injustice, and cruelty, of Benhadad! But, though it answered a present purpose, it exposed him to severe rebukes, and he never prospered afterwards. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xv. 17—22.)

V. 7—10. Asa's misconduct entirely originated from unbelief. Had he relied on the Lord, he would have defended him against the Israelites, and enabled him likewise to prevail against the king of Syria, who was then in league with Baasha; by which he might have enriched his treasures, instead of emptying them to purchase his assistance. This was the more inexcusable in him, seeing he had before experienced the prevalence of faith and prayer, in his victory over the Ethiopians. (*Notes*, xiv. 9—15. 2 *Sam.* xii. 8—10.) Indeed, Asa could not be ignorant, that the omnipresent and ever watchful providence of God notices all the wants, dangers, and trials of those, who uprightly trust and serve him; and is ever at hand to give

11 And, behold, [b] the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings [c] of Judah and Israel.

12 And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was [d] diseased in his feet, until his disease *was* exceeding *great:* yet [e] in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the [f] physicians.

13 And Asa [g] slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.

14 And they buried him in [h] his own sepulchres, which he had [*] made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed, which was filled with [i] sweet odours, and divers kinds *of spices* prepared by [k] the apothecaries' art: and they made [l] a very great burning for him.

b ix. 29. xii. 15. xx. 34. xxvi. 22.
c xxv. 26. xxvii. 7. xxxii. 32. xxxiii. 18. xxxv. 27. 1 Kings xv. 23.
d Matt. vii. 2. Luke vi. 37, 38. Rev. iii. 19.
e *See on* 9.—xxviii. 22. 1 Chr. x. 14. Jer. xvii. 5.
f Gen. l. 2. Job xiii. 4. Jer. viii. 22. Matt. ix. 12. Mark ii. 17. v. 26. Col. iv. 14.
B. C. 914.
g 1 Kings xv. 24.
h xxxv. 24. Is. xxii. 16. John xix. 41, 42.
* Heb. *digged.*
i Gen. l. 2. Mark xvi. 1. John xix. 39, 40.
k Ex. xxx. 25—37. Ec. x. 1.
l xxi. 19. Jer. xxxiv. 5.

speedy and effectual assistance to them, as the case may require. (*Marg. Ref.*) In this Asa greatly failed; and the prophet plainly told him, that he had acted *foolishly*, and thenceforth should have wars. His subsequent conduct seems to be without parallel in scripture. No one decidedly *pious* man, as I recollect, is recorded to have so deeply resented a reproof from a prophet in the name of God, as to have used severity against him for it: yet the expressions concerning Asa's character are so strong, (xiv. 2. xv. 17;) that we must consider him as an exception; and a lamentable proof that there is no kind of sin, which a believer is not capable of committing, if left to himself: so that we must not form our judgment of men's characters from any detached actions, but the general tenour of their conduct.—In his rage he committed the prophet to prison, or rather he "put him into the stocks," for that is the meaning of the original word; perhaps excusing himself to others, and to his own conscience, by criminating the prophet as rude, intermeddling, and insolent: and perhaps, when some of the people censured his conduct, he oppressed them also, as determined to crush all opposition by violent means. It is probable, however, that he speedily released the prophet; and as he lived at least fifteen years after this event, (for so long he lived after Baasha's death;) and as we do not find that he oppressed or persecuted any person, except on this occasion; we may conclude that he repented, and adhered to the service of God to the close of his life. But, having openly dishonoured the Lord, the latter part of his reign was obscure, inglorious, and troublesome.—It is not said what wars he was engaged in; but probably they were more perplexing to him, than fatal to his people.

Lubims. (8) 'The people of Libya, or the Africans 'beyond Egypt.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, xii. 3, 4.) This favours the opinion that the Ethiopians, commanded by Zerah, were those of Africa, not the Cushites in Arabia. (*Note*, xiv. 9—15.)—*He was in a rage with him because of this thing.* (10) 'For which he ought to have thanked 'and rewarded him.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12. 'Asa had the gout, which increased to such a 'height that he died of it, as Pellicanus thinks; which 'was a just punishment for putting the prophet's feet in 'the stocks.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Under this excruciating correction he relapsed into his former sin, of relying on man, and not on the Lord. If he consulted physicians, properly so called, his sin entirely consisted in his *reliance* on them, instead of seeking a blessing from God on the means which they employed. But, perhaps they were such persons as attempted, by charms, or other superstitious devices, to alleviate his pain: and then the thing itself likewise was exceedingly sinful. As the Lord has been pleased to throw a cloud upon his memory, we will not further attempt to penetrate it; though from the character which he bears in scripture, it may be inferred, that he did not die without repenting of this sin also.

V. 13, 14. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some have considered this funeral, as an argument of the improper state of Asa's heart, even at death, supposing that he appointed it for himself, out of vain glory, and in conformity to heathen customs. Indeed, it is said, that he *digged* sepulchres for himself, (*marg.*) as Manasseh and others also did: but probably the pomp of his interment, which had nothing idolatrous or unlawful in it, was intended by the people as an expression of respect for his memory; (*Marg. Ref.*) for, notwithstanding the blemishes recorded in this chapter, he had been an excellent, valuable, and successful prince: and the state of Judah during his reign was most happy, compared with the distractions and miseries of Israel. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xvi. 23.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Those, who on some occasions, "being strong in faith, "glorify God," and bring blessings on themselves and others by so doing; at other times shew, that faith is lamentably out *of* exercise: (*Notes, Gen.* xii. 1—5. 11—16:) and whenever men waver, as to confidence in God, they grow negligent and heartless in waiting on him, and serving him, and in using proper means for their own defence or deliverance; and become ready to turn aside into by-paths, and employ sinful expedients. When once any person has set forward in this down-hill road, he hurries along from one crime to another, till he falls into greater ungodliness; nor can we tell into what impiety, treachery, or injustice, we may run, if left to ourselves. Well may we then be cautioned, "while we think we stand, to take "heed lest we fall;" and well may we pray, "Lord, in-"crease our faith!"—The self-sufficient are impatient of reproof or contradiction; and then the plain language of faithful ministers appears ill-nature, ill-manners, impertinence, or insolence. In this case, if power unite with haughty resentment, persecution will follow: so that they are not qualified at all times, to deliver the messages of God, even to good princes, who are not ready to bear the cross. For, in general, "the flatterer, who spreads a net "for a man's feet," and merits execration, may more reasonably expect a reward from men; than he who most affectionately labours for their present and eternal good, but who will, when needful, speak offensive truth, unreservedly, and in plain language. (*Notes, Matt.* xiv. 3—11.)—Those, who venture to take the part of such as have thus

CHAP. XVII.

Jehoshaphat succeeds Asa, reigns well, and prospers, 1—6. He sends priests and Levites, accompanied by princes, to teach the law throughout Judah, 7—9. God overawes the minds of Jehoshaphat's neighbours, so that they submit to him, 10, 11. His greatness, and his army, with the captains, 12—19.

a 1 Kings xv. 24. xxii. 41. 1 Chr. iii. 10.—Matt. i. 8. *Josaphat.*
b xii. 1. xxvi. 8. xxxii. 5. 1 Sam. xxiii. 16. Ezra vii. 28. Eph. vi. 10.
c *See on* xi. 11, 12.
d xv. 8.
e xv. 2. 9. Gen. xxxix. 2, 3. 21. Ex. iii. 12. iv. 12. Josh. i. 5. 9. Judg. ii. 18. vi. 12. 2 Sam. v. 10. 1 Chr. xxii. 18. Ps. xlvi. 7. 11. Is. viii. 10. xli. 10. Matt. i. 23. xviii. 20. xxviii. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 22.
f 2 Sam. viii. 15. 1 Kings xi. 6. xv. 3, 4. 2 Kings xiv. 3. xvi. 2. xviii. 3. xxii. 2. Ps. cxxxii. 1—5.
* Or, *his father, and of David.* xiv. 2—5. 11. xv. 8—13.
g Judg. ii. 11. xiii. 33. Jer. ii. 23.
h Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. ii. 12. iv. 1.
i 1 Kings xii. 28. 33. xiii. 33, 34. xvi. 31—33. 2 Kings viii. 18. xvii. 19. Jer. iii. 7, 8. Hos. iv. 15.

AND a Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, b and strengthened himself against Israel.

2 And he c placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and d in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.

3 And e the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because f he walked in the first ways of * his father David, and g sought not unto Baalim;

4 But sought to the *LORD* God of his father, and h walked in his commandments, and i not after the doings of Israel.

5 Therefore k the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah † brought to Jehoshaphat l presents; and m he had riches and honour in abundance.

6 And n his heart was ‡ lifted up ° in the ways of the LORD: moreover p he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.

7 ¶ Also in the third year of his reign q he sent to his princes, *even* to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Micaiah, r to teach in the cities of Judah.

8 And with them *he sent* Levites, *even* Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, s priests.

9 And they taught in Judah, and *had* t the book of the law of the LORD

k 2 Sam vii. 25, 26. 1 Kings ix. 4, 5. Ps. cxxvii. 1. cxxxii. 12. 1 Pet. v. 10.
† Heb. *gave.*
l xxxii. 23. 1 Sam. x. 27. 1 Kings iv. 21. x. 25. Ps. lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10. lxxvi. 11. Matt. ii. 11.
m i. 15. ix. 27. xviii. 1. xxxii. 27—29. Gen. xiii. 2. xxvi. 13, 14. Deut. viii. 13, 14. Job xlii. 12. Matt. vi. 33.
n Deut. xxviii. 47. Job xxii. 26.
‡ That is, *was encouraged.*
o Ps. xviii. 21. cxix. 1. cxxxviii. 5. Hos. xiv. 9. Acts xiii. 10.
p xiv. 3. xv. 17. xix. 3. xx. 33. xxxi. 1. xxxiv. 3—7. 1 Kings xxii. 43.
B. C. 912.
q Deut. iv. 5. Ps. xxxiv. 11. li. 13. Ec. i. 12. xii. 9, 10. Is. xlix. 23.
r xv. 3. xxx. 22. xxxv. 3. Deut. xxxiii. 10. Neh. viii. 7, 8. 13, 14. ix. 3. Matt. iv. 23. Mark iv. 2. Luke iv. 43, 44. Acts i. 1.
s Ezra vii. 1—6. Mal. ii. 7.
t Deut. vi. 6—9. Luke iv. 17—19.
xxxi. 11—13. Josh. i. 7, 8. Is. viii. 20. Matt. xv. 2—9. xxviii. 19, 20. John v. 39. 46. Acts xiii. 15. xv. 21. xxviii. 23. Rom. iii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 14.

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given umbrage, must expect to share in the resentment which they have excited; for where rage prevails against the fear of God, justice and humanity will scarcely be attended to. If, however, any of the Lord's own people thus resent the conduct of his faithful ministers, they may lay their account with most severe chastisement: and when they repeatedly relapse into the same crime, they may expect to go down into the grave in dishonour and in uncertainty, and to leave their characters involved in obscurity.—But, notwithstanding incidental faults, we should honour the memory of those who have been useful in their generation, and that of our benefactors: leaving their eternal state to the heart-searching Judge.—In all our conflicts and sufferings, we have need especially to look to our own hearts, that they be "perfect towards God," in the exercise of faith, patience, and obedience: remembering that "his eyes run to and fro, throughout the earth, "to shew himself strong in behalf of them," who thus trust and serve him; being an ever-present and all-sufficient Helper and Comforter. And he will especially plead the cause, and abundantly recompense the sufferings, of those who are here persecuted for righteousness' sake, and for being faithful to his truth, and in delivering his message to their fellow sinners.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref.* a, b.) It is probable that Asa had been engaged in war with the kingdom of Israel, after the establishment of Omri on the throne, though no events occurred so considerable as to be recorded.—*In the cities of Ephraim*, &c. (2) *Note*, xv. 8.

V. 3. *The first ways*, &c.] Jehoshaphat copied the example of David, by proceeding to reform the state of religion immediately on his accession to the throne; and in his zeal for the pure, orderly, and spiritual worship of God: but he carefully avoided those sins, into which David afterwards fell. This is the common explication of the expression.—But as David's piety and zeal never shone brighter than at the close of his life; perhaps the words might as properly be read, "In the first ways, even those "of David his father:" proposing him as his model, and not the succeeding princes, under whom idolatry had been introduced, tolerated, or but feebly opposed; and not being satisfied even with walking in the steps of his father Asa, but aiming to reduce matters to their ancient purity.—The margin reads it, *of his father, and of David;* for the latter days of Asa were not so worthy of imitation as his former had been.

V. 4, 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'As he worshipped not the 'gods of other countries, so he did not join with the Israel-'ites in worshipping God by the calves. ...Riches procure 'men honour, when they make such a good use of them, 'as he did.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 6. The heart of Jehoshaphat was lifted up, not in pride, but in courage, zeal, and vigour. By strong faith and ardent love, he was lifted up above fears and discouragements; and readily faced and endured dangers and difficulties in the cause of God. And he did not glory in his riches and honour, but in serving the Lord, and promoting his cause. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* ii. 1.)—He took away the high places in Judah; but perhaps he left them in the cities of Ephraim; or he destroyed such as were devoted to idols, but spared those in which God was worshipped. Or, he destroyed them at the beginning of his reign; but his subjects restored some of them afterwards, (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xx. 31—34. 1 *Kings* xxii. 41—45, *v.* 43.)

V. 7—9. While the priests and Levites neglected their duty, as publick teachers, the people remained ignorant of

with them, and went about [u] throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

10 ¶ And [x] the fear of the LORD [*] fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, [y] so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

11 Also *some* of the Philistines [z] brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute-silver: and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats.

12 And Jehoshaphat [a] waxed great exceedingly: and he built [b] in Judah [†] castles, and cities of store.

13 And he had [c] much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, *were* in Jerusalem.

14 And these *are* [d] the numbers of them according [e] to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands; Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valour [f] three hundred thousand.

15 And [‡] next to him *was* Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.

16 And next him *was* Amasiah the son of Zichri, who [g] willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour.

17 And of Benjamin; Eliada, a mighty man of valour, and with him [h] armed men with bow and shield, two hundred thousand.

18 And next him *was* Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war.

19 These waited on the king, beside *those*, whom the king [i] put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.

u Matt. x. 23. xi. 1. Acts viii. 40.
x *See on* xiv. 14. —Gen. xxxv. 5. Ex. xv. 14—16. Josh. ii. 9—11.
* Heb. *was.*
y xvi. 9. Ex. xxxiv. 24. Prov. xvi. 7.
z *See on* 5.—ix. 14. xxvi. 8. 2 Sam. viii. 2. 2 Kings iii. 4.
a xviii. 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 25.
b viii. 2—6. xi. 6—12. xiv. 6, 7. xxvi. 6—9. xxvii. 4. xxxii. 5. 27—29.
† Or, *palaces.*
c xxvi. 10—15. 1 Chr. xxvii. 25—31.
d Gen. xii. 2. xiii. 16. xv. 5.
e *See on* Num. i. 2. 18.
f xi. 1. xiii. 3. xiv. 8. xxvi. 13.
‡ Heb. *at his hand.*
g Judg. v. 2. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 9. 14. 17. Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor. viii. 3—5. 12.
h xiv. 8. 2 Sam. i. 21, 22.
i 2. 12. xi. 12. 23.

the truth and law of God, and were easily seduced into superstition or idolatry: so that the reformations which took place were rather the result of authority than conviction and distinct knowledge; and thus only external and transient. Asa and his people had done well, in covenanting together to punish those who would not seek the Lord: (*Note*, xv. 12—15:) for this was according to the tenour and intention of that introductory dispensation; under which the capital punishment of apostate Israelites was one divinely appointed method of preserving that people from sinking wholly into idolatry, till the coming of Christ. But Jehoshaphat did better, when he added the publick teaching of the people from the law of God: for this not only tended to the same object, but promoted the salvation of souls, and the increase of spiritual worshippers, who would hand down religion to their posterity. The princes were joined in commission with the priests and Levites; both to excite the latter to their duty, and to induce the attention of the people. Probably they acted as magistrates, and were men of known probity, piety, and acquaintance with the law of God; who, when they administered justice, instructed and exhorted the people, and charged them, both as a matter of conscience, and as they regarded the favour of the king, to receive and observe the instructions of the priests and Levites. The persons from among the priests and Levites, who were appointed to be the itinerant instructors, were doubtless selected, because they were known to be eminent for piety and ability. They took the book of the law with them, and read and expounded it wherever they went, grounding all their instructions upon it. It must also be supposed, that these teachers were intended to excite and to strengthen the hands of the priests and Levites, who resided in the neighbourhood of the cities to which they went, and who were to be considered as the stated teachers in their several districts. (*Note*, xv. 1—7.) It has before been shewn, that the prophets in the kingdom of Israel held stated assemblies for religious worship, on the sabbath-days, and on some of their solemn feasts. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* iv. 23.) And it is probable, that from this time it became gradually the practice of the priests and Levites in Judah, as far as they paid regard to their duty; but this alas, was but seldom done. Synagogues, as it appears from this history, were not yet regularly formed in Judah; and the book of the law seems to have been very scarce, and but little attended to by the people in general, or made known to them by their regular instructors. (*Note*, xv. 1—7, *v.* 3.)

V. 10. The army of Jehoshaphat was indeed very formidable (13—19), yet it was "the fear of the LORD" that deterred his neighbours from attacking him: they were so dismayed, that they dared not to attempt any thing against one, who was so evidently favoured of God; and it is probable, the surrounding nations had observed, that Judah always prospered, when the worship of God was kept up in the land. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xxxiv. 24. *Lev.* xxvi. 3, 4. *Deut.* xxviii. 3—14.)

V. 11. The Philistines had been subdued by David, and no doubt had paid him tribute; but, after a time, they seem to have again become independent: (*Note*, *2 Kings* xviii. 8:) and it is not certain, whether they and the Arabians brought these presents to Jehoshaphat, as submitting to his authority, or only as desiring to conciliate his friendship.

V. 13—19. Jehoshaphat's militia far exceeded in number that of any of his predecessors, (xiii. 3,) though he did not possess much above a third of the country, over which David and Solomon had reigned. But great numbers had flocked into his kingdom from Israel, his people increased by a peculiar blessing, and no wasting wars had occurred

CHAP. XVIII.

Jehoshaphat joins affinity with Ahab, and agrees to go with him against Ramoth-gilead, 1—3. The false prophets assure them of success, 4, 5. At Jehoshaphat's request Micaiah is sent for, who foretels Ahab's death, and shews that his prophets were instigated by a lying spirit, 6—22. He is reviled and sent back to prison, 23—27. Ahab goes in disguise to the battle; where Jehoshaphat, in imminent danger, calls on God, and is preserved, 28—32. Ahab is slain by an arrow shot at a venture, 33, 34.

for many years. It is probable that these troops served by rotation; (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxvii. 1—15;) and some of them might be employed in the buildings and other business, which he had in the cities of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*) One of his chief officers is distinguished, for having offered himself willingly to serve God, as well as his country, in that station (16).

Much business. (13) 'To settle religion, and purge out 'idolatry, as well as to provide for their safety, by fortifi- 'cations, and whatsoever was necessary for the publick 'tranquillity.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

It is a signal blessing, when the Lord raises up pious and able men, in church or state, to succeed one another. For often useful instruments are removed, or laid aside, at the very crisis when their preparations were completed, and their purposes in a fair way of being effected; and others come in their stead, who take a pride and pleasure in rendering their schemes abortive: and thus "one sin- "ner destroyeth much good." (*Notes, Ec.* ii. 18—23. *John* iv. 31—38.) It therefore behoves us all to pray for a succession of useful men, who may every one of them endeavour to complete the designs of their predecessors, and make way for the usefulness of their successors: and did all pious persons, with one accord and without intermission, unite in such prayers, in behalf of the community, the church at large, and particular congregations; they would witness blessed effects, and brighter prospects would open before us.—It is happy when prudence, vigour, and piety unite in distinguished characters; when they carefully imitate the best parts of the conduct of eminent believers, and as carefully avoid their mistakes; and when the purest ages of the church are made the models of personal religion and publick reformation. Indeed, we should all study to walk in those "first ways" of Christians, when "great "grace was upon them all," and not be satisfied with the current standard of modern profession: this would tend to the establishment of our hearts in peace and assurance, and to the prosperity of our endeavours to glorify God and to do good.—When faith is in vigorous exercise, and when zeal, love, and active hope render the ways of God delightful; the soul rises superior to dangers and difficulties, disregards hardships and labours, and can even rejoice in sufferings for the Lord's sake. Then low, earthly affections are subdued; the heart is lifted up above them, and soars heaven-ward; glorying in nothing but the service, truth, and favour of God, and ambitious of no other honour. This exalted piety springs from genuine poverty of spirit: and a deep sense of the condescension of the infinite God, in employing and accepting us poor, guilty, polluted, worthless creatures, inspires the heart with renewed vigour in his service.

V. 7—19.

The publick teaching of the word of God forms, in all ages, the grand method of promoting the power of godliness: for by it the understanding is informed, the judgment regulated, the conscience awakened and directed, and the hopes, fears, and affections suitably excited; and, as far as the divine blessing is vouchsafed, religious worship is rendered a voluntary, reasonable, and spiritual service. Kings and princes, therefore, render a most essential service to the cause of God, when they use their influence to excite and countenance those, who "labour in "the word and doctrine;" and by their example and publick declarations make it known, that they most approve of such as diligently attend on the instructions of such teachers. And though no violence must be done to any man's conscience, nor any one constrained to teach in contradiction to his judgment; yet surely they, who are publickly maintained as teachers of the people, may be required either to do their work, or to give place to those who will!—Notwithstanding the prejudices of mankind, and the indiscretions of individuals, *an itinerant preacher*, if duly qualified and sent forth, is one of the most honourable and useful characters, that can be found upon earth: and there needs no other proof that, when this work is done properly and with perseverance, it forms the grand method of spreading widely, and rendering efficacious, religious knowledge, than the experience of the church in all ages; for great reformations and revivals of religion have generally been thus effected. It is especially sanctioned by the example of Christ and his apostles, and recommended as the divine method of spreading the gospel through the nations of the earth; *itinerant preaching* having almost always preceded, and made way for, the stated ministry of *regular pastors*. But it is a work which requires peculiar talents and dispositions, and a peculiar call in Providence; and is not rashly and hastily to be ventured upon by every novice, who has learned to speak about the gospel, and has more zeal, than knowledge, prudence, humility, or experience. An unblemished character, a disinterested spirit, an exemplary deadness to the world, unaffected humility, deep acquaintance with the human heart, and preparation for enduring the cross, not only with boldness, but with meekness, patience, and sweetness of temper, are indispensably necessary in such a service. They who engage in it should go upon broad scriptural grounds, and dwell chiefly upon those grand essentials of religion, in which pious men of different persuasions are agreed; plainly proving every thing from the word of God, running nothing into extremes, and avoiding all disputes, however urged to it, about the *shibboleths* of a party. In this way itinerant preaching is a blessing which all, who love the souls of men, must wish to be vouchsafed to every part of every nation upon earth. And if those who are in authority, would employ select men of known and approved piety and ability, protected and countenanced by them, to go from city to city, and from village to village, through the kingdom, teaching in every place the plain acknowledged truths and precepts of the Bible, immense good might be

NOW Jehoshaphat had [a] riches and honour in abundance, and [b] joined affinity with Ahab.

2 And [*] after *certain* years [c] he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And [d] Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that *he had* with him, and [e] persuaded him to go up *with him* to [f] Ramoth-gilead.

3 And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered him, [g] I *am* as thou *art*, and my people as thy people; and *we will be* with thee in the war.

4 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, [h] Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day.

5 Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of [i] prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, [j] Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, [k] Go up; for God will deliver *it* into the king's hand.

6 But Jehoshaphat said, [l] *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD [†] besides, that we might enquire of him?

7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* yet [m] one man by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but [n] I hate him; for he never prophesieth [o] good unto [p] me, but always evil: the same *is* Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, [q] Let not the king say so.

8 And the king of Israel called for one *of his* [‡] officers, and said, [s] Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla.

9 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, [r] sat either of them on his throne, [s] clothed in *their* robes, and they sat in a [‖] void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria: and [t] all the prophets prophesied before them.

10 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him [u] horns of iron, and said, [x] Thus saith the LORD, With these thou shalt push Syria, until [*] they be consumed.

11 And [y] all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper; for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

12 And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, [z] Behold, the words of the prophets *declare* good to the king with one [†] assent: let thy word, therefore, I pray thee, be like one of their's, and speak thou good.

13 And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, [a] even what my God saith, that will I speak.

a i. 11—15.—*See on* xvii. 5. 12.—Matt. vi. 33.
b 31. xix. 2, 3. 6. xxii. 1 Kings xvi. 31 —33. xxi. 25. 2 Kings viii. 18. 26. xi. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 14.
* Heb. *at the end of years.* 1 Kings xvii. 7. Neh. xiii. 6. *margins.*
c xix. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 2.
d 1 Kings i. 9. Is. xxii. 13. Luke xvii. 27—29.
e 1 Kings xxii. 4. 20—22.
f Deut. iv. 43. Josh. xx. 8. 1 Kings iv. 13. 2 Kings ix. 1.
g *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 4. 2 Kings iii. 7. — Ps. cxxxix. 21. Eph. v. 11. 2 John 10, 11.
h xxxiv. 26. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2. 4. 9—12. 2 Sam. ii. 1. v. 19. 23. 1 Kings xxii. 5, 6. Ps. xxvii. 4. Jer. xxi. 2. Ez. xx. 3.
i 1 Kings xviii. 19. 2 Kings iii. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 3.
j Jer. xxxviii. 14, &c. xlii. 2, 3. 20.
k 14. 20, 21. Jer. viii. 10, 11. xxiii. 17. Ez. xiii. 3—16. 22. Mic. ii. 11. iii. 11. Rev. xix. 20.
l *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 7—9. 2 Kings iii. 11—13.
† Heb. *yet*, or, *more.*
m 1 Kings xviii. 4. xix. 10.
n 1 Kings xviii. 17. xx. 42, 43. xxi. 20. Prov. ix. 8. Jer. xviii. 18. Am. v. 10. Mark vi. 18, 19. 27. John vii. 7. xv. 18, 19. 24. Gal. iv. 16.
o Is. xxx. 10. Jer. xxxviii. 4.
p 13. 2 Kings iii. 13. 22. Ez. iii. 17—19. Acts xx. 26, 27.
q Prov. xxv. 12. Mic. ii 7.
‡ Or, *eunuchs.* 1 Sam. viii. 15. 1 Chr. xxviii. 1. *margins.* Is. xxxix. 7. Dan. i. 3. 7, 8.
§ Heb. *Hasten.* 25, 26. 1 Kings xxii. 9.
r *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 10—12.—Is. xiv. 9. Ez. xxvi. 16. Dan. v. 1. 9. Matt. xix. 28.
s 29. Matt. vi. 29. xi. 8.
‖ Or, *floor.*
t Jer. xxvii. 14—16.
u Jer. xxvii. 2. xxviii. 10—14. Zech. i. 18—21. 2 Tim. iii. 8.
x Jer. xxiii. 17. 21. 25. 31. xxviii. 2, 3. xxix. 21. Ez. xiii. 7. xxii. 28.
* Heb. thou *consume them.*
y 5. 12. 33, 34. Prov. xxiv. 24, 25. Mic. iii. 5. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. Jude 16. Rev. xvi. 13, 14. xix. 20.
z Job xxii. 13. Ps. x. 11. Hos. vii. 3. Am. vii. 13. Mic. ii. 6. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16.
† Heb. *mouth.* Josh. ix. 2. *marg.*
a Num. xxii. 18—20. 35. xxiii. 12. 26. xxiv. 13. 1 Kings xxii. 14. Jer. xxiii. 28. xlii. 4. Ez. ii. 7. Mic. ii. 6, 7. Acts xx. 27. 1 Cor. xi. 23. 2 Cor. ii. 17. Gal. i. 10. 1 Thes. ii. 4.

done. Those stated teachers, who have been grossly negligent or profligate, must either be disgraced or reformed; others might be stirred up to use greater diligence; and the instructions of stated faithful ministers would receive an additional sanction, which could not fail of producing a happy effect.—Thus it was in the days of Jehoshaphat; and thus it will be, wherever or whenever God shall please to stir up the hearts of kings, princes, and ministers, to teach the people in every part of their territories, according to the word of God. This is also the proper way of promoting publick peace and prosperity; and, it will prove a better protection of nations, than an increase of powerful armies or navies: yet it may very properly be connected with the ordinary methods of defence.—Persons in authority have "much business" to which they ought to attend: and they should consider that stable peace, and increasing numbers of well maintained and orderly subjects, are more honourable than the most successful wars: and whatever ability any man possesses, he should willingly devote himself to God, and serve him with all that he has.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. *Affinity*, &c.] Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat married Athaliah the daughter of Ahab. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 2. 2 *Kings* viii. 18. 26.) Perhaps pride and ambition had some influence in forming this fatal union: but probably Jehoshaphat was allured to it, by the hopes of cementing a durable peace between Judah and Israel, whom he wished to consider as brethren. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* viii. 18.) Ahab perceived Jehoshaphat to be so strong, that he had no hopes of prevailing against him, and therefore he courted his friendship. But this affinity was evil in itself, and peculiarly dangerous to Jehoshaphat; who, though firm and courageous in resisting and overcoming opposition and difficulties, was easily persuaded by fair words into improper compliances. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 4. 7. 29. 2 *Kings* iii. 7.)

V. 2—6. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 1—7.—*We will be with thee in the war.* (3) Thus Jehoshaphat expressly engaged to assist Ahab, before he proposed to enquire of God. (*Note*, *Josh.* ix. 14, 15.)—'Ahab entertained both Jehoshaphat 'and his attendants, with great splendour. ... He caressed 'him so at this feast, and used such arguments, as pre'vailed with him to undertake this expedition. What he 'had consented to in the midst of their merriment, he 'seems now to resolve deliberately.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 7—13. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 7—14.

14 ¶ And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, [b] Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.

15 And the king said to him, How many times [c] shall I adjure thee, that thou say nothing but the truth to me, in the name of the LORD?

16 Then [d] he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, [e] as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no [f] master; let them return *therefore* every man to his house in peace.

17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, [g] Did I not tell thee *that* he would not prophesy good unto me, * but evil?

18 Again he said, Therefore [h] hear the word of the LORD: [i] I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and [j] all the host of heaven standing on his right hand, and *on* his left.

19 And the LORD said, [k] Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may [l] go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake, saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner.

20 Then [m] there came out a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?

21 And he said, I will go out, and be [n] a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And *the* LORD said, [o] Thou shalt entice *him*, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do *even* so.

22 Now therefore, behold, [p] the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, [q] and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

23 Then [r] Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, [s] Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?

24 And Micaiah said, [t] Behold, thou shalt see on that day, when thou shalt go † into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

25 Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, [u] and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

26 And say, Thus saith the king, [x] Put [y] this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with [z] bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, [a] until I return in peace.

27 And Micaiah said, [b] If thou certainly return in peace, *then* hath not the LORD spoken by me. And he said, [c] Hearken, all ye people.

28 ¶ So [d] the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-gilead.

29 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, [e] I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but [f] put thou on thy robes. So [g] the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went to the battle.

30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that *were* with him, saying, [h] Fight ye not with [i] small or great, save only with the king of Israel.

31 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It *is* the king of Israel: therefore they compassed about him to fight: but [k] Jehoshaphat cried out, and [l] the LORD helped him; and [m] God moved them *to depart* from him.

32 For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again ‡ from pursuing him.

33 And [n] a *certain* man drew a bow [o] at a venture, and smote the king of Israel [‖] between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariotman, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am * wounded.

34 And the battle increased: that

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a 1 Kings xviii. 27. xxii. 15. Ec. xi. 1. Lam. iv. 21. Am. iv. 4, 5. Mic. xxvi. 45.

b 1 Sam. xiv. 24. 1 Kings xxii. 16. Matt. xxvi. 63. Mark v. 7. Acts xix. 13.

c 1 Sam. xiv. 24. 1 Kings xxii. 16. Matt. xxvi. 63. Mark v. 7. Acts xix. 13.

d Matt. xxvi. 64.

e 33, 34. 1 Kings xxii. 17. 34—36. Jer. xxiii. 1, 2. Ez. xxxiv. 5, 6. & Zech. x. 2. xiii. 7. Matt. ix. 36. Mark vi. 34.

f 2 Sam. ii. 7. v. 2. 2 Kings x. 3.

g *See on* 7. 1 Kings xxii. 18.—Prov. xxix. 1. Jer. xliii. 2, 3.

* Or, *but for evil.*

h Is. i. 10. xxviii. 14. xxxix. 5. Jer. ii. 4. xix. 3. xxxiv. 4. Am. vii. 16.

i 1 Kings xxii. 19—23. Is. vi. 1—5. Dan. vii. 9, 10. Acts vii. 55, 56.

j Gen. xxxii. 2. Ps. ciii. 20, 21. Zech. i. 10.

k *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 20.—Job xii. 16. Is. vi. 9, 10. liv. 16. Ez. xiv. 9. 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12. Jam. i 13, 14.

l xxv. 8. 19. Prov. xi. 5.

m Job i. 6. ii. 1. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 13—15.

n 22. Gen. iii. 4, 5. — *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 21, 22.—John viii. 44. 1 John iv. 6. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 14. xx. 8.

o *See on* 19—Judg. ix. 23. Job i. 12. ii. 6. Ps. cix. 17.

p Ex. iv. 21. Ez. xiv. 8—5. 9. Matt. xxiv. 24, 25. 2 Cor. xi. 13—13. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

q *See on* 7. 17.—xxv. 18. Is. iii. 11. Matt. xxvi. 24, 25. Mark xiv. 20, 21.

r *See on* 10. 1 Kings xxii. 23—25.—Is. i. 5, 6. Jer. xx. 2. Lam. iii. 30. Mic. v. 1. Matt. xxvi. 67. John xviii. 22. 23. Acts xxiii. 2, 3.

s Jer. xxix. 26, 27. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. John ix. 40, 41.

t Is. xxvi. 11. Jer. xxviii. 16, 17. xxix. 21, 22. 32.

† Or, *from chamber to chamber.* Heb. *into a chamber in a chamber.* 1 Kings xx. 30. Is. xxvi. 20.

u 8. Jer. xxxvii. 15—21. xxxviii. 6, 7. Acts xxiv. 25—27.

x *See on* 15. xvi. 10. — 1 Kings xxii. 26—28. Jer. xx. 2, 3. Matt. v. 12. Luke iii. 19, 20. Acts v. 18. 2 Cor. xi. 23 Rev. xi. 10.

y 1 Sam. xxv. 21. Matt. xii. 24. Luke xxiii. 2. Acts xxii. 22.

z Ps. lxxx. 5. cii. 9. Is. xxx. 20.

a Deut. xxix. 19. Ps. x. 5. Prov. xiv. 16. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3.

b Num. xvi. 29. Acts xiii. 10, 11.

c Matt. xiii. 9. xv. 10. Mark vii. 14. Luke xx. 45, 46.

d *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 29—33.

e 1 Sam. xxviii. 8. 1 Kings xiv. 2—6. xx. 38. Job xxiv. 15. Jer. xxiii. 24.

f Ps. xii. 2. Prov. xxvi. 25.

g xxxv. 22.

h 1 Kings xx. 33, 34. 42.

i *See on* xv. 13. Gen. xix. 11. Deut. i. 17.

k xii. 14. xiv. 11. Ex. xiv. 10. Ps. cxvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

l xxvi. 7. Ps. xlvi. 1. xli. xciv. 17. cxviii. 13.

m Ezra i. 1. vii. 27. Neh. i. 11. Prov. xvi. 7. xxi. 1.

‡ Heb. *from after him.*

n *See on* 1 Kings xxii. 34.

o Heb. *in his simplicity.* 2 Sam. xv. 11.

‖ Heb. *between the joints and between the breast-plate.* 1 Kings xxii. 34, 35.

* Heb. *made sick.* xxxv. 23.

V. 14—27. *Notes,* 1 *Kings* xxii. 15—28.

V. 28, 29. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xxii. 29, 30.) It has been thought, that Ahab wished Jehoshaphat to fall by the Syrians, in expectation that the affairs of Judah would come under his management, as the father-in-law of Jehoram.

V. 30—34. *Notes,* 1 *Kings* xxii. 31—35.—*God moved,* &c. (31) In the extremity of danger, Jehoshaphat made

day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed *himself* up in *his* chariot against the Syrians until the even; and about the time of the sun going down [o] he died.

[o] *See on* 16. 19. 27. — Num. xxxii. 23. Prov. xiii. 21. xxviii. 17.

CHAP. XIX.

Jehoshaphat, on his return, is reproved by Jehu the prophet, for joining alliance with Ahab; but commended in other respects, 1—3. He visits and reforms his kingdom, 4: and gives a charge to the judges, priests, and Levites, in the cities of Judah, and at Jerusalem, 5—11.

AND Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house [a] in peace to Jerusalem.

2 And [b] Jehu the son of [c] Hanani [d] the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, [e] Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that [f] hate the LORD? therefore [g] *is* wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

3 Nevertheless, there are [h] good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast [i] prepared thine heart to seek God.

4 And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusa-

[a] xviii. 31, 32. [b] xx. 34. 1 Kings xvi. 1. 7. 12. [c] xvi. 7. [d] *See on* 1 Sam. ix. 9. [e] xviii. 3. 28. 1 Kings xxi. 25. Ps. xv. 4. cxxxix. 21, 22. Prov. i. 10—19. Rom. i. 32. Eph. v. 11. 2 John 10, 11. [f] xviii. 7. Ex. xx. 5. Deut. v. 9. vii. 10. xxxii. 41. xxxiii. 11. Ps. xxi. 8. lxviii. 1. lxxxi. 15. John xv. 18. 23. Rom. i. 30. viii. 7. Jam. iv. 4. [g] xxxii. 25. Ps. xc. 7, 8. Rom. i. 18. 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32. [h] xvii. 3—6. 1 Kings xiv. 13. Rom. vii. 18. [i] *See on* xii. 14.—xxx. 19. Ezra vii. 10. Ps. lvii. 7.

the Lord his Refuge, who remembered his servant, though out of the path of duty; and, in answer to his prayer, inclined his pursuers to depart from him, by a secret but powerful influence on their minds.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Abundant riches and honour do indeed give large opportunities of doing good; but they are attended with such strong temptations, as very few who possess them are enabled to withstand. It is therefore a certain proof, that men are not well acquainted with the artifices of Satan, and the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and that they have much self-confidence, when they covet riches in order to do good; for they are far more likely to get harm by them. Among other evils, they often betray pious persons into improper marriages, for themselves or their children. It appears beneath them to join affinity with inferior families; but "not many mighty or noble are called:" and so they are seduced to prefer titles and estates, to faith and holiness; and the effects are generally lamentable to themselves, to posterity, and to the cause of godliness.—We should follow peace with all men: but we ought to have no intimacies with the workers of iniquity; for their caresses, flatteries, and feasts, are more dangerous than their most embittered rage; and in fact they are frequently the result of politick enmity, and at best proceed from mercenary self-love. Indeed, the most enormous wickedness is often veiled under a show of piety.—A very great majority of professed ministers, in many ages and places, have been teachers of lies; who, while they acted their parts with the name of God in their mouths, have secretly been prompted by Satan, "deceiving and being deceived." We should therefore be reminded not only to "enquire of "the LORD," but careful likewise *by whom* we enquire of him; and also that we enquire his will, before we commit ourselves, by engagements that may be contrary to it. —They who flatter the humours of the rich and great will in general be most favoured; and those who offend the pride, or disturb the consciences, of such as are strangers to the power of godliness, will be hated, and may lay their account with hard usage: nay, such pious persons as associate with ungodly people, must often witness and seem to approve of, very abominable things. The event, however, will shew faithful teachers in their proper light; so that even the wicked will be constrained to allow the propriety of their conduct. In the mean time, let them go on with confidence in God, simply declaring his whole message, and patiently bearing the cross; for "great will be their "reward in heaven."—Satan is allowed to deceive those, who reject the testimony of God's prophets.—No policy can avert the stroke of the Lord's vengeance, when the time arrives; nor can his people ever be destitute of a refuge. He both can and will extricate them even from those difficulties and perils, into which they have sinfully brought themselves, when they earnestly and humbly call upon him: and, as he has all hearts in his hand, he can easily rescue them in their most urgent distresses.—"O "LORD God of Hosts, blessed is the man that putteth his "trust in thee!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. This peaceful return home exceeded Jehoshaphat's expectations, and was contrary to his deserts: and he was thus discriminated from Ahab to whom he had said, "I am as thou art." (xviii. 3. 29. *Note*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 4.) 'I suppose, as soon as the battle was 'over, he immediately went to Jerusalem, to return thanks 'to God for his wonderful preservation.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 2. Jehu was the son of Hanani, who was cast into prison by Asa for reproving him; (*Note*, xvi. 7—10;) yet he was not afraid of bringing a similar message to Jehoshaphat. That prince's alliance with a notorious idolater was a bad example to his subjects, which exceedingly tended to counteract his endeavours for reformation: and Ahab's expedition was undertaken in defiance of the word of God, and attended with such circumstances, as rendered Jehoshaphat inexcusable in helping him. For this misconduct "wrath was upon him from before the LORD:" not the wrath of an Enemy or avenging Judge, but that of an offended Father; and the fatal effects of this affinity upon his family and kingdom, were as awful evidences of this wrath, as could be experienced by one that did not finally perish. (*Notes*, xxi. 4. 18—20. xxii. 5. 7—9. 2 *Sam.* xii. 10. 2 *Kings* xi. 1, 2.)—*Went out to meet him.*] 'Before he 'came into the city, that being admonished by him, he 'might be the more affected with the mercy of God to 'wards him in his deliverance.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xvii. 1—9.

V. 4. Jehoshaphat went no more to Samaria, but abode at Jerusalem, and in Judah, and attended to the affairs of

lem: and he * went out again through the people from [k] Beer-sheba to [l] mount Ephraim, and [m] brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

5 ¶ And [n] he set judges in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city;

6 And said to the judges, [o] Take heed what ye do: for [p] ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who *is* with you in the † judgment.

7 Wherefore now, [q] let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do *it:* for *there is* [r] no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor [s] respect of persons, nor [t] taking of gifts.

8 Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set [u] of the Levites, and *of* the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for [x] the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

9 And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do [y] in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

10 And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, [z] between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even [a] warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and *so* [b] wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

11 And, behold, [c] Amariah the chief priest *is* over you in [d] all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites *shall be* officers before you. ‡ Deal [e] courageously, and [f] the LORD shall be with [g] the good.

* Heb. *returned and went out.* 1 Sam. vii. 15—17.
k Gen. xxi. 33. Judg. xx. 1.
l Josh. xvii. 15. Judg. xix. 1.
m *See on* xv. 8—13.—xxix. 10, 11. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. Mal. iv. 6. Luke i. 17.
n 8. Deut. xvi. 18—20. Rom. xiii. 1—5. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.
o Josh. xxii. 5. 1 Chr. xxviii. 10. Luke xii. 15. xxi. 8. Acts v. 35. xxii. 26.
p Deut. i. 17. Ps. lxxxii. 1—6. Ec. v. 8.
† Heb. *matter of judgment.*
q Gen. xlii. 18. Ex. xviii. 21. 22. 25, 26. Neh. v. 15. Is. i. 23—26.
r Gen. xviii. 25. Deut. xxxii. 4. Rom. ix. 14.
s Deut. x. 17, 18. Job xxxiv. 19. Matt. xxii. 16. Acts x. 34. Rom. ii. 11. Gal. ii. 6. Eph. vi. 9. Col. iii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 17.
t Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19. Is. i. 23. xxxiii. 15. Mic. vii. 3.
u xvii. 8. Deut. xvii. 8—13. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4. xxvi. 29.
x Ex. xviii. 19—26. Deut. xxi. 5. xxv. 1.
y *See on* 7.—Deut. i. 16. 17. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. Is. xi. 3—5. xxxii. 1.
z Deut. xvii. 8.
a Ez. iii. 18—21. xxxiii. 6. Acts xx. 31. 1 Thes. v. 14.
b Num. xvi. 46. Josh. xxii. 18—20.
c 1 Chr. vi. 11.
d 8. 1 Chr. xxvi. 30. Mal. ii. 7.
‡ Heb. *take courage and do.*
e Josh. i. 6. 9. 1 Chr. xxii. 11. 16. 19. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
f 6. xv. 2. Ps. xviii. 25, 26. John xiv. 23, 24. Rom. ii. 4—13. Phil. iv. 8, 9.
g Ps. xxxvii. 23. cxii. 5. Prov. ii. 20. Ec. ii. 26. Luke xxiii. 50. Acts xi. 24.

his own kingdom. Being assured that the Lord had graciously accepted of his endeavours for reformation, he made a circuit through his kindom to perfect that work, and to restore what had been overturned. For it seems, that the people had relapsed into idolatry, regarding his intimacy with Ahab as a kind of *dispensation*, to such as chose to avail themselves of it.

V. 5—11. In process of time, irregularities and abuses in the magistracy had interrupted the regular administration of justice: but Jehoshaphat carefully reduced this likewise to order; and took care that judges, and courts of justice, should be established in every considerable town, for the benefit of the neighbourhood; but with appeal to the superior courts at Jerusalem. (*Notes, Ex.* xxiii. 1—3. 6—9. *Deut.* xvi. 18, 19. xvii. 8—13. 1 *Chr.* xxiii. 2—6. xxvi. 30—32.) In all these courts the priests and Levites were joined with the principal persons of the other tribes: for the law of God was in an especial manner the statute-law of the realm; according to which both ecclesiastical causes, or the "judgment of the LORD," the pleas of the crown, or "the king's matters," and common pleas, or "controversies," were to be determined. This settlement was completed, when the king and his attendants returned to Jerusalem from the circuit of the land: and both in the cities of Judah, and at Jerusalem, the king solemnly exhorted and charged the magistrates to do the duty of their office, in the fear of the Lord; as acting by his authority, in his presence, under his protection, copying his impartial justice and equity, and looking forward to the account which they must shortly render to him. (*Marg. Ref.* o—t. y.) 'It is most agreeable to the scripture to understand by 'the things of God, those which were defined by the law 'of God, and were to be judged of by that law: and by '"the king's matters," such as not being defined by the 'divine law, were left to the judgment of the king; of 'which kind were all deliberations about what was expe- 'dient, or not expedient. ...The court had different pre- 'sidents, according to the nature of the causes. In things 'pertaining to God, Amariah the high priest sat as the first 'judge; in things pertaining to the king, Zebadiah a prin- 'cipal person about the king...was the moderator.' *Grotius*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick.* 'The rest' (of the Levites) 'who were not judges, were ministers under them, 'to see their sentence executed. ...He bids them not be 'afraid of any man, for God, who employed them, would 'stand by them, and defend them, if they were good and 'upright judges.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Some interpret, *blood and blood*, of relationship and titles to estates; but it seems rather to mean causes concerning murder, maiming, or accidentally killing any one.—The judges were required to warn the people not to transgress; lest, beside other reasons, their brethren should be involved in the consequences of their crimes.

The LORD, who is with you in judgment. (6) Which the Talmud thus translates, '*Ye do not judge before the sons of 'men, but before the WORD of the* LORD, *and his glorious 'presence resides among you in the act of judgment;* which 'is an illustrious testimony that the ancient Jews believed 'more persons than one in the Deity.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*Deal courageously.* (11) *Notes, Josh.* i. 7. 2 *Tim.* ii. 1, 2.—*The LORD shall be with the good.*] *Note, Phil.* iv. 8, 9.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing but perils, wrath, and painful effects, can be expected from intimacies with ungodly men; and that in proportion to the degree of their avowed hatred to the character, worship, and service of God. We ought therefore to shun all needless familiarity with them, and to shew them and all the world, our disapprobation of their principles and conduct; whatever may be their rank, abilities,

CHAP. XX.

Jehoshaphat, alarmed by an invasion of the Moabites, Ammonites, and others, proclaims a fast, 1—4. His prayer, 5—13. Jahaziel, the prophet, assures him of a signal deliverance, 14—17. Jehoshaphat and his people receive the promise with adoring thankfulness, 18, 19. He exhorts them to believe, and appoints singers to praise the Lord, 20, 21. The invaders destroy one another, and the people of Judah gather immense spoils, 22—25. They bless God at Berachah, return in triumph, and enjoy peace, 26—30. Jehoshaphat's good reign and acts, 31—34. He joins with Ahaziah in sending ships to Tharshish, which are wrecked, according to the prediction of Eliezer, 35—37.

[a] xix. 5, 11. xxxii. 1.
[b] Ps. lxxxiii. 6—8. Is. vii. 1. viii. 9, 10. xvi. 6.

[a] IT came to pass after this also, *that* [b] the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them *other* beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

[c] xix. 2. Jer. x. 24. Rev. iii. 19.

2 Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from [d] beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they *be* in [e] Hazazon-tamar, which *is* [f] En-gedi.

[d] Gen. xiv. 3. Num. xxxiv. 12. Josh. iii. 16.
[e] Gen. xiv. 7.
[f] Josh. xv. 62. 1 Sam. xxiii. 29. Cant. i. 14.

3 And Jehoshaphat [g] feared, and set [*] himself to [h] seek the LORD, and [i] proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

[g] Gen. xxxii. 7—11. 24—28. Ps. lvi. 3, 4. Is. xxxvii. 3—6. Jon. i. 16. Matt. x. 28.
[*] Heb. *his face.*
[h] *See on* xi. 16. xix. 3.
[i] Judg. xx. 26. 1 Sam. vii. 6. Ezra viii. 21—23. Esth. iv. 16. Jer. xxxvi. 9. Joel i. 14. ii. 12—18. Jon. iii. 5—9.

4 And Judah gathered themselves together, to [j] ask *help* of the LORD: even out of all [k] the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

[j] Ps. xxxiv. 5, 6. l. 15. lx. 10—12.
[k] xix. 5. Ps. lxix. 35.

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or accomplishments; or however political interests or relative ties may plead for a coalition. We should indeed bear them good will, and be ready to relieve their distress, and to help them in their most important interests: but we ought to be cautious of involving ourselves with their secular undertakings, and still more of concurring with them in any of their sinful projects. (*Notes, 2 Cor.* vi. 14—18. *Eph.* v. 8—14. 2 *John* 7—11. *P. O.*)—The unmerited mercies of God are often united with severe rebukes and corrections; and these again are moderated by tokens of his approbation, where our conduct has been good in his sight: for he would not have those discouraged, who "prepare their hearts to seek him;" and, when there are *really* good things found in us, he will mercifully forgive the evil which we allow not or repent of, and accept the good, through the Saviour's advocacy. In these things we should be followers of God: we must not "hate our "offending brother, nor suffer sin upon him; but in any "wise rebuke him;" (*Note, Lev.* xix. 17;) but we should take more pleasure in commending what is evidently good; and bear much from those in whom "good things are "found."—While ministers ought not to fear or respect the persons of men, or be intimidated by the sufferings of others in the same cause, but must deliver their whole message plainly; they should also endeavour to do it with forbearance, tenderness, and candour, which will render reproofs less offensive and more effectual. When these are prudently given and properly taken, they are not only salutary, but confer honour on both parties; (*Note, Prov.* xxv. 11, 12;) and when, being united with due commendations, they excite men to renewed vigilance and diligence in their proper work, they become general benefits. —The tendency of human nature to evil renders unremitting vigour necessary in all those, who would suppress abuses and effect reformation: for, on every relaxation, evils will revive and gather strength rapidly, and all will need to be done over again.—The ministry and the magistracy, when restricted to their distinct methods, may concur in promoting godliness, as well as preserving publick peace: and all legal decisions should be expedited in a regular and easy method, and with little expense; that the poor may be placed, as nearly as possible, at an equal advantage with the rich, in obtaining their dues.—Magistrates are the vicegerents of the Governor and Judge of the world, and are therefore to be obeyed in all things lawful for the Lord's sake. (*Notes, Rom.* xiii. 1—7.) But there lies an appeal from their decisions to a superior tribunal; and *they* should be constantly and solemnly reminded, that they will be exposed to condemnation, if they do not act uprightly in the fear of God, without respect of persons, or taking of gifts. And, besides executing the laws of man impartially, it is their duty also to warn men not to trespass against the Lord, lest wrath come upon them and their brethren. (*Note,* xvii. 7—9.) They should therefore take heed and deal courageously, not fearing the displeasure of man, but confiding in the protection of God, who is with them in the judgment; that he may indeed be with them for their good. May he provide increasing numbers of good ministers and good magistrates, to suppress vice, and to promote the cause of truth and holiness!

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. (*Notes,* xiv. 1—15. xxxi. 20, 21. xxxii. 1—8. 1 *Sam.* vii. 1—7.) "The fear of the Lord had "fallen upon the kingdoms round about Judah;" and Jehoshaphat had so long enjoyed peace, that he seems to have neglected his military arrangements, and to have relaxed his vigilance. (*Notes,* xvii. 10—19.) Perhaps his enemies observed this, and thought to take advantage of it; or they had heard "that wrath was upon him from be"fore the LORD," for uniting with Ahab. This formidable armament consisted of Moabites, Ammonites, and the allies of the Ammonites; (*Note,* 10, 11;) and came from "beyond the sea on this side Syria," that is the *dead sea,* or *salt sea,* which was considered as one of the western boundaries of Syria; and they were encamped in his dominions, at Engedi, (*Marg. Ref.* e, f,) before he was informed of their approach, or apprised of their intentions. This would prevent his mustering all his forces.

V. 3, 4. Probably, this invasion took place not long after Jehoshaphat's return from Ramoth-gilead; and he was afraid, that God was about to chastise his sin by permitting the devastation of his kingdom. To avert this calamity, "he set himself to seek the LORD." It may be

5 And [l] Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,

6 And said, [m] O LORD God of our fathers, *art* not thou [n] God in heaven? and [o] rulest *not* thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and [p] in thine hand *is there not* power and might, so that [q] none is able to withstand thee?

7 *Art* not thou [r] our God, [*] who didst [s] drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and [t] gavest it to the seed of Abraham [u] thy friend for ever?

8 And they dwelt therein, and have [v] built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

9 [x] If, *when* evil cometh upon us, *as* the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for [y] thy name *is* in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.

10 And now, behold, the children of Ammon, and Moab, and mount Seir, [z] whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not;

11 Behold, *I say* [a] *how* they reward us, to come [b] to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

12 O our God, [c] wilt thou not judge them? for [d] we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; [e] neither know we what to do: but [f] our eyes *are* upon thee.

l See on vi. 12, 13—xxx. 31. 2 Kings xx. 15—19.
m See on Ex. iii. 6. 15, 16. 1 Chr. xxix. 16.
n Deut. iv. 39. Josh. ii. 11. 1 Kings viii. 23. Is. lvii. 15, 16. lxvi. 1. Matt. vi. 9.
o 1 Chr. xxix. 11, 12. Ps. xlvii 2. 8. Jer. xxvii. 5—8. Dan. iv. 17. 25. 32—35.
p 1 Chr. xxix. 11, 12. Ps. lxii. 11. Matt. vi. 13.
q Acts xi. 17.
r xiv. 11. Gen. xvii. 7. Ex. vi. 7. xix. 5—7. xx. 2. 1 Chr. xvii. 21—24.
* Heb. *thou.*
s See on Ex. xxxiii. 2.—Ps. xliv. 2.
t Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. Josh. xxiv. 3. 13. Neh. ix. 8.
u Is. xli. 8. John xi. 11. xv. 15. Jam. ii. 23.
v See on ii. 4. vi. 10.
x See on vi. 28—30. 1 Kings viii. 33. 37.
y See on vi. 20. Ex. xx. 24. xxiii. 21.
z Num. xx. 17—21. Deut. ii. 4, 5. 9. 19. Judg. xi. 15—18.
a Gen. xliv. 4. Ps. vii. 4. xxxv. 12. Prov. xvii. 13. Jer. xviii. 20.
b Judg. xi. 23, 24. Ps. lxxxiii. 3—12.
c Deut. xxxii. 36. Judg. xi. 27. Ps. vii. 6. 8. ix. 19. xliii. 1. Is. ii. 4. lxxii. 4. Joel iii. 12. Rev. xix. 11.
d See on xiv. 11.—1 Sam. xiv. 6. 2 Cor. i. 8, 9.
e 2 Kings vi. 15.
f Ps. xxv. 15. cxxi. 1, 2. cxxiii. 1, 2. cxli. 8. Jon. ii. 4.

supposed, that he made the best military arrangement of which the exigency would admit: but his chief preparation consisted in proclaiming a fast, and gathering his people together to ask help of the Lord.—We have in the preceding books of scripture, read of private fasting with prayer; of "afflicting the soul" at the day of atonement; of the people's fasting at the instance of Samuel the prophet; and of their fasting by common consent: (*Notes, Lev.* xvi. 29—31. *Deut.* ix. 18. 25. *Judg.* xx. 26—28. 1 *Sam.* vii. 5, 6. 2 *Sam.* xii. 16:) but the fast here mentioned was observed at *the proclamation of the chief magistrate,* who acted by the authority of his station, and not by the Spirit of prophecy: and the event of this measure, both warrants civil governors in times of distress to act in this manner, and encourages them to expect the most important benefits from it. Every one was called on to humble himself before God for his own sins, and the sins of the publick, as the aggregate of the whole. Thus they united in expressing their sorrow and self-displacency for their sins; and they publickly honoured God as the righteous Author of their calamity, and as their only Hope and Refuge in distress. All other cares being laid aside, they were at leisure to unite in uninterrupted and fervent prayers for help and forgiveness. Doubtless serious impressions would be made on many, who before had been inattentive; the pious affections of others would be revived, and rendered more fixed and lively; and in every way it would tend to the honour of God, and the good of his people.

V. 5. *New court.*] It is not known what is here meant by the *new court:* but, probably, Jehoshaphat had rebuilt some of the courts, or had added one to them.

V. 6—9. After the example of Solomon, Jehoshaphat himself offered the publick prayer for this large congregation, in words which proceeded from the abundance of his heart: a careful examination of the marginal references will be found the best comment on them (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* viii. 33—43. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19.)—*Abraham thy friend.* (7) אֹהֲבֶךָ: *a lover of thee.* (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, John* xv. 12—16. *Jam.* ii. 22—29.)

V. 10, 11. The mention of mount Seir, the country of Edom, shews what is meant in the first verse by "other "beside the Ammonites."—The Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, had been expressly named as nations whom Israel must not invade: and the divine admonition had been exactly attended to. (*Deut.* ii. 4—7. 9. 19. *Note, Num.* xx. 14—21.) Other wars indeed had brought some of them under the dominion of Judah and Israel: but it seems the superiority had been used with gentleness, and no reason had been given for this violent assault; in which, it is probable, the confederates meant to destroy the kingdom of Judah, and the house of David; as well as to expel the people of God, from that land which was "his "possession:" so that the war was indeed waged against the LORD himself. (*Notes, Judg.* xi. 12—27.)

V. 12. The language of this verse is peculiarly expressive of humble, genuine faith. The appeal, as to the justice of the cause, is simply, yet emphatically, made to God; and the inability of Jehoshaphat, with the force which he had hastily collected, or indeed with any forces apart from the powerful aid of God, to resist so vast an army; the perplexity to which he was reduced; and his only refuge from despair, by firmly relying on the Almighty, and expecting help from him, as pleading his own cause in pleading their's; are stated in the most natural and affecting manner. (*Note,* xiv. 9—15.)—'In this weak and declining 'condition, wherein the church now is,...let us say daily 'with Jehoshaphat, "We know not what to do; but our '"eyes are unto thee." "Thine is the kingdom, the '"power, and the glory." Thou art our King and our 'Shepherd; we are thy people, and the sheep of thy pas-'ture. Thou only art powerful, we are infirm: but thy 'power will be perfected in our weakness. "Not unto '"us, O LORD, but to thy name give the glory; for thy '"mercy and thy truth's sake." Do not remember our 'iniquities, but save us for thy mercy's sake; for we are

13 And [g] all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

14 ¶ [h] Then upon Jahaziel, the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite, of the sons of Asaph, [i] came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation;

15 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat; Thus saith the LORD unto you, [k] Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for [l] the battle *is* not your's, but God's.

16 To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the * cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the † brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.

17 Ye shall [m] not *need* to fight in this *battle:* set yourselves, [n] stand ye *still*, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them: [o] for the LORD *will be* with you.

18 And Jehoshaphat [p] bowed his head with *his* face to the ground: and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.

19 And [q] the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the [r] Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with [s] a loud voice on high.

20 And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of [t] Tekoa: and, as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, [u] Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; [x] Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; [y] believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

21 And when he had [z] consulted with the people, he [a] appointed singers unto the LORD, and ‡ that should praise [b] the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, [c] Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

22 And [§] when they began ‖ to sing and to praise, [d] the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they * were smitten.

23 For the children of Ammon and

[g] Deut. xxix. 10, 11. Ezra x. 1. Jon. iii. 5. Acts xxi 5.

[h] Is. lviii. 9. lxv. 24. Dan. ix. 20, 21. Acts x. 4. 31.

[i] xv. 1. xxiv. 20. Num. xi. 25, 26. xxiv. 2.

[k] xxxii. 7. Deut. i. 29, 30. xx. 1. 4. xxxi. 6. 8. Josh. xi. 6. Neh. iv. 14. Ps. xxvii. 1, 2. Is. xli. 10—16.

[l] xxxii. 8. 1 Sam. xvii. 47.

* Heb. *ascent.*

† Or, *valley.*

[m] 22, 23. Ex. xiv. 13, 14. 25.

[n] Ps. xlvi. 10, 11. Is. xxx. 7. 15. Lam. iii. 26.

[o] xv. 2. xxxii. 8. Num. xiv. 9. Ps. xlvi. 7. 11. Is. viii. 9, 10., xli. 10. Am. v. 14. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20. Rom. viii. 31. 2 Tim. iv. 22.

[p] vii. 3. Gen. xxiv. 26. Ex. iv. 31.

[q] 1 Chr. xv. 6—22. xvi. 5. 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1—7.

[r] Ps. xliv.—xlix. *titles.*

[s] v. 13. Ezra iii. 12, 13. Neh. xii. 42, 43. Ps. lxxxi. 1. xcv. 1, 2.

[t] xi. 6. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. 1 Chr. iv. 5. Jer. vi. 1.

[u] *See on* 15.

[x] Is. vii. 9. xxvi. 3. John xi. 40. xiv. 1. Rom. viii. 31.

[y] Ex. xiv. 31. Luke xvi. 31. John v. 46, 47. xiii. 20.

[z] 1 Chr. xiii. 1, 2. Prov. xi. 14.

[a] xxix. 25—30. xxx. 21. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Neh. xii. 27.

‡ Heb. *praisers of.*

[b] 1 Chr. xvi. 29. Ps. xxix. 2. l. 2. xc. 17. xcvi. 9.

[c] v. 13. vii. 3. 6. 1 Chr. xvi. 34. 41. Ezra iii. 11. Ps. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 11.

§ Heb. *in the time that, &c.*

‖ Heb. *in singing and praise.*

[d] Judg. vii. 22. 1 Sam. xiv. 16. 20. 2 Kings vi. 17. Ps. xxxv. 5, 6. Is. xix. 2. Ez. xxxviii. 21.

* Or, *smote one another.*

'brought very low.'—Such addresses to God...will illus-
'strate this prayer of Jehoshaphat, better than the largest
'commentaries.' *Victorinus Strigelius in Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13. *With their little ones.*] *Notes, Deut.* xxix. 10—15. xxxi. 10—13. *Ezra* x. 1. *Neh.* viii. 1, 2. *Joel* ii. 15—17.—Not only the women, and the children who were grown up, attended on this occasion, but the infants also: for it is probable the people intended their presence, as a silent plea with the Lord to have mercy upon them, for the sake of their helpless offspring. (*Note, Jon.* iv. 9—11.)

V. 14—17. The Lord did not speak, on this occasion, by the high priest, but by an ordinary Levite descended from Asaph, who, it is probable, was an eminently pious person. Whether he had previously been known as a prophet, or not, all present were satisfied that he spoke by the Spirit of God. He assured them of the Lord's especial interposition; for, as the battle immediately concerned his honour, it would be decided by his power. "The war is "not to you, but to God." (*Note,* 10, 11.) Without any fear of the immense multitude of their invaders, they were ordered to march forth the next day, not to fight, but to witness the salvation of the Lord with them, and his answer to their fervent prayers. (*Notes, Ex.* xiv. 13, 14. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 45—47.)

V. 18, 19. The king and his people, placing the most entire confidence in the divine promise, at once anticipated its fulfilment, and directly joined in an act of solemn adoration, and in songs of gratitude and praise for this yet unaccomplished deliverance.

V. 20, 21. Jehoshaphat seems not greatly to have regarded the arrangement of his army; for he so firmly believed the words of the prophet, that he marched forth as to a triumph, and not to a battle. Accordingly he exhorted his troops to a firm faith in God, and an entire reliance on his power, faithfulness, and covenanted mercy to his people; and a confident expectation, that all his words spoken to them by his prophets should be accomplished: for thus, and thus only, could they be established, and prosper. (*Is.* vii. 9.) Having consulted with the chief persons of the people that were with him, he also appointed singers to go before the army, "that should praise "the beauty of holiness:" that is, according to some expositors, exactly as *they used to do at his beautiful sanctuary.* But perhaps the expression rather means, that they should celebrate the glorious excellences of God, which render him "the Perfection of beauty," and the meet object of the most absolute love, confidence, and delight of all his rational creatures; especially, as "his mercy which en-"dureth for ever," is displayed in perfect harmony with his more awful attributes. (*Notes,* v. 12, 13. vii. 1—3. 1 *Chr.* xvi. 28, 29. *Ps.* l. 1, 2. xc. 13—17. cxxxvi. 1—3.)

V. 22—25. Some commentators, both ancient and modern, think that angels were employed on this occasion, who came on the invaders by surprise, as from an ambush-

Moab stood up against the inhabitants
e Gen. xiv. 6. xxxvi. 8, 9. Deut. ii. 5. Josh. xxiv. 4. Ez. xxxv. 2, 3. of [e] mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy *them:* and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped [*] to destroy another.

* Heb. *for the destruction.*

24 And when Judah came toward the watch-tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold,
f Ex. xiv. 30. Ps. cx. 6. Is. xxxvii. 36. Jer. xxxiii. 5. [f] they *were* dead bodies fallen to the earth, and [†] none escaped.

† Heb. there was *not an escaping,* Ezra ix. 14.

25 And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of
g Ex. xii. 35, 36. 1 Sam. xxx. 19, 20. 2 Kings vii. 9—16. Ps. lxviii. 12. Rom. viii. 37. them, [g] they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and [h] precious jewels, which
h Ex. iii. 22. Num. xxxi. 51. Judg. viii. 24—26. Prov. iii. 15. they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

‡ That *is, Blessing.*

26 And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of
i Ex. xv. 1—19. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. Ps. ciii. 1, 2. cvii. 21, 22. Luke i. 68. Rev. xix. 1—6. [‡] Berachah; for there they [i] blessed the
j Gen. xxviii. 19. xxxii. 30. Ex. xvii. 15. 1 Sam. vii. 12. Is. lxii. 4. Acts i. 19. LORD: therefore [j] the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, [k] unto this day.
k v. 9.

27 Then they returned, every man
§ Heb. *head.* 2 Sam. vi. 14, 15. Mic. ii. 13. Heb. vi. 20. of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the [§] forefront of them, to go
l 1 Sam. ii. 1. Neh. xii. 43. Ps. xx. 5. xxx. 1. Is. xxxv. 10. li. 11. Rev. xviii. 20. again to Jerusalem with joy; for [l] the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

28 And they came to Jerusalem
m 2 Sam. vi. 5. 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xxiii. 5. xxv. 6. Ps. lvii. 8. xcii. 3. cxlix. 3. cl. 3—5. Rev. xiv. 2, 3. [m] with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets, unto the house of the LORD.

29 And
n xvii. 10. Gen. xxxv. 5. Ex. xxiii. 27. Josh. v. 1. 2 Kings vii. 6. [n] the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries, when [o] they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel.
o Ex. xv. 14—16. Josh. ii. 9—11 ix. 9—11.

30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for [p] his God gave him rest
p xiv. 6, 7. xv. 15. Josh. xxiii. 1. 2 Sam. vii. 1. Job xxxiv. 29. Prov. xvi. 7. John xiv. 27. round about.

31 ¶ And [q] Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: *he was* thirty and five
q 1 Kings xxii. 41—44. years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.

32 And [r] he walked in [s] the way of
r *See on* xvii. 3—6.
s *See on* xiv. 2—5. 11—13. 1 Kings xv. 11. Asa his father, and [t] departed not from it, doing *that which was* right in the
t xvi. 7—12. Ps. xviii. 21. xxxvi. 3. sight of the LORD.

33 Howbeit, [u] the high places were
u *See on* xiv. 3. xvii. 6. not taken away: for as yet the people [x] had not prepared their hearts unto the
x *See on* xii. 14. xix. 3.—xxx. 19. Deut. xxix. 4. 1 Sam. vii. 3. God of their fathers.

34 Now [y] the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they
y *See on* xii. 15. xiii. 22. xvi. 11. *are* written in the [‖] book of [z] Jehu the son of Hanani, who [*] is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.
‖ Heb. *words.*
z xix. 2. 1 Kings xvi. 1. 7.
* Heb. *was made to ascend.*

35 ¶ And after this [a] did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with
B. C. 896.
a 1 Kings xxii. 48, 49. Ahaziah king of Israel, [b] who did very
b 2 Kings i. 2—16. wickedly:

36 And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to [c] Tarshish:
c *See on* 1 Kings x. 22. *Tharshish.* and they made the ships in [d] Ezion-
d 1 Kings ix. 26. *Ezion-geber.* gaber.

37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, [e] Because thou hast
e *See on* xix. 2.

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ment, and slew some of them: and that the survivors supposed themselves assaulted by their confederates; and so retaliated, till they fell into utter confusion, and entirely destroyed one another.—But perhaps the Lord only left the several nations to a natural distrust and jealousy of each other: and thus some of them formed ambushments against the rest, which terminated in their mutual destruction. Or perhaps the ambushments placed against the Jews, fell by mistake on their own allies. This, however, fulfilled the purpose of God, as effectually as if he had placed the ambushments, or they had acted in obedience to his commandment. The slaughter was universal, and the spoil immense; so that this invasion served exceedingly to enrich Jehoshaphat and his kingdom. (*Notes,* xxxii. 27—29. *Rom.* viii. 35—39.)

V. 26—28. "Berachah" signifies *Blessing.* Having previously sought deliverance, by fasting and prayer, and received the assurance of it with grateful joy, Jehoshaphat and his army returned immediate and most fervent thanks and praise to the Lord, who had in so wonderful a manner performed his promise. 'They did not return every man 'to his own home; ... but first went back to Jerusalem to 'bless him' (the Lord) 'again for hearing their prayers, and 'making good his promises.' *Bp. Patrick.* The whole forms a most remarkable and instructive history: and no undertaking, recorded in Scripture, was entered on, conducted, and concluded, in a more unexceptionable manner.

V. 29, 30. When the surrounding nations perceived how wonderfully the Lord had destroyed this powerful armament, they dared not to attack Jehoshaphat any more; and thus God gave him rest round about, which continued during the remainder of his reign. (*Note,* xvii. 10.)

V. 31—34. (*Notes,* xvii. 3. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 21—28. 1 *Kings* xxii. 41—46.) The minds of the people were not suitably prepared for the regular and cordial worship of God at Jerusalem: so that Jehoshaphat either did not dare to attempt, or was not able to effect, an entire and abiding suppression of all those high places, where God was irregularly worshipped. (*Marg. Ref.* u, x. *Notes,* xvii. 6. xix. 2—4.)

V. 35—37. Jehoshaphat's affinity with Ahab's family

[f] xvi. 9. Prov. ix. 6. xiii. 20. Heb. xii. 6. Rev. iii. 19. joined thyself with Ahaziah, [f] the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

drew him in to join in this traffick with wicked Ahaziah, for which he was rebuked and chastened; and afterwards he refused to join with him. Ahaziah died within less than two years after Ahab, and Jehoshaphat survived him for a considerable time. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 48, 49. 2 *Kings* i. 1—17. viii. 16, 17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

Uninterrupted peace must not be expected in this world, even when we are most devotedly serving God. The enemies of true religion are the more exasperated by our zeal to promote it; our own miscarriages require rebukes; trials are needful to repress pride; and difficulties form the proper exercise and discovery of our faith, love, patience, and hope in God. Thus his honour, the edification of others, the good of our own souls, and our situation in the midst of ungodly men, all require that "in the world we "should have tribulation."—In calamities or dangers, publick or personal, our first business should be to seek help from the Lord. When two or three agree in doing this, that concurrence adds energy to their supplications: how much more then, when multitudes with one accord pour out their fervent supplications for the same common blessing! Hence the advantage of days appointed for national fasting and prayer. Such seasons remind the remnant of believers to unite in the same requests, as with one heart and one voice: and even the cries of unconverted men for outward mercies form an honourable acknowledgment of God, and of man's entire dependence on him; and frequently receive a gracious answer. It is therefore commendable in Christian princes to call their people to these solemn services; and it is indeed a most important part of their duty and true wisdom: but it can scarcely be supposed that the mere appointment is sufficient; unless their own example proves that they are in earnest in the sacred service, let who will be formal. It is also the duty of every individual, according to his station in the community, to concur in such pious measures, and to stir up himself and those around him, to engage cordially in them, that good impressions may be made, fixed, or revived in the minds of men in every place.—What then shall we think of those, who call themselves Christians and patriots; yet not only neglect, but ridicule or revile, this scriptural method of seeking help in danger, from our almighty Friend, after an example so honoured by God himself? or of those, who give occasion to such reproach and contempt, by their absurd and manifest hypocrisy in these observances?—The fear of wrath, when united with a hope of mercy, excites sinners to seek the Lord in good earnest; and is often useful to quicken the believer, when his love has subsided, and he is grown slothful in the concerns of his soul. We must, therefore, first approach the holy majesty of our God, with humiliation for our sin, justifying him in all we suffer or fear, and confiding only in his mercy for acceptance, and in his power for protection. And in all ages of the church, *fasting* has been deemed an expedient attendant upon such exercises, on particular occasions, personal and publick; being expressive of a mind abstracted from earthly things; conscious of having forfeited every enjoyment by sin; and attentive only to obtain the great objects which the soul is then pursuing.—All believers are sons of Abraham and "friends of God:" with such persons the everlasting covenant is established, and to them every promise belongs. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xii. 1—3. *John* xv. 12—16. *Rom.* v. 1, 2.) Even in those distresses, which are intended for the correction of their sins, when they cry unto the Lord, he will hear and help them. *Their* enemies are *his* enemies; and when they are rewarded with evil for good, *he* will appear for them and plead their cause. When they are the most indisposed to avenge themselves, and least able to ward off injuries, their dependence on God will become more unreserved, and their prayers more fervent: and he will no more forsake those, who "know not what "to do," but look up to him alone for help; than a fond mother will desert her helpless infant, that clings to her bosom, and knows and seeks no other refuge. Indeed, this is the very frame of mind, to which he designs to form his people.—The covenant is made with believers "for the "good of their children after them;" and they should bring them, and the rest of their families, as soon as possible, to the ordinances of God, that they may be trained up in his house, and become truly a part of his family.

V. 14—37.

The Lord will surely speak peace to those, who seek him in a due manner: and when his word banishes our fears and calms our spirits, our prayers are answered in good measure, even previously to those providential deliverances, of which we have received a blessed pledge.—If our sins be pardoned, "God is for us;" and "if he be for "us, who can be against us?" We need not be dismayed at the number and power of our enemies, or on account of our own weakness: "the battle is the LORD'S," and the victory is sure. We have only to observe his word of command, whether he call us to labour, to wrestle, and strive; or whether it become our part to "stand still, and to see "the salvation of the LORD." When vigorous faith receives the promises, their accomplishment is anticipated with humble gratitude. The Christian soldier may sing his songs of triumph, when marching to the field, or conflicting in his spiritual battles, being assured that he shall be "made more than conqueror, through the Saviour who "hath loved him:" and thus, the joy and praise of the church *militant* may emulate and anticipate that of the church *triumphant*.—But alas! our faith is apt to waver, and then our joys decline: believers need frequent exhortations to persevering faith and hope in God; and it becomes the strong in this manner to animate the weak.—As we cannot know the truth and promises of God, except by his prophets and apostles; how can we believe in him, unless we firmly credit their infallible testimony, as recorded in the sacred Scriptures? In proportion as we expect protection in this way from God, by obedient faith, we "shall be established," and prosper; and shall adore the beauty of the divine holiness, and the everlasting mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with thankful hearts: and the more generally and publickly this is done in any country, the

CHAP. XXI.

Jehoshaphat dies; Jehoram succeeds, slays his brethren, and reigns wickedly, 1—7. Edom and Libnah revolt, 8—10. He establishes idolatry, 11. Elijah's written prophecy against him, 12—15. The Philistines and Arabians invade and plunder his kingdom, and carry all his family captive, except Jehoahaz, 16, 17. Elijah's prophecy fulfilled in Jehoram's incurable disease and death; and he is interred without honour, 18—20.

a 1 Kings xxii. 50. NOW [a] Jehoshaphat slept with his
b 20.—*See on* ix. 31. xii. 16. fathers, and [b] was buried with his fa-
c 2 Kings viii. 16, 17. thers in the city of David. And [c] Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

2 And he had brethren, the sons of Jehoshaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all these *were* the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.

d xi. 23. Gen. xxv. 6. Deut. xxi. 15—17. 3 And their father [d] gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram; because he *was* the firstborn.

4 Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and [e] slew all his brethren with the sword, and *divers* also of the princes of Israel.

e 17. xxii. 8. 10. Gen. iv. 8. Judg. ix. 5. 56, 57. 1 John iii. 12.

5 Jehoram *was* thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and [f] he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

f 2 Kings viii. 16, 17.

6 And he walked [g] in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab; for [h] he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD.

g 1 Kings xvi. 25—33.
h xviii. 1. xxii. 2. 2 Kings viii. 18. Neh. xiii. 25, 26.
i xxii. 11. Is. vii. 6, 7.
k 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 28—34. 39. Jer. xxxiii. 20—26.
l 2 Sam. vii. 12—17. 1 Kings xi. 13. 36. 2 Kings viii. 19. Ps. cxxxii. 17, 18. Luke i. 69. 79.
* Heb. *lamp*, or, *candle*.

7 Howbeit [i] the LORD would not destroy the house of David, [k] because of the covenant that he had made with David, and [l] as he promised to give a [*] light to him and to his sons for ever.

8 ¶ In his days [m] the Edomites revolted from under the [†] dominion of Judah, [n] and made themselves a king.

m Gen. xxvii. 40. 2 Kings viii. 20—22.
† Heb. *hand*.
n 1 Kings xxii. 47. 2 Kings iii. 9.

greater stability and success will attend the affairs of the nation. When we thus arrange and conduct our affairs, our enemies will fall before us; our trials will prove our gain; and our very sorrows will enrich our souls with more abundant rejoicing. The advantage will be all our own; but the whole glory will be ascribed to the Lord.—We should always render our tribute of praise and gratitude for mercies received, when our hearts are impressed with a lively sense of the loving-kindness of God: as thanksgivings, for publick or private benefits, grow languid by delay. But alas! we find very few who are so prompt to return thanks for favours vouchsafed, as they were to cry for relief in the hour of distress. (*Note* and *P. O. Luke* xvii. 11—19.) Blessed be God, there are some honourable exceptions, whose example proves very useful.—Mercy thus sought and improved will be durable; and if God give us rest, none will dare to molest us.—But the best of men seldom shine so bright in prosperity, as in adversity: and even relapses into sin may be noticed in very valuable characters, which the Lord will mark with rebukes and chastenings. Many things must also remain imperfect in the church on earth; for there are many desirable regulations which the greatest reformers have not ventured to attempt, or have not been able to accomplish: and indeed, except men's "hearts are prepared to seek the LORD," magistrates and ministers can do nothing effectual. The zealous, however, will never labour in vain. Much good will be done, though not all which they desire. God will graciously accept their endeavours; and in heaven they will be associated with "the spirits of just men made perfect," and made like them in holiness and felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 2. The second Azariah, in the original, is called *Azariahu.—King of Israel.*] Jehoshaphat is called here "the king of Israel," not "king of Judah;" as the whole nation sprang from Jacob, whom God surnamed Israel; and he reigned over a considerable part of it. (4. xxviii. 19.)

V. 3. Perhaps Jehoram had acted the hypocrite during his father's life-time: but, even if he shewed his evil disposition, Jehoshaphat, having no command from God, did not think it proper to set him aside; otherwise his brethren were better than he, more wise and more righteous. (*Note*. 13.) The succession of so wicked a king as Jehoram, to pious Jehoshaphat, was a just judgment on the men of Judah for "not having prepared their hearts unto the God "of their fathers," during the preceding reigns. (*Note*, xx. 31—34, *v.* 33.)

V. 4. On one pretence or another, Jehoram cruelly slew all his brethren, from a jealous ambition, lest they should supplant him in his authority; which was probably increased by their reputation and favour with the people; and the affluence and authority to which Jehoshaphat had raised them. (*Note, Judg.* ix. 4—6.) He slew some of the princes also, who probably favoured them. Some think these were the magistrates whom Jehoshaphat had appointed. (xix. 5—11.) This he did, lest they should revenge on him the murder of his brethren.

V. 5, 6. *Notes*, xviii. 1. 1 *Kings* xvi. 30—33. 2 *Kings* viii. 16—18.

V. 7. 2 *Kings* viii. 19. *Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 12—16 1 *Kings* xi. 11—13. 34—36. *v.* 36. *Is.* ix. 6, 7. *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 14—26. *Ez.* xxxvii. 24, 25.

V. 8—11. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* viii. 20—24.) Jehoram obtained some advantages over the Edomites, but could not re-establish his dominion.—Libnah seems to have revolted, because they would not submit to his idolatrous impositions.—The inhabitants of Jerusalem were induced by his persuasions to fall in with his idolatry; but the other parts

9 Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

10 So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time *also* did [o] Libnah revolt from under his hand; [p] because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

11 Moreover [q] he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and [r] caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit [s] fornication, and [t] compelled Judah *thereto*.

12 ¶ And there came [u] a writing to him from [x] Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father; Because thou hast not walked [y] in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor [z] in the ways of Asa king of Judah;

13 But hast walked [a] in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a [b] whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also [c] hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, *which were* better than thyself:

14 Behold, with a great * plague will the LORD smite [d] thy people, and [e] thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods.

15 And thou *shalt have* great sickness [f] by disease of thy bowels, until [g] thy bowels fall out, by reason of [h] the sickness day by day.

16 ¶ Moreover [i] the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the [k] Philistines, and of the Arabians, that *were* near the Ethiopians:

17 And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and † carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and [l] his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save [m] Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

18 And after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with [n] an incurable disease.

19 And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years,

o Josh. xxi. 13. 2 Kings xix. 8.
p xiii. 10. xv. 2. Deut. xxxii. 21. 1 Kings xi. 31. 33. Jer. ii. 13.
q Deut. xii. 2—4. 1 Kings xi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Ez. xx. 28.
r 1 Kings xiv. 9. 16. 2 Kings xxi. 11. Hab. ii. 15. Rev. ii. 20.
s 13. Lev. xvii. 7. xx. 5. 2 Kings ix. 22. Ps. cvi. 39. Ez. xvi. 15, &c. Rev. xvii. 1—5.
t xxxiii. 9. Dan. iii. 5, 6. 15. Rev. xiii. 15—17. xvii. 5, 6.
u Jer. xxxvi. 2. 28. 28—32. Ez. ii. 9, 10. Dan. v. 5. 25—29.
x 2 Kings ii. 11.
y xvii. 3, 4. 1 Kings xxii. 43.
z xiv. 2—5. 1 Kings xv. 11.
a 1 Kings xvi. 25. 30—33.
b 11. Ex. xxxiv. 15. Deut. xxxi. 16. 2 Kings ix. 22.
c 4. Gen. iv. 10—12. xlii. 21, 22. Judg. ix. 56, 57. 1 Kings ii. 31—33. Is. xxvi. 21. Hab. ii. 12. 1 John iii. 12.
* Heb. *stroke*. Lev. xxvi. 21.
d Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.
e Ex. xx. 5.
f 18, 19. Num. v. 27. Deut. xxviii. 61. Acts xii. 23.
g Ps. cix. 18. Acts i. 18.
h 18. Deut. xxviii. 27. 35. 59. 67. B. C. 884.
i xxxiii. 11. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Kings xi. 11. 23. Ezra i. 1. 5. Is. xlv. 5—7. Am. iii. 6.
k xvii. 11.
† Heb. *carried captive*. Job v. 3, 4.
l xxii. 1. xxiv. 7.
m xxii. 1. *Ahaziah*. 6. *Azariah*.
n *See* a.s 15.

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of Judah were *compelled* to it by persecution.—All kinds of licentious and unnatural practices, to the extreme disgrace of human nature, were encouraged, and even held sacred, in the worship of these abominable idols, as may undeniably be proved even from pagan authors.

V. 12. If the account of Elijah's translation be given according to the order of time in which it occurred, it happened before Jehoram reigned alone. (*Notes, 2 Kings* ii. 11—18. iii. 11, 12.) But the spirit of prophecy might direct Elijah, to prepare this writing before his translation, in the foresight of Jehoram's crimes; it might be left to Elisha, or some other prophet, to transmit it to him; and coming in that extraordinary manner, it would have a peculiarly awful energy. 'Elijah, foreseeing by 'the Spirit of prophecy, before he went to heaven, the 'wickedness of Jehoram, spake these words to one of the 'prophets, and charged him to put them down in writing, 'and to send them in a letter to Jehoram, when he grew 'so impious as is here related; and let him know, that 'Elijah commanded this writing to be delivered to him: 'that so Jehoram being affected with it, as if it had been 'sent from heaven, might be moved to repent of the evil 'he had done.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Some, however, have not improbably conjectured, that *Elisha*, and not *Elijah*, is intended.—The opinion, found in Josephus, and elsewhere, that this letter was sent by Elijah from heaven, only shews, that the papists have not the honour of being the first inventors of such legendary tales. (*Acts* xix. 35.)

V. 13. *Better.*] Jehoram's brethren seem to have been pious persons, and hated for the same cause as Abel was hated by Cain. 'This seems to signify that they were 'pious persons, who abhorred idolatry: and therefore his 'sin was the more heinous, in cutting them off, proceeding from enmity to God, as well as to them.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Gen.* iv. 6—9. 1 *John* iii. 11, 12.)

V. 14, 15. Many of the people had concurred in Jehoram's idolatry; and some of them must have been instruments in his base, unnatural murders. They were therefore joined in his punishment, and he suffered by losing his subjects. (*Note*, 18—20.) 'All which calamities were threatened in the writing sent him in the 'name of Elijah, that he might not think they came by 'chance, but by the special direction of Almighty God, 'as a punishment of his wickedness.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 16, 17. The Philistines 'invaded him on the west 'side of his kingdom, as the Arabians did on the east side.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, xvii. 11.) The spirit of these invaders was especially stirred up against Jehoram, and they do not seem to have done any great mischief to the country, or to Jerusalem. Having taken captive all his sons, except Jehoahaz, or *Ahaziah*, (names of similar meaning,) they put them to death. (*Note*, xxii. 1.)—Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, was left by the invaders; but she proved a still further curse to the family of Jehoram. It is probable that she concealed herself and her youngest son.

V. 18—20. Jehoram lived to witness the fulfilment of the other most afflictive particulars of Elijah's prophecy; and then he was seized with the predicted malady. (12—

his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases.

o xvi. 14. Jer. xxxiv. 5. And his people ° made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.

p 5. 20 ᵖ Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed

* Heb. *without desire.* xxiii. 21. Prov. x. 7. Jer. xxii. 18, 19. 28. * without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

CHAP. XXII.

Ahaziah succeeds Jehoram, reigns wickedly, joins Jehoram king of Israel, and is slain by Jehu, 1—9. Athaliah murders the seed royal, and usurps the throne, 10. Joash is preserved by Jehoshabeath, 11, 12.

a xxiii. 3. xxvi. 1. xxxiii. 25. xxxvi. 1. AND ᵃ the inhabitants of Jerusalem made ᵇ Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had ᶜ slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

b 6. *Azariah.* xxi. 17. *Jehoahaz.* 1 Chr. iii. 11.

c xxi. 16 17.

2 ᵈ Forty and two years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* ᵉ Athaliah the daughter of Omri.

d 2 Kings viii. 26.

e xxi. 6. 1 Kings xvi. 28.

3 He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for ᶠ his mother was ᵍ his counsellor to do wickedly.

f Gen. vi. 4, 5. Deut. xiii. 6—8. Judg. xvii. 4, 5. Neh. xiii. 23—27. Mal. ii. 15. Matt. xiv. 8—11.

4 Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD, like the house of Ahab: for ʰ they were his counsellors, after the death of his father, to his destruction.

g Gen. xxvii. 12, 13. Matt. x. 37.

h xxiv. 17, 18. Prov. i. 10. xiii. 20. xix. 27.

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15. *Notes, Deut.* xxviii. 61. *Acts* xii. 20—23.) He was a young man, yet he could get no relief from the most painful and loathsome disease imaginable: and "he departed "without being desired." No one regretted his death, as none had desired his recovery: but the idolaters, and even his dependents, were glad to be relieved from his tyranny: they therefore burnt no sweet spices in honour of him, and refused to bury him among their former kings. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The effects of sin may be very dreadful and durable, even when it does not prove finally destructive to him who committed it.—No means can ensure divine grace to our children; but intimate connexions with atrocious sinners almost render their ungodliness certain.—We are reminded to bless God for equitable rulers, a mild administration, and a limited and well arranged constitution of government; and to pray for a continuance of these blessings: for, notwithstanding the most prudent regulations, we may be suddenly and irreparably bereaved of them, unless God mercifully protect us.—Ambition, envy, and jealousy destroy natural affection, and convert men into savage monsters; when they have obtained power, and are afraid of losing it, and when "there is no fear of God before "their eyes." In the mystery of Providence, such persons prosper for a time, and murder much wiser and better men than themselves: but the Lord has righteous purposes in permitting these events; part of which may now be discerned, and all the rest will be discovered by the light of the eternal world.—The vilest characters are, in some way, connected in the great chain of causes and effects: and are reserved to be undesignedly instrumental in carrying on the purposes of God, and in fulfilling his promises to his church and servants: or they are spared a while, for the sake of their relation to those, whom "he delighteth "to honour." But his plan will not long require them; their measure of iniquities will speedily be full, and then all their prosperity will end in ruin and despair.—The Lord, by one means or another, awfully reminds offenders of their guilt, and warns them of their danger: and those, who despise these admonitions, will experience the truth of them when it is too late; for, if neither judgments nor respites bring men to repentance, destruction cannot be far distant.—The dreadful torments and deaths of some murderers, persecutors, and other haughty criminals, who defy human justice, proclaim, that "verily there is a "God, that judgeth the world;" and shew what all such enemies of God and man may expect, in the day of wrath and righteous vengeance. None need lament the departure of those who were plagues and tempters while they lived: and it may be right, in some cases, to withhold customary respect from them after their death; that other tyrants and persecutors, when surrounded by sycophants who flatter them in their crimes, may understand how they are despised and abhorred in the general sentiments of mankind. May the Lord enable us so to live, that we may have hope and comfort in the approach and agonies of death, and a joyful entrance into glory; and that our survivors may have to bless God for the benefit which they have received from us, and to regret our removal! Of this we should be ambitious, and such honour in some degree have all the saints of God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. The Arabians seem to have taken Jehoram's family captive, in the prospect of obtaining a ransom: but some band of men in their camp slew them; and thus defeated their purpose, but accomplished that of God. (*Note,* xxi. 16, 17.)

V. 2—4. *Forty and two.* (2) As Jehoram was under forty years old when he died, it *must* be granted that this is an error of the transcribers, and that it should be *twenty-two,* as in Kings, (*2 Kings* viii. 26,) and in some ancient versions.—Ahaziah was born when his father was eighteen years of age, yet he had several elder brethren: so that Jehoram must have been married to Athaliah when he was very young; and this circumstance rendered Jehoshaphat's

5 He [i] walked also after their counsel, and [k] went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel, to war against Hazael king of Syria at [l] Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.

6 And he returned to be healed in Jezreel, because of the wounds [*] which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And [m] Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down [n] to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.

7 And the [†] destruction of Ahaziah [o] was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, [p] he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom [q] the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

8 And it came to pass, that [r] when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.

9 And [s] he sought Ahaziah; and they caught him, (for he was hid [t] in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: [u] Because, said they, he *is* [x] the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart. So [y] the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

10 ¶ But when [z] Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah.

11 But [a] Jehoshabeath the daughter of the king took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a [b] bed-chamber. So Jehoshabeath the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of [c] Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that [d] she slew him not.

12 And he was with them [e] hid in the house of God six years: and [f] Athaliah reigned over the land.

i Ps. i. 1.
k 2 Kings viii. 28, 29.
l xviii. 3. 31. xix. 2. 2 Kings xxii. 3, 4. Dan. v. 22, 23.
* Heb. *wherewith they wounded him.*
m 1. 7. *Ahaziah.* xxi. 17. *Jehoahaz.*
n 2 Kings viii. 29. x. 13, 14.
† Heb. *treading down.* Mal. iv. 3.
o x. 15. Judg. xiv. 4. 1 Kings xii. 15. xxii. 20. Ps. ix. 16. Is. xlvi. 10.
p 2 Kings ix. 21.
q 1 Kings xix. 16. 2 Kings ix. 1—7.
r 2 Kings x. 11—14.
s 2 Kings ix. 27.
t 1 Kings viii. 32.
u 2 Kings ix. 28. 34.
x xvii. 3, 4. xxi. 20.
y 1. 8. xxi. 4. 17.
z 2—4. 2 Kings xi. 1, &c.
a 2 Kings xi. 2. *Jehosheba.*
b Ez. xl. 45, 46.
c xxiii. 1.
d xxi. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Kings xv. 4. Ps. xxxiii. 10. lxxvi. 10. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. lxv. 8. Acts iv. 28.
e Ps. xxvii. 5.
f Ps. xii. 8. lxxiii. 14. 18, 19. Jer. xii. 1. Hab. i. 12.

conduct in this alliance still more blameable. (*Note*, xviii. 1.)

V. 5. Ahaziah 'would not imitate his grandfather in 'that which was good in him: yet he followed his bad example, in joining with Ahab's son, as Jehoshaphat had 'with Ahab.' *Bp. Patrick.*—This propensity in human nature, not only to copy bad examples, but even to select the bad part of good characters for imitation, is an awful and conclusive proof of deep depravity.

V. 6. (2 *Kings* viii. 28, 29.) The name given the king of Judah in this verse, though in the translation the difference is not great, yet it is greater in the original, and seems to have been a distinct name by which he was known. (אֲחַזְיָהוּ, *Ahaziah*; עֲזַרְיָהוּ, *Azariah*.)—It signifies *the help of the LORD*.

V. 7—9. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* ix. 21—28. x. 13, 14.) The Lord was pleased to commission Jehu, at this crisis, in order that Ahaziah might be involved in the righteous judgment, which was executed upon the house of Ahab.—Ahaziah lay concealed in the kingdom of Samaria, though not in the city so called. When he had seen Jehoram slain, he fled and endeavoured to conceal himself in some part of that country: but Jehu ordered him to be pursued, and at length he was taken at Megiddo, and brought to Jehu, who caused him to be put to death. His servants were permitted, however, to carry his corpse *to* Jerusalem, and bury him, out of respect to the memory of Jehoshaphat his grandfather; while Jehoram was left unburied, in detestation of his father Ahab's enormous wickedness.

V. 10—12. *Notes*, 2 *Kings* xi. 1—3.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No tongue can express, no imagination can conceive, the guilt and condemnation of those parents, who *counsel* their own children to do wickedly, and who thus become their murderers in the most awful sense. Yet, this fatal calamity, to families and to society, is frequently the consequence of contracting marriages with those who are irreligious and wicked. But they, who are not previously disposed to ungodliness and vice, will not hearken to such pernicious counsellors: and neither the persuasion, authority, example, nor favour, even of a parent, is to be regarded, when the will and honour of God are concerned. But when men hate the truth and service of God, they are judicially left to be seduced and deceived, till their impolicy and impiety concur in bringing destruction upon them. None can flee, or hide himself, from that evil which pursueth sinners; or from those instruments, whom God employs to execute judgment upon his enemies: and the external respect paid to them, for the sake of pious ancestors, will not prevent the ruin of their own souls, or that of their families.—The most desperate and prosperous workers of iniquity, who are hardened against every natural affection, as well as all remains of the fear of God, can do no more than execute his righteous purposes: but he will not suffer his promises to be broken; and if infants, or pious persons, are permitted to be cut off in such unnatural massacres, he will set all right in the eternal world.

CHAP. XXIII.

Jehoiada takes proper measures, and makes Joash king, 1—11. Athaliah is slain, 12—15. Jehoiada subverts idolatry; restores the worship of God, and places Joash on the throne, to the great joy of the people, 16—21.

a 2 Kings xi. 4, &c. AND in the [a] seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jehoram, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into b xv. 12. 1 Sam. xviii. 3. Neh. ix. 38. [b] covenant with him.

c Ps. cxii. 5. Matt. x. 16. Eph. v. 15. 2 And they [c] went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and d xi. 13—17. 1 Chr. xv. 12. xxiv. 6 [d] the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.

e 16. 2 Sam. v. 3. 2 Kings xi. 17. 1 Chr. xi. 3. 3 And all the congregation [e] made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, f vi. 16. vii. 18. xxi. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 16. 1 Kings ii. 4. ix. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 29. 36. [f] as the LORD hath said of the sons of David.

4 This *is* the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you [g] entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, *shall be* h 1 Chr. xxvi. 13—16. [h] porters of the * Heb. *thresholds.* doors;

i 2 Kings xi. 5, 6. Ez. xliv. 2, 3. xlvi. 2, 3. 5 And a third part *shall be* at [i] the king's house; and a third part at k Acts iii. 2. [k] the gate of the foundation: and all the people *shall be* in the courts of the house of the LORD.

6 But let none come into the house l 2 Kings xi. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxiii. 28—32. of the LORD save the priests, and [l] they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they *are* holy: but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD.

7 And m 2 Kings xi. 8, 9. [m] the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and n Ex. xix. 12, 13. xxi. 14. [n] whosoever *else* cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.

8 So o 2 Kings xi. 9. [o] the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go *out* on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not p 1 Chr. xxiv xxv. xxvi. [p] the courses.

9 Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds, q 1 Sam. xxi. 9. 2 Sam. viii. 7. [q] spears, and bucklers, and shields that *had been* king David's, which *were* in the house of God.

10 And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand † Heb. *shoulder of the house.* 2 Kings xi. 11. from the right [†] side of the temple to the left side of the temple, r vi. 12. Ex. xl. 6. Matt. xxiii. 35. [r] along by s xxii. 11. 2 Kings xi. 12. [s] the altar and the temple, by the t 2 Sam. i. 10. Ps. xxi. 3. lxxxix. 39. cxxxii. 18. Heb. ii. 9. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5. Rev. iv. 4. 10. v. 10. xix. 12. king round about.

11 Then u Ex. xxv. 16. xxxi. 18. Deut. xvii. 18. Ps. ii. 10—12. lxxviii. 5. Is. viii. 16. 20. xlix. 23. [u] they brought out the king's son, and [t] put upon him the crown, and *gave him* [u] the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons x 1 Sam. x. 1. 2 Sam. v. 3. 1 Kings i. 39. Ps. lxxxix. 20. Acts iv. 26, 27. [x] anointed him, and said, y Heb. *Let the king live.* 1 Sam. x. 24. 2 Sam. xvi. 16. 1 Kings i. 34. Matt. xxi. 9. [y] God save the king.

12 ¶ Now z 2 Kings ix. 32—37. [z] when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, a she came to the people into the house of the LORD:

13 And she looked, and, behold,

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. (*Note, 2 Kings* xi. 4.) These "chief fathers of Israel" seem to have been the descendants of those priests and Levites from the ten tribes, and pious persons, who left their cities and joined themselves to Judah, in the days of Jeroboam. (*Note,* xi. 13—17.) The word "Israel," however, is sometimes used as a general term for the nation, and so applied to the people of Judah.

V. 3—10. *Notes, 2 Kings* xi. 5—10.—*Made a covenant,* &c. (3) 16. *Note, 2 Kings* xi. 17—20.—"The house "of the LORD" (6), must mean the *inner court;* for no Levites, who were not also priests, entered the sanctuary. This shews, that on some occasions, the people were admitted into the inner courts; else the injunction had been needless.

V. 11. *Note, 2 Kings* xi. 12.—*Sons.*] Probably Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, who was afterwards stoned by Joash's command, assisted in crowning and anointing him. (*Notes,* xxiv. 19—26.)

V. 12—21. *Notes, 2 Kings* xi. 13—20.—*His pillar at the entering in,* &c. (13) The king's pillar was at the entrance of the inner court; but the two pillars, Boaz and Jachin, stood at the porch of the temple. One of these therefore could not, as some have supposed, be the king's pillar. (*Marg. Ref.* a.—1 *Kings* vii. 21.)—*Singers,* &c. (13) (*Marg. Ref.*) It is observable, that this particular is noted in Chronicles, and not in Kings; in which the appointment of the sacred Psalmody is not recorded. (Comp. 1 *Kings* viii. 1—11. with 2 *Chr.* v. 11—14.—1 *Kings* viii. 62—66. with 2 *Chr.* vii. 1—10.)—*Jehoiada,* &c. (16) Jehoiada, as priest, and probably high priest, represented God in this solemn transaction.—*The officers.* (18)

[a] the king stood at his pillar at the entering in, [b] and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and [c] all the people of the land rejoiced, and [d] sounded with trumpets; also [e] the singers with instruments of musick, and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, [*] Treason, Treason.

14 Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges: and [f] whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, [g] Slay her not in the house of the LORD.

15 So they laid hands on her: and when she was come to the entering [h] of the horse-gate, by the king's house, [i] they slew her there.

16 And Jehoiada [k] made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, [l] that they should be the LORD's people.

17 Then all the people went to [m] the house of Baal, and brake it down, and [n] brake his altars and his images in pieces, and [o] slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

18 Also Jehoiada appointed the officers of the house of the LORD, by the hand of the priests the Levites, [p] whom David had distributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt-offerings of the LORD, [q] as *it is* written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, *as it was ordained* [†] by David.

19 And he set the [r] porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none *which was* unclean in any thing should enter in.

20 And he took [s] the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the LORD: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom.

21 And [t] all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

CHAP. XXIV

Joash reigns well during Jehoiada's life, and zealously repairs the temple, 1—14. Jehoiada dies, and is honourably buried, 15, 16. Joash, seduced by his princes, turns aside to idolatry; and causes Zechariah, Jehoiada's son, to be stoned, for reproving him in the name of God, 17—21. Zechariah's dying prediction, 22. Joash is plundered by the Syrians, left sick, and then slain by his own servants, 23—26. Amaziah succeeds him, 27.

[a] JOASH *was* seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

2 And [b] Joash did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, [c] all the days of Jehoiada the priest.

3 And Jehoiada [d] took for him [e] two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.

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a xxxiv. 31. 2 Kings xxiii. 3.
b Num. x. 1—10. 1 Chr. xv. 24.
c 1 Kings i. 39, 40. 1 Chr. xii. 40. Prov. xi. 10. xxix. 2.
d Judg. vii. 8. 18—22. 2 Kings ix. 13.
e 1 Chr. xv. 16—22. 27. xxv. 1—8.
* Heb. *Conspiracy.* 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. 2 Kings ix. 23. Rom. ii. 1, 2.
f 2 Kings x. 25. xi. 8. 15.
g Ez. ix. 7.
h Neh. iii. 28.
i xxii. 10. Judg. i. 7. Matt. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 13. Rev. xvi. 5—7.
k xv. 12. 14. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31, 32. Deut. v. 2, 3. xxix. 1. 10—15. 2 Kings xi. 17. Ezra x. 3. Neh. v. 12, 13. ix. 38. x. 29, &c.
l Deut. xxvi. 17—19. Josh. xxiv. 21—25. Is. xliv. 5.
m xxxiv. 4. 7. 2 Kings x. 25—28. xi. 18. xviii. 4.
n Deut. xii. 3. Is. ii. 18. Zech. xiii. 2, 3.
o Deut. xiii. 5, 9. 1 Kings xviii. 40. 2 Kings xi. 18, 19.
p 1 Chr. xxiii. xxiv.
q Num. xxviii. 2, &c.
† Heb. *by the hands of David.* xxix. 25. 1 Chr. xxv.
r 1 Chr. ix. 23, 24. xxvi.
s 2 Kings xi. 9, 10. 19.
t 2 Kings xi. 20. Ps. lviii. 10. Prov. xi. 10. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 2—4.
a 2 Kings xi. 21. xii. 1. *Jehoash.* 1 Chr. iii. 11.
b xxv. 2. xxvi. 4, 5. 2 Kings xii. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 36, 37. cvi. 12, 13. Mark iv. 16, 17.
c 17—22.
d Gen. xxi. 21. xxiv. 4.
e Gen. iv. 19. Matt. xix. 4—8.

The arrangements made by David, as to the worship and attendance at the temple, had been wholly disregarded; but were restored by Jehoiada. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord commonly effects great and important changes by those persons whom he has furnished with wisdom, courage, piety, and integrity; and who intend to do his will and promote his glory, and not to advance their own interests.—In the greatest emergencies, care ought to be taken that sacred things be not profaned; and that every one concur in a manner consistent with his character and calling: and as ministers are by profession *holy* persons, they should be careful to exhibit *holy* examples.—Civil transactions should be managed with a regard to the word and worship of God; and while men's hearts overflow with good wishes for their princes, commendations of them, or joy in their advancement; they should remember to conduct and terminate all in thanksgivings and praises unto God. This is peculiarly becoming, when persecuting tyrants and usurpers are removed, and equitable rulers come in their places: the work is the Lord's, whatever instruments he is pleased to employ. Such national mercies should be acknowledged by publick reformations; and by a concurrence of all ranks, in solemnly yielding themselves up to be the Lord's people, and in establishing his worship and ordinances according to his word. Where this is neglected, the joy and singing, which takes place upon great deliverances, or the accession of kings to the throne, will commonly be short-lived, and will terminate in complaints, and discords, and calamities.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1—3. *Note, 2 Kings* xii. 2, 3.—*Took*, &c. (3) The Jewish expositors are of opinion, that Jehoiada took these two wives for himself, not for Joash:

B. C. 865.
4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, * Heb. *renew.* 5—7. *that* Joash was minded to * repair the house of the LORD.

5 And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, f xxix. 3. xxxiv. 8, 9. 2 Kings xii. 4, 5. and f gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year B. C. 856. to year; and see that ye hasten the g 2 Kings xii. 6, 7. matter. g Howbeit the Levites hastened *it* not.

6 And the king called for Jehoiada h 2 Sam. xxiv. 3. the chief, and said unto him, h Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah, and out of i Ex. xxx. 12—16. Jerusalem, i the collection, *according to the commandment* of Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congre- k Num. i. 50. xvii. 7, 8. xviii. 2. Acts vii. 44. gation of Israel, for the k tabernacle of witness?

7 For the l sons of Athaliah, m that l xxi. 17. m xxviii. 22—24. Esth. vii. 6. Prov. x. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 8. Rev. ii. 20. wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD n Deut. xxxii. 15—17. Ez. xvi. 17. 19—21. Dan. v. 2—4. 23. Hos. ii. 8, 9. n did they bestow upon Baalim.

8 And o at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it o 2 Kings xii. 8, 9. Mark xii. 41. without at the gate of the house of the LORD.

† Heb. *voice.* 9 And they made a † proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring p *See on* 6. Matt. xvii. 24—27. in to the LORD the p collection *that* Moses the servant of God *laid* upon Israel in the wilderness.

10 And all the princes and all the q 1 Chr. xxix. 9. Is. lxiv. 5. Acts ii. 45—47. 2 Cor. viii. 2. people q rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

11 Now it came to pass, that r at r 2 Kings xii. 10—12. what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that *there was* much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

12 And the king and Jehoiada s gave xxxiv. 9—11. it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired t masons and carpenters to repair the t 1 Kings v. 15. house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD.

13 So the workmen wrought, and ‡ the work was perfected by them, and ‡ Heb. *the healing went up upon the work by their hand.* Neh. iv. 7. they set the house of God u in his state, u 1 Chr. xxii. 5. Hag. ii. 3. Mark xiii. 1, 2. and strengthened it.

14 And when they had finished *it*, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made x vessels for the house of x 2 Kings xii. 13, 14. the LORD, *even* y vessels to minister, y 1 Kings vii. 50. and § to offer *withal*, and spoons, and § Or, *pestils.* Prov. xxvii. 22. vessels of gold and silver. And they z offered burnt-offerings in the house z Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. of the LORD continually, a all the days 2, &c. a 2. of Jehoiada.

15 ¶ But Jehoiada waxed old, and B. C. 845. was b full of days when he died; c an b Gen. xv. 15. xxv. 8. 1 Chr. xxiii. 1. Job v. 26. Ps. xci. 16. hundred and thirty years old *was he* c Gen. xlvii. 9. Ps. xc. 10. when he died.

16 And they buried him d in the d 1 Sam. ii. 30. 1 Kings ii. 10. Acts ii. 29. city of David among the kings, e be- e xxiii. xxxi. 20, 21. Neh. xiii. 14. Heb. vi. 10. cause he had done good in Israel,

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and they consider this as inconsistent with the character of the high priest. But it is most obvious to understand the words, *for him*, of Joash: and Jehoiada's advanced age, at this time, renders it highly improbable that he should take them for himself; for he must, on any computation, have been above a hundred years old, when Joash began to reign. (*Note*, 15, 16.) Nor are any sons of Jehoiada mentioned, afterwards, except such as were grown up.—It is not indeed expressly said that Jehoiada was high priest, but the way in which he is distinguished from the other priests, and the authority which he exercised, seem to put it beyond all reasonable doubt, that he was.

V. 4—14. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2 Kings* xii. 4—16.—*Hasten*, &c. (5) 'Things were in so bad a condition, that 'it required the work should be begun with speed. Yet 'such was the negligence of the Levites, and the back-'wardness perhaps of the people to part with their money, 'that in the twenty-third of this king's reign nothing was 'done.' *Bp. Patrick.*

The sons of Athaliah, &c. (7) Jehoram's sons, Ahaziah excepted, whether by Athaliah, or his other wives, were slain before his death. (xxii. 1.) But either his sons by Athaliah, during his life time, or her sons by some other man, as many suppose, had thus spoiled the temple to consecrate its treasures to Baalim.—*All the princes*, &c. (10) 'The great men set so good an example to the 'people, that they cheerfully joined with them in this good 'work.' *Bp. Patrick.*

And they offered, &c. (14) It appears from this, that the daily offering, morning and evening, had been intermitted previously; and that it was neglected after the death of Jehoiada. (*Notes*, xxiii. 18, 19. *Ex.* xxix. 38—41. *Dan.* viii. 9—12. xi. 31. xii. 11—13.)

V. 15, 16. Jehoiada was born in the reign of Solomon,

both toward God, and toward his house.

17 ¶ Now [f] after the death of Jehoiada, came [g] the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them.

18 And [h] they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and [i] wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.

19 Yet [k] he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not [l] give ear.

20 And [m] the Spirit of God [*] came upon Zechariah [n] the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, [o] Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? [p] because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.

21 And they [q] conspired against him, and [r] stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the LORD.

22 Thus Joash the king [s] remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, [t] The LORD look upon *it*, and require *it*.

[f] Deut. xxxi. 27. Acts xx. 29, 30. 2 Pet. i. 15.
[g] x. 8—10. xxii. 3, 4. Prov. vii. 21—23. xx. 19. xxvi. 28. xxix. 5. Dan. xi. 32.
B. C. 840
[h] 4. xxi. 13. xxxiii. 3—7. 1 Kings xi. 4, 5. xiv. 9. 23.
[i] xix. 2. xxviii. 13. xxix. 8. Josh. xxii. 20. Judg. v. 8. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. Hos. v. 10, 11.
[k] xxxvi. 15, 16. 2 Kings xvii. 13—15. Neh. ix. 26. Jer. vii. 25, 26. xxv. 4, 5. xliv. 4, 5. Luke xi. 47—51. xvi. 31. xx. 9—15.
[l] Is. xxviii. 23. xlii. 23. li. 4. lv. 3. Matt. xiii. 9. 15, 16.
[m] xv. 1. xx. 14.
[*] Heb. *clothed.* Judg. vi. 34. 1 Chr. xii. 18. *margins.*
[n] xxiii. 11.
[o] Num. xiv 41. 1 Sam. xiii. 13, 14. 2 Sam xii. 9, 10. Zech. vii. 11—14.
[p] xv. 2 Deut. xxix. 25, 26. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. ii. 19. iv. 18. v. 19. 25
[q] Jer. xi. 19. xviii. 18. xxxviii. 4—6.
[r] Matt. xxi. 35. xxiii. 34—37. Acts vii. 58, 59.
[s] Ps. cix. 4. Luke xvii. 15—18 John x. 32.
[t] Gen. ix. 5. Jer. xi. 20. xxvi. 14, 15. 2 Tim. iv. 14. Rev. vi. 9—11. xviii. 20. xix. 2, 3.

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and had lived through six successive reigns, besides Athaliah's usurpation; namely, those of Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah. He was honourably interred among the kings of Judah: but the reason assigned for this extraordinary respect was much more honourable; and perhaps it was inscribed on his monument: "He has done good in Israel, both toward "God, and toward his house." He had eminently promoted true religion, and promoted the regular worship of God, and the repairs of the temple; in which the best interests of the people were greatly concerned. He had also been exceedingly useful in preserving the line of David in the person of Joash, and in terminating Athaliah's wicked usurpation. (*Note*, xxxiv. 20, 21.)—Israel, the general name of the whole nation, is sometimes used when the kingdom of Judah is meant.

V. 17, 18. Jehoiada had acquired his influence over Joash during his childhood: and his near relation to the king, and the immense obligations, which he had conferred upon him, concurred with his age, gravity, reputation, piety, and wisdom, to support him in authority. So that, while he lived, neither Joash, nor his courtiers, ventured to follow, or even to declare, their inclinations to idolatry; but externally conformed to Jehoiada's regulations. As soon, however, as he was removed by death, they threw off the mask; and the nobles paid court to Joash, and perhaps flattered him, as at length freed from priestly dominion, tuition, grave lectures, and restraints, and as now a king indeed; and intimated, that he would have no objection to release the rigour of Jehoiada's administration, in matters of religion. Perhaps, they only proposed, that he should tolerate their sacrificing upon the high places, as more convenient and agreeable to them, than always coming to Jerusalem: but he, being won by their homage, as well as induced by his own inclinations, joined with them even in more gross and avowed idolatry; in consequence of which, they soon experienced the tokens of the divine displeasure. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xii. 17, 18.)

V. 19—22. (*Marg. Ref.*) Both the king and his courtiers seem to have contemptuously disregarded the warnings of the prophets, first sent to them; so that they did not honour them even with hatred or persecution. But, at length, when they were assembled on account of some festival; (for the temple was not utterly forsaken;) the Spirit of God directed Zechariah to expostulate with them respecting their idolatry. Being the son of Jehoiada, a near relation to Joash, a chief priest, if not the high priest, he seemed to be the most unexceptionable person, who could possibly have been selected for the service: while his piety, and the meekness and reasonableness of his plain address and warning, combined in entitling him to a favourable hearing, and evidenced his admonition to be seasonable. "The Spirit of God clothed him." (*marg.*) 'He had a divine motion to speak publickly to the people 'and to reprove them, which that he might do and be 'heard of all, he got up into an high place, where they 'might all both see and hear him.' *Bp. Patrick.* But all this was in vain; the enraged apostate, who hated reproof, ordered him to be stoned, and the unprincipled people, as if joined in a preconcerted conspiracy against God and his servants, with one accord executed the unrighteous sentence, even in the court of the temple! (xxiii. 14, 15. *Note*, 2 *Kings* xi. 13—16.)—It is scarcely possible that a murder could contain more aggravated injustice and impiety: but the ingratitude of Joash is peculiarly noticed. Many, who have cast off all fear of God, retain some regard to their earthly benefactors; but this base man was lost to every thing, which had the least semblance of good. —Zechariah's dying words would be best rendered, "The LORD will look upon it and require it:" as a prophecy, and not a prayer. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Matt.* xxiii. 29—36.) The event soon verified this prediction. (*Note*, 23, 24.) 'It is likely that he was a younger son of Je-'hoiada. ... Ludovicus Capellus therefore thinks, that his 'brother the high priest conniving at Joash's apostasy, 'this younger brother was inspired of God to reprove it, 'which boldness Joash and his courtiers thought they 'might punish with some colour, ... which they stirred up 'the people to chastise. ... Though Zechariah spoke by 'the Spirit of God, he only applied the prediction of 'Moses (*Deut.* xxxi. 16, 17,) to the present time; that 'they might all learn to have a greater regard to Moses, 'and continually meditate in his law; unto which if they

23 ¶ And it came to pass, * at the end of the year, *that* [u] the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed [x] all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of † Damascus.

24 For the army of the Syrians [y] came with a small company of men, and the LORD [z] delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. [a] So they executed judgment against Joash.

25 And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in [b] great diseases,) [c] his own servants conspired against him, [d] for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him [e] not in the sepulchres of the kings.

26 And these *are* they that conspired against him; [‡] Zabad the son of Shimeath, an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of [§] Shimrith, a Moabitess.

27 Now *concerning* his sons, and the greatness of the [f] burdens *laid* upon him, and the [‖] repairing of the house of God, behold, they *are* written in the [*] story of the book of the Kings. And [g] Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

* Heb. *in the revolution.* 1 Kings xx. 22. 26.
u Deut. xxxii. 35. 2 Kings xii. 17, 18.
x 17, 18. Ps. ii. 10, 11. lviii. 10, 11. lxxxii. 6, 7.
† Heb. *Darmasek.*
y Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 30. Is. xxx. 17. Jer. xxxvii. 10.
z xvi. 8, 9. xx. 11, 12. Lev. xxvi. 25. Deut. xxviii. 25.
a xxii. 8. Is. x. 5, 6. xiii. 5. Hab. i. 12.
b xxi. 16. 18, 19. xxii. 6.
c 2 Kings xii. 20. xiv. 19, 20.
d 21, 22. Ps. x. 14. Rev. xvi. 6.
e 16. xxi. 20 xxviii. 27.
‡ Or, *Jozachar.* 2 Kings xii. 21.
§ Or, *Shomer.*
f 2 Kings xii. 18.
‖ Heb. *founding.* 18.
* Or, *commentary.* ix. 29. xvi. 11. xx. 34.
g xxv. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 12.

'had attended, they would easily have discerned, who were 'true prophets, and who were false.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 23, 24. (*Note*, 17, 18.) A small company sent by Hazael plundered Jerusalem, and sent the spoil to Hazael at Damascus. They likewise "destroyed all the princes "of the people;" the very persons, who seduced Joash into idolatry (17). So that the judgment of God executed by them, singled out the principal criminals, as appointed to death. "They executed judgment, (or *judgments*) "against Joash" also.—That so small an army should obtain so decided a victory over all the power of Judah, and the strength of Jerusalem; shewed that the punishment was immediately from God himself, who forsook them, and "delivered a very great host into the hand of the "Syrians;" because they had so wickedly forsaken him.

V. 25, 26. (*Note, 2 Kings* xii. 20, 21.) 'Many think, 'he was sorely wounded in the battle, which brought him 'into great diseases, and they increased, it is likely, by the 'anguish of his mind, to see his country ruined; and by 'the hatred and contempt into which he was fallen.' *Bp. Patrick.* Joash seems to have murdered some other sons of Jehoiada, perhaps lest they should avenge the death of Zechariah.—Whether the conspirators intended to punish Joash for this murder, or were actuated by private resentment or ambition; God was pleased to use them as executioners of his righteous vengeance. They were both born of foreign women: the idolatrous kings perhaps encouraged such forbidden marriages; but in this case they proved fatal to Joash. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27. *Burdens*, &c.] Either the tribute demanded by the victor; or the judgments denounced and inflicted by the Lord.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The best education, the most scriptural instructions, and the brightest examples, are insufficient of themselves to convert the soul: they are, however, the general means by which the Lord works; and even, when not eventually successful to change the sinner's heart, they commonly produce effects salutary to the community.—Hypocrites often shew extraordinary zeal for externals, but they foolishly neglect the heart.—The reluctancy of men to part with their money, for pious and charitable uses, is increased by the avarice of many, through whose hands it should pass, and who basely intercept it: but exact fidelity and punctuality, in shewing that it has been, or will be, expended for the end proposed, go far towards inducing men to contribute liberally in a good cause; and this alone can afford comfort upon reflection, or bring honour upon a man's character.—If we live to the glory of God, and endeavour to do good to men, especially in the great concerns of salvation; we may be satisfied that we have lived long enough, though we should die young; or we may be willing to linger out many years in infirm old age, if the Lord has any thing for us to do. But, whenever or however we pass from time into eternity, may we leave such a testimony in the consciences of our survivors, that if they were required to make an inscription for our tomb, they might be constrained to write; "He did good to Israel, both toward God, and toward "his house." It is true, that many, who are overawed by the personal qualities, the rank, or the reputation of eminent men, secretly hate their piety, and are weary of their authority. But a good conscience, the assurance of usefulness, and the approbation of God, may enable a man to disregard these painful effects of superior excellency.

V. 17—27.

The authority or influence of parents, ministers, and pious friends, joined with transient serious impressions, and other incidental circumstances, may produce, and long maintain, a plausible profession of religion: but the lamp will go out when it is especially wanted; unless supplied from the oil in the vessel, the grace of God possessing the heart. (*Notes*, and *P. O. Matt.* xxv. 1—13.)—When a man is under the power of pride and worldly passions, he disrelishes those counsels, from which he has received the most important temporal advantage, and which tend to his eternal good: and then flattery, licentious liberty, arbitrary authority, and the most impious proposals, will be more welcome, because congenial to his judgment and affections. But he, who has not sense to direct his own conduct, and is too proud to take good advice, will soon be proved a fool, let who will flatter his wisdom.—"This

CHAP. XXV.

Amaziah at first reigns well, and justly punishes his father's murderers, 1—4. He gathers a great army, and hires, for a hundred talents, a hundred thousand Israelites against Edom: but, having paid the money, he dismisses them at the word of a prophet; and they depart in great anger, 5—10. He smites the Edomites, and exercises great cruelty towards the captives, 11, 12. The Israelites, on their return, spoil the cities of Judah, 13. Amaziah serves the gods of Edom, and rejects the admonitions of a prophet, 14—16. He challenges Joash, who in vain warns him: he is vanquished, and Jerusalem spoiled, 17—24. The rest of his reign, 25, 26. He is slain by a conspiracy, 27, 28.

a 2 Kings xiv. 1—3. AMAZIAH *was* [a] twenty and five years old *when* he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

b 14. xxiv. 2. xxvi. 4. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 37. Is. xxix. 13. Hos. x. 2. Acts viii. 21. 2 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, [b] but not with a perfect heart.

3 Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was [*] established to him, that [c] he slew his servants that had killed the king his father.

* Heb. *confirmed upon him.*

c xxiv. 25, 26. Gen. ix. 5, 6. Ex. xxi. 14. Num. xxxv. 31—33.

4 But he slew not their children, but *did* [d] as *it is* written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

d Deut. xxiv. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 5. Jer. xxxi. 29, 30. Ez. xviii. 4. 20.

5 ¶ Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them [e] captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of *their* fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them [f] from twenty years old and above, and found them [g] three hundred thousand choice *men, able* to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield.

B. C. 827.

e Ex. xviii. 25. 1 Sam. viii. 12. 1 Chr. xiii. 1. xxvii. 1.

f Num. i. 3.

g xi. 1. xiv. 8. xvii. 14—18.

6 He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel, for an hundred talents of silver.

h 2 Sam. xii. 1. 1 Kings xiii. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 17.

7 But there came [h] a man of God to

" is the love of God, to keep his commandments, and his " commandments are not grievous." Yet the yoke of external obedience is very uneasy to the carnal mind; and, in this case, men will secretly rejoice, and perhaps openly congratulate one another, upon the death of pious monitors, or even parents. But impiety brings wrath, especially when consequent to apostasy, on such as cast off the fear of God.—No caution, tenderness, or gentleness, consistent with faithfulness; no respectability of character, eminent services, or personal obligations, can secure the ministers of God from persecution, if they rouse the dormant conscience, contradict the haughty spirit, or excite disquietude in sin: and, except their word be accompanied with the converting grace of God, the sinner will rage, in proportion to his power, pride, or impiety.—Some regard to justice, decency, and gratitude, may be expected from ignorant and profligate characters, and from infidels and heathen idolaters: but the rage of an apostate bursts all obligations and restraints; for he has so done violence to his conscience, that it has lost all its energy; and, except he be restrained by human laws, every thing desperate may be expected from his resentment. The testimony of faithful ministers will, however, be accepted by God, when rejected by men; and he will recompense to them all their losses and sufferings for his sake.—Those who transgress the commandments of the Lord, cannot prosper, whatever they may presumptuously suppose; and when they forsake God, he will forsake them. Without the Spirit of prophecy, we may confidently foretel, that the Lord will look upon, and require, all the persecutions, slanders, mockeries, and ill usage, which his servants meet with, except their prayers be answered, and he give the persecutors repentance and better minds.—The Lord can soon find such as will, for their own purposes, execute judgment upon murderers, and other atrocious criminals, however exalted; nor can any power avail against those, into whose hands he delivers his enemies to be punished. Then, superiority in station only ensures precedency in suffering: and how dreadful is it when a painful and miserable death transmits the impenitent rebel to a more miserable eternity! God help us to be in earnest, to take warning, to be upright in heart, and to persevere unto the end! that, having lived by faith, and in humble, devoted obedience, we may at length " die the death of the right- " eous, and that our last end may be like his! "

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1, 2. *Notes,* 14—16. xxvi. 4. 2 *Kings* xiv. 1—4.

V. 3, 4. (*Notes,* xxiv. 25, 26.) Even if the conspirators against Joash intended to avenge upon him the murder of Zechariah, they acted without a commission from that God, " to whom vengeance belongeth; " and were justly put to death for treason and murder. (*Note,* 2 *Kings* xiv. 5, 6.)

V. 5. Nearly four times as many soldiers had been numbered in the days of Jehoshaphat. (*Note,* xvii. 13—19.) The inhabitants of the land must have vastly decreased during the late reigns, in consequence of their wickedness, and as a punishment of it. But, perhaps, numbers were unwilling to enlist under Amaziah: and either he did not attempt to force them, or they found means to evade his enquiries. His army, however, seems to have been sufficiently numerous to reduce the revolted Edomites, against whom he was preparing to make war. (11, 12.)

V. 6—10. If Amaziah had previously consulted God, all the painful consequences of the measure which he

him, saying, O king, let not the army
i xiii. 12. xix. 2. 1 Kings xii. 28. Is. xxviii. 1—3. Hos. v. 13—15. ix. 13. of Israel go with thee; [i] for the LORD *is* not with Israel, *to wit, with* all the children of Ephraim.

8 But if thou wilt go, do *it,* [k] be
k xviii. 14. Ec. xi. 9. Is. viii. 9, 10 Joel iii. 9—14. Matt. xxvi. 45. strong for the battle: God shall make
l xiv. 11. Judg. vii. 7. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. Job v. 18. ix. 13. Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 16—20. thee fall before the enemy: for [l] God hath power to help, and to cast down.

9 And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents, which I have given to
* Heb. *band.* the [*] army of Israel? And the man of
m i. 12. Deut. viii. 18. Prov. x. 22. Hag. ii. 8. Luke xviii. 29, 30. God answered, [m] The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.

10 Then [n] Amaziah separated them,
n 1 Kings xii. 24. *to wit,* the army that was come to him
† Heb. *to their place.* out of Ephraim, to go [†] home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned
‡ Heb. *heat of anger.* 2 Sam. xix. 43. Prov. xxix. 22. home in [‡] great anger.

11 ¶ And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and
o 2 Sam. viii. 13. 2 Kings xiv. 7. Ps. lx. *title.* went to the [o] valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand.

12 And *other* ten thousand *left* alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and [p] cast them down
p 2 Sam. xii. 31. 1 Chr. xx. 3. from the top of the rock, that they all were [q] broken in pieces.
q xx. 10. xxi. 8—10.

13 But the [§] soldiers of the army
§ Heb. *sons of the band.* which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from [r] Sama-
r 1 Kings xvi. 24. 29. ria even unto [s] Beth-horon, and smote
s viii. 5. 1 Kings ix. 17. three thousand of them, and took much spoil.

14 ¶ Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that [t] he brought the
t xxviii. 23. gods of the children of Seir, and set them up *to be* [u] his gods, and bowed
u Ex. xx. 3—6. Deut. vii. 5. 25. 2 Sam. v. 21. down himself before them, and burned incense unto them.

15 Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he
x 7. xvi. 7—9. xix. 2. xx. 37. 2 Sam. xii. 1—6. sent unto him [x] a prophet, which said
y xxiv. 20. Judg. ii. 2. Jer. ii. 5. unto him, [y] Why hast thou sought after

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adopted would have been prevented.—As a hundred talents would not divide above eight shillings a piece, among one hundred thousand men; we may suppose that it was only an earnest of their pay, or that they expected to be enriched with the plunder of the Edomites.—The kingdom of Israel was openly idolatrous, and the Lord would not have Judah join alliance with them. Perhaps the army which Amaziah had hired, was chiefly of the tribe of Ephraim; or that tribe, being the most considerable in the kingdom of Israel, is put for the whole.—As the Lord was not with the men of Ephraim, he declared by his prophet that he would not prosper Amaziah, if he employed them: and if, after this prohibition, he would persist in taking them with him, he was warned, that God would make him fall before the enemy: for he could help him without the aid of idolaters; and he could cast him down, though he thus made himself "strong for the battle." (*Notes, Is.* viii. 9, 10. *Joel* iii. 9—17.) And as for the hundred talents, which he had given to the Israelites, and could not recover, and which he was unwilling to lose; the Lord was able to give him much more than that, 'and, 'as Grotius observes, he is rich enough, who is impover-'ished for God's sake.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Amaziah, though destitute of true faith, paid so much regard to the Lord's message, that he discharged the hired army: and they were exceedingly offended at the affront put upon them, in being sent away as the enemies of God; and perhaps also by the disappointment of their avaricious or ambitious expectations.

V. 11, 12. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* 2 *Kings* xiv. 7.) No intimation is given, on what account, or for what provocation, this most cruel conduct towards the prisoners of war was adopted. The enmity between Israel and Esau seems to have been reciprocal, and deeply malignant. The victorious king and his army considered every individual of Edom, as a traitor and a rebel; and so adjudged them to death, and acted according to that judgment. But their conduct was wholly inexcusable, and could only perpetuate rancour to future generations, and provoke the surviving Edomites to cruel retaliations whenever they had it in their power.

V. 13. The Israelites seem to have returned *home,* when discharged by Amaziah, as his powerful army deterred them from attempting revenge at that time: but when he was engaged in war with the Edomites, they took the opportunity, marched from Samaria, and plundered all the cities till they came to Beth-horon, where they slew three thousand of the inhabitants.—Amaziah had indeed dismissed these auxiliaries in obedience to God; but his savage cruelty to the prisoners of Edom, and his subsequent idolatry, (*Note,* 14—16,) proved that he acted by constraint or terror, when he was obedient: he therefore received for his complicated misconduct a just rebuke. Had he broken the idols to pieces, and treated the prisoners with clemency; he might have expected comfort in his success, and not experienced such painful effects from dismissing the Israelites.—Perhaps the cities, which were destroyed on this occasion, being in the vicinity of Israel, were infected with idolatry.

V. 14—16. Ahaz, who worshipped the idols of Syria by whom he was vanquished, was not so senseless as Amaziah, who sought unto the gods of Edom, which could not deliver them from his cruelty. (*Note,* xxviii. 22, 23.) 'Perhaps Amaziah worshipped them from fear they should 'owe him a spite, and contrive some mischief against 'him, in revenge of what he had done against the Edom-'ites.' *Bp. Patrick.* But Amaziah, who had borne with the prophet, who spoke to him concerning dismissing

z Ps. xcvi. 5. 1. Ps. cxv. 4—8. Is. xliv. 9, 10. xlvi. 1, 2. Jer. x. 7. 1 Cor. viii. 4. x. 20.

z the gods of the people, a which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?

16 And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that *the king* said unto him, b Art thou made of the king's counsel? c forbear: why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God d hath * determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

b xvi. 10. xviii. 25, 26. xxiv. 21. Am. vii. 10—13. Matt. xxi. 23.

c Prov. ix. 7, 8. Is. xxx. 10, 11. Jer. xxix. 26. 2 Tim. iv. 3. Rev. xi. 10.

d Ex. ix. 16. Deut. ii. 30. 1 Sam. ii. 25. Acts iv. 28. Rom. ix. 22.

* Heb. *counselled.*

17 ¶ Then e Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, f let us see one another in the face.

e 13. 2 Kings xiv. 8—14.

f 2 Sam. ii. 14. Prov. xx. 3.

18 And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The † thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by ‡ a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

† Or, *furze-bush*, or *thorn*. Judg. ix. 8—15. 1 Kings iv. 33.

‡ Heb. *a beast of the field.* Ps. lxxx. 13.

19 Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and g thine heart lifteth thee up h to boast: abide now at home; i why shouldest thou meddle to *thine* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?

g xxvi. 16. xxxii. 25. Deut. viii. 14. Prov. xiii. 10. xvi. 18. xxviii. 25. Dan. v. 20—23. Hab. ii. 4. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.

h Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 29.

i xxxv. 21. Prov. xviii. 6. xx. 3. xxvi. 17. Luke xiv. 31.

20 But Amaziah would not hear: for k it *came* of God, that he might deliver them into the hand *of their enemies*, because they sought after the gods of Edom.

k 16. xxii. 7. 1 Kings xii. 15. Ps. lxxxi. 11, 12. Acts xxviii. 25—27. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

21 So Joash the king of Israel went up, and they l saw one another in the face, *both* he and Amaziah king of Judah, at m Beth-shemesh, which *belongeth* to Judah.

l 17.

m Josh. xxi. 16. 1 Sam. vi. 9, 19, 20.

22 And Judah was n put to the worse before Israel, and they n fled every man to his tent.

n Heb. *smitten.* xxviii. 5, 6.

n 1 Sam. iv. 10. 1 Kings xxii. 36.

23 And Joash the king of Israel o took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of p Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, from the q gate of Ephraim to the ‖ corner-gate, four hundred cubits.

o xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 6, 10. Prov. xvi. 18. xxix. 23. Dan. iv. 37. Ob. 3. Luke xiv. 11.

p xxi. 17. xxii. 1. *Ahaziah.* xxii. 6. *Azariah.*

q Neh. viii. 16. xii. 39.

‖ Heb. *the gate of it that looketh.* Jer. xxxi. 38.

24 And *he took* r all the gold and the silver, and all the vessels *that were* found in the house of God, with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

r xii. 9. 2 Kings xiv. 14.

25 ¶ And Amaziah, the son of Joash king of Judah, lived after the death of s Joash, son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years.

s 2 Kings xiv. 17. *Jehoash.*

26 Now the t rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, *are* they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?

B. C. 810.

t xx. 34. 2 Kings xiv. 15.

27 Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away * from following the LORD, they † made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to u Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.

* Heb. *from after.*

† Heb. *conspired a conspiracy.* xxiv. 25. 2 Kings xiv. 19.

u Josh. x. 31.

28 And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in x the city of Judah.

x 2 Kings xiv. 20, *City of David.*

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the Israelites, by which he lost one hundred talents, was so mad upon his idols, that he would not endure that subject to be insisted on.—He seems to have menaced the prophet with Zechariah's doom; and thus he made himself a sharer in the guilt of that atrocious murder. (*Note*, xxiv. 19—22.) The prophet was a *counsellor*, whom the Lord had appointed him: and none of those, whom he had chosen for himself, gave him such honest, wise, and salutary counsel. But, as he would not hearken to it, the prophet desisted, having most solemnly warned him that the Lord had *counselled* to destroy him. (*Marg.*—*Notes*, 17—27. *Deut.* ii. 30. 1 *Kings* xxii. 19—23. *Luke* xxii. 21—23. *Acts* ii. 22—24.)

V. 17—24. *Notes*, 2 *Kings* xiv. 8—14.—*Took advice*, &c. (17) Amaziah having rejected the counsel of God, advised with his flatterers; and they counselled him to make a foolish challenge, which paved the way for his ruin, to which he had been doomed for his obstinate idolatry.—*To boast.* (19) "Glory of this:" 2 *Kings* xiv. 10.—*It came of God*, &c. (20) The people had joined in Amaziah's idolatry; and therefore suffered through his folly and vain glory. (*Notes*, 14—16. 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1, 2. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 26, 27.) 'God blinds the minds of those 'whom he intends to destroy for their sins.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*Obed-edom.* (24) Perhaps a descendant of him, who received the ark in the days of David, had the charge of these treasures in the house of God. (1 *Chr.* xiii. 13, 14.)

V. 25—27. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xiv. 17—20.) No intimation is given, that Amaziah repented during the whole space of the Lord's long-suffering. Probably he added tyranny and oppression to his idolatry: and this, with his imprudent and unsuccessful administration, rendered him so odious, that he was slain, as it appears, by the general consent of his subjects, and no one was called to account for his death.—He was, however, buried with the other kings of Judah. (*Notes*, xxi. 18—20. xxiv. 15, 16.)

CHAP. XXVI.

Uzziah succeeds Amaziah, reigns well for a time, and is greatly prospered, 1—8. His buildings, husbandry, army, and engines of war, 9—15. Being lifted up in pride he attempts to burn incense in the temple, is opposed by the priests, and smitten with leprosy by God, 16—21. He dies, and is succeeded by Jotham, 22, 23.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

Many favour and support religion from motives of policy, who either do not appear, or who only appear, to be religious; but the Lord has no pleasure in dissemblers.—Traitors and murderers are sometimes so powerful, as, for a time, to set justice at defiance; but they will at length find those, who are able to execute righteous vengeance upon them. In every case, however, the law of God should be adhered to, as our perfect rule of duty.—Unrepented sin will inevitably and finally ruin every one who continues in it: and in like manner it will infallibly enfeeble those nations where it prevails, and diminish their prosperity and consequence. Princes and statesmen professing Christianity, when forming alliances, or stipulating succours from foreign courts, seldom enquire, whether "the LORD be with them" or not. Indeed, the very question would too generally excite ridicule and disgust: and yet this will be found of far greater efficacy, in the success of wars, and the prosperity of kingdoms, than the most sagacious ungodly devices. It is indeed certain, that no enterprize, publick or private, should be engaged in, without seeking to know the will of God concerning it; if we would avoid those distressing consequences, which often follow from even the most politick measures. But no confederates are so dangerous as apostates.—Success cannot reasonably be expected by those, who act in defiance of the divine commands: they may be "strong "for the battle," or for the business; but, if God is pleased "to make them fall," their strength will avail nothing; for he has power to help, and to cast down: and if men prosper in presumptuous wickedness, their success is the prelude of their ruin.—When those who have not true faith, or a spiritual mind, are convinced of the sinfulness of any part of their conduct or pursuits, they always object to self-denying obedience; and seem to say, "But what shall we do for the hundred talents?" 'What shall we do, if, by hallowing the sabbath, we lose so many good customers? What shall we do, if we renounce this illegal traffick and exorbitant profit, to compensate so important a loss? What shall we do, if we affront our friends, obstruct our preferment, or lose the friendship of the world? How shall we maintain our families? "What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? "or wherewithal shall we be clothed?" Penury and distress face us in the way which you point out to us: we are almost persuaded it is the road to heaven; but what shall we do about the expenses of the journey?' Here numbers stumble and turn aside, or endeavour to quiet their conscience in a vain pretence, that such and such practices are necessary *in their case;* that the precept must be dispensed with: in short, their meaning is, however they may disguise it from others, and even from themselves, that by them, circumstanced as they are, both God and Mammon may be served; and that they may be Christ's disciples without "denying themselves, taking up the cross, and "forsaking all for him." But the answer to such objections is obvious: "The LORD is able to give thee much "more than this;" and he has promised to "add all "other things" to those, "who seek first the kingdom of "God, and his righteousness:" yea, to make up a hundred fold, even in this present world, all that has been conscientiously renounced for his sake and the gospel: and we are "compassed about with an innumerable cloud of "witnesses" of his faithfulness to this promise. Unbelief, however, will trust the Lord no further, than it can understand in what way he will fulfil his word: but faith approves the security, and gives him full credit for his truth, power, and love; and makes every sacrifice, and ventures every consequence, in dependance on his word, and in obedience to his command. He, who in this way is reduced to poverty, is enriched for ever; and he may set down his largest losses as his most certain gains, assured, that "no good thing will the LORD withhold from "those who walk uprightly."—Yet, a single instance of self-denying obedience, performed on a sudden, under some vehement impression, does not prove that a man has true faith. A person, on a sudden emotion, might cut off his hand, in any cause, and upon reflection repent of it ever after: but the deliberate daily renouncing of the world, and opposing our strongest sinful inclinations, (though as painful to part with, as a right hand, or a right eye,) for the sake of the gospel, and in obedience to the Saviour, forms the constant evidence of an interest in him, and all his precious promises; (*Notes, Phil.* iii. 1—11, *v.* 7—9;) and to some measure of this temper and conduct every true believer has attained. But, the behaviour of the mere professor of true religion will frequently detect the hypocrisy of his obedience in particular instances, and justify God in punishing his other crimes, by the very consequences of that obedience.

V. 11—28.

Those who are evidently and consciously *irreligious*, are yet often much offended with being treated as such: and affronted pride, united with disappointed rapacity, kindles a resentment, from which the most fatal effects may be expected.—Abused mercies occasion man's most aggravated wickedness, and accelerate his ruin: so that, when we are prospered by Providence, we should be peculiarly careful what return we make for the goodness of God, and what use we make of his bounty.—"The tender mercies "of the wicked are cruel;" and none are so imperious and inhuman towards those who oppose their will, as they who dare to bid defiance to the authority of the Almighty.—The absurdities of superstition and idolatry, to which the human race has in all ages shewn so strange a propensity, are as disgraceful to the understanding as to the heart: and if we did but consider how unavailing those worldly objects, which we are apt to idolize, have always proved, to the peace, safety, and happiness of their possessors; the reflection must check our eager pursuits of wealth, honour, or sensual pleasure; or at least shew them to be as irra-

THEN [a] all the people of Judah took [b] Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.

2 He built [c] Eloth, and [d] restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

3 Sixteen years old *was* [e] Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* [f] Jecoliah of Jerusalem.

4 And he did *that which was* right [g] in the sight of the LORD, according to [h] all that his father Amaziah did.

5 And [i] he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who [*] had understanding in the * visions of God: and, [k] as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.

6 And he went forth and [l] warred against the Philistines, and brake down [m] the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities [†] about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

7 And [n] God helped him against the Philistines, and against [o] the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Mehunims.

8 And [p] the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and [q] his name [‡] spread abroad *even* to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened *himself* exceedingly.

9 Moreover Uzziah built towers in

a xxii. 1. xxxiii. 25.
b 2 Kings xiv. 21. xv. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 12. *Azariah.* Matt. i. 8, 9. *Ozias.*
c viii. 17. 2 Kings xiv. 22. xvi. 6. *Elath.*
d xxv. 23 28.
e Is. i. 1. vi. 1. Hos. i. 1. Am. i. 1. Zech. xiv. 5.
f 2 Kings xv. 2, 3. *Jecholiah.*
g xxv. 2.
h xxiv. 2. Judg. ii. 7. Hos. vi. 4. Mark iv. 16, 17. Acts xx. 30.
i Gen. xli. 15. Dan. i. 17. ii. 19. v. 16. x. 1.
* Heb. *seeing of God.*
k xv. 2. xxv. 8. 1 Chr. xxii. 11. 13. Ps. i. 3.
l xxi. 16. Is. xiv. 29.
m 2 Sam. viii. 1. 1 Chr. xviii. 1.
† Or, *in* the country of *Ashdod.* 1 Sam. v. 1. 6.
n xiv. 11. 1 Chr. v. 20. xii. 18. Ps. xviii. 29. 34, 35. Acts xxvi. 22.
o xvii 11. xxi. 16.
p xx. 1. Gen. xix. 38. Deut. ii. 19. Judg. xi. 15—18. 1 Sam. xi. 1.
q Gen. xii. 2. 2 Sam. viii. 13. 1 Kings iv. 31. Matt. iv. 24.
‡ Heb. *went.*

tional, as the worship of useless, helpless idols.—They, who are mad upon their lusts, will not bear controul or counsel: and he, who would expostulate with them for their good, may expect to be treated as impertinent, intermeddling, or insolent: especially if an inferior venture to admonish, in the name of the Lord, sinners of superior rank and station. These, indeed, seem generally to claim it as one of their prerogatives, to walk unmolested in "the broad "way that leadeth to destruction:" and ridicule or menaces will be the recompence of him, who dares to warn them that it is a dangerous road. But, after all the contempt and obloquy to which such *counsellors* are exposed, the event demonstrates, that princes generally hearken to those who are far worse: and, though assuming churchmen have often disgraced their profession; yet no man, from the throne to the alms-house, will have cause to repent attending to the warnings, instructions, and counsel of the few, who honestly declare the truth and will of God, without courting the favour, fearing the frown, or respecting the person of any man. If, however, mild, serious, rational, and scriptural reproof is proudly rejected and resented, we are not required further to urge our admonitions, but must desist, by plainly giving men to understand what the consequence will be.—When the remonstrances of conscience are silenced, and the ministers of God are rejected and menaced, it is to be feared that he has determined upon the sinner's destruction; and if he also says, "Let him alone," "my Spirit shall not always "strive with him;" he will be given up to strong delusion, to increasing vain-confidence, infatuated projects, rash intermeddling, and obstinate perseverance in a course of folly, till the measure of his wickedness is filled up, and "destruction from the Almighty" comes upon him. Thus "a man's pride shall bring him low;" his ruin may be dated from his turning away from the Lord; and the longer he is spared, the more will he "treasure up wrath against "the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judg-"ment of God, who shall render to every man according "to his works." May the Lord preserve us from this dreadful doom, and prepare our hearts to receive his truth, to welcome his counsels and reproofs, and obediently to submit to his authority, and do his will!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1—3. *Notes,* 2 *Kings* xiv. 21, 22. xv. 1—7, *v.* 1—5.

V. 4. Uzziah, or Azariah, began his reign much better than he ended it, as Amaziah had done. But he seems to have supported the worship of God all his days; and he is never charged with idolatry, or any kind of immorality. (*Notes,* xxv. 14—16. 2 *Kings* xiv. 3, 4.) His reign must therefore have been very happy for his people, and favourable to the interests of religion; though the close of it proved disgraceful to himself.

V. 5. It is not known of what tribe or family this Zechariah was; though some conjecture, that he was the son of that Zechariah whom Joash murdered. This, however, would be a singular instance in Scripture, of a son called by his father's name.—He was perhaps endued with a peculiar gift in distinguishing between those, who were actually favoured with prophetick visions, and those who only pretended to be so. (1 *Cor.* xii. 10.) At least he was well acquainted with divine things, an intelligent, prudent, pious, and heavenly-minded man; and an instructor, or counsellor, to Uzziah, who prospered by hearkening to his admonitions: whilst Amaziah, who had scorned to be counselled by a prophet, followed advice which brought him to destruction. (*Notes,* xxv. 14—24.) Had Zechariah been spared, he might perhaps have dissuaded Uzziah from that fatal attempt, which he afterwards made. (*Note,* 16—23.)

V. 6—9. These verses contain some particulars, in which Uzziah, by the special help and blessing of God, was greatly prospered, while he adhered strictly to the worship of God according to the law. (*Marg. Ref.*)—'He 'demolished all the fortifications of his enemies on the 'frontiers; and provided his own frontiers, with works, 'garrisons, arms, and engines of war. ...These Mehu-'nims were a people in *Arabia deserta.*' *Bp. Patrick.* Jabneh is not mentioned elsewhere, nor Gur-baal.—"He

Jerusalem at [r] the corner-gate, and at [s] the valley-gate, and at [t] the turning *of the wall*, and [*] fortified them.

10 Also he built towers in the desert, and [†] digged many wells: for [u] he had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains; husbandmen *also*, and vine-dressers in the mountains, and in [‡] Carmel: for he loved [§] husbandry.

11 ¶ Moreover Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that [x] went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account, by the hand of Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains.

12 The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour *were* two thousand and six hundred.

13 And under their hand *was* [‖] an army, [y] three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.

14 And Uzziah prepared for them, throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and [*] slings *to cast* stones.

15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by [z] cunning men, to be on the towers, and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal: and his name [†] spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped till he was strong.

16 ¶ But [a] when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction; for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and [b] went into the temple of the LORD [c] to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

17 And [d] Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, *that were* [e] valiant men:

18 And they [f] withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, *It appertaineth* [g] not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but [h] to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; [i] neither *shall it be* for thine honour from the LORD God.

19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense; and while [k] he was wroth with the priests, [l] the leprosy even rose up in his forehead, before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense-altar.

20 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests looked upon him, and, behold, he *was* leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself [m] hasted also to go out, because [n] the LORD had smitten him.

21 And [o] Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and [p] dwelt in a [‡] several house, *being* a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son *was* over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

22 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, [q] first and last, did [r] Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.

23 So Uzziah [s] slept with his fathers, and [t] they buried him with his fathers

r xxv. 23. 2 Kings xiv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 38. Zech. xiv. 10.
s Neh. iii. 13. iii. 13.
t Neh. iii. 20. 24.
* Or, *repaired.*
† Or, *cut out many cisterns.* Gen. xxvi. 18—21.
u 2 Kings iii. 4. 1 Chr. xxvii. 26—31.
‡ Or, *fruitful fields.* 2 Kings xix. 23. Is. xix. 17.
§ Heb. *ground.*
x 2 Kings v. 2.
‖ Heb. *the power of an army.*
y xi. 1. xiii. 3. xiv. 8. xvii. 14—19.
* Heb. *stones of slings.* Judg. xx. 16. 1 Sam. xvii. 49.
z ii. 7. 14. Ex. xxxi. 4.
† Heb. *went forth.* Matt. iv. 24.
a xxv. 19. xxxii. 25. Deut. viii. 14. 17. xxxii. 13—15. Prov. xvi. 18. Hab. ii. 4. Col. ii. 18.
b 2 Kings xvi. 12, 13.
c Num. xvi. 7. 7, 8. 35. 1 Kings xii. 33. xiii. 1—4.
d 1 Chr. vi. 10.
e 1 Chr. xii. 28. xxvi. 6.
f xvi. 7—9. xix. 2. Jer. xiii. 18. Matt. x. 18. 28. xiv. 4. 2 Cor. v. 16. Gal. ii. 11.
g Num. xvi. 40. 46—48. xviii. 7.
h Ex. xxx. 7, 8. Heb. v. 4.
i 1 Sam. ii. 30. Dan. iv. 37. John v. 44. Jam. ii. 1.
k xvi. 10. xxv. 16.
l Num. xii. 10. 2 Kings v. 27.
m Esth. vi. 12.
n Lev. xiv. 34. Deut. xxviii. 22. 35.
o 2 Kings xv. 5.
p Lev. xiii. 46 Num. v. 2, 3. xii. 15. 2 Kings vii. 3.
‡ Heb. *free.*
q ix. 29. xii. 15.
r Is. i. 1. vi. 1.
s 2 Kings xv. 6, 7. 38. xxi. 20. xxviii. 27. xxxiii. 20.
t

"built cities about Ashdod," or "*in the country* of Ash-"dod." (*Marg.*)—In the days of his father, the wall of Jerusalem had been broken down "to the *corner-gate:*" (xxv. 23:) and Uzziah not only repaired it, but added towers and fortifications to secure it.

V. 10. *Towers.*] These towers seem to have been built in the desert, for the protection of Uzziah's shepherds and flocks, from the depredations of the Arabian free-booters and others, upon whom he seems to have retaliated (11).—A prince can hardly have a more rational, inoffensive, and indeed useful recreation from publick business, than these rural occupations. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* iv. 7—19. 1 *Chr.* xxvii. 25—31.)

In Carmel.] 'Not ... the famous mount of that name, '(for that was not in the tribe of Judah,) but a very fertile 'country, as the word Carmel signifies in several places. *Is.* xvi. 10. *Jer.* ii. 7. xlviii. 33.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg.*—*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxv. 2. 2 *Kings* xix. 23. *Is.* xxxv. 1, 2.)

V. 11—15. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* 6—9. xiv. 6—8. xvii. 13—19. xxv. 5.)—'God aided him so wonderfully in all 'his undertakings, that he feared no enemy. ... How 'hard it is to bear great prosperity with moderation and 'humble thankfulness.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 16—23. Uzziah had been remarkably prospered in every thing; but pride, instead of gratitude, was fostered by it: so that, deeming himself at least as much favoured as the priests were, he thought it a reproach to him to be excluded from any part of the temple, or the worship of God.—Burning incense was the most honourable part of the sacerdotal office, and of that he became ambitious.

in the field of the burial which *belonged* to the kings; for they said, He *is* a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

CHAP. XXVII.

Jotham reigns well and prospers, 1, 2. His buildings, 3, 4. He subdues the Ammonites, 5, 6. He dies, and is succeeded by Ahaz, 7—9.

(*Note, Lev.* x. 1, 2.) The law had forbidden any, but the priests of the family of Aaron, to enter the sanctuary, or to burn incense; and the fate of Korah and his company, was an awful example upon record, of the consequences to be expected from violating that statute, (*Notes, Num.* xvi. xvii.) But perhaps Uzziah was tempted to disbelieve these ancient records; imagining that they had been falsified by the priests to keep up their own consequence; or that the law was now become obsolete: and he might be confirmed in this, by considering that nothing of the kind had taken place for many centuries. Thus "his "heart was lifted up to his destruction;" his crime exposed him to eternal destruction, as well as present *death;* and though he was respited, yet his remaining days were spent, as it were, in a lingering ignominious execution.—None of the former kings of Judah had attempted to burn incense in the temple; none, perhaps, to invade the sacerdotal office in any way: though many of them had offended by forsaking the worship of God. Had Uzziah contented himself with imitating David, Solomon, and Jehoshaphat, in instructing, and praying with and for his people, he would have done commendably.—The idolatrous kings indeed burned incense to their idols, and it seems he took them for his pattern in this instance, though he would not forsake the God of Israel. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* xiii. 1.)—Azariah and the other priests behaved nobly on this occasion: (*Note,* 2 *Kings* xvi. 10—16:) they opposed the king's design, not with violence or reproachful language, but with plain scriptural remonstrances, precepts, and counsels; and by warning him, that his attempt would expose him to disgrace from the LORD God. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* vi. 4—15, *v.* 10.) Yet he was insensible to their arguments, and enraged by their faithful opposition: and Josephus writes that he threatened them with death, when an extraordinary earthquake preceded his being smitten with leprosy. (*Notes, Amos* i. 1. *Zech.* xiv. 4, 5.) But, however that might be, when he found that this divine judgment was inflicted upon him, and was conspicuous in his forehead, he became sensible of his sin and danger, and yielded to the priests who hurried him out of the sanctuary, yea hasted to retreat, perhaps dreading still further judgments. It pleased God to continue this stigma upon him during the remainder of his life: and, in consequence, he was excluded from the precincts of the temple; from society, except that of the priests into whose office he had intruded; and from the exercise of his regal authority. It is not said how long this occurred before his death: but the age of Jotham, when he began to reign, implies, that it was late in Uzziah's reign, before he was smitten with the leprosy: and his reign must be considered as a very prosperous one for his kingdom. But, by aspiring after that honour which did not belong to him, he lost all his dignity and reputation, and was, in some sense, degraded beneath the meanest of his subjects; and even after his death, notwithstanding his good and prosperous reign, he was, as a leper, excluded from the sepulchres of the kings.—Yet the long-suffering of God gave him space for repentance: and his patient and quiet submission to this severe rebuke, and to all its most painful consequences, (as they must have been to so honourable and prosperous a monarch,) forms no inconsiderable proof of his repentance; and implies that his retirement was well improved, and his death happy. (2 *Kings* xv. 1—7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

Wise and pious instructors are an invaluable treasure to young people; especially to those, who are advanced to exalted stations, and who are generally poisoned with the flattery of interested sycophants and dependents. Yet, unless they seek and serve God from an inward principle of piety; they will at length lose, or shake off, their preceptors and their religion together.—Many have experienced, and some have confessed, that, when they paid regard to the service of God, they prospered; but that every thing went wrong, from the time they grew negligent in religion. Indeed, external prosperity does not now so uniformly attend godliness, as it did in the case of Israel: yet every undertaking will succeed with the true Christian, as far as it is good for him; and God will help and prosper him in his spiritual warfare, in proportion to the simplicity of his dependence and obedience.—No lawful business will be the worse managed, or prove less pleasant to any man, on account of his diligence in the service of God, if he have learned to arrange his temporal and spiritual concerns in due order.—It would be happy for mankind, if able and powerful monarchs took more delight, and spent more of their leisure hours, in rural occupations, which are manly, useful, and truly honourable: but hitherto man's chief ambition, exertion, and ingenuity, have been directed to the destruction of his own species! If, however, it must be a part of his occupation to invent and forge instruments of destruction, and of shortening the already contracted duration of human life; surely these should be used only in self-defence, or in awing the turbulent spirits of those publick depredators, who cannot otherwise be prevented from disturbing the world.

V. 16—23.

It is written, as with a sun-beam, that prosperity is most dangerous to fallen man. Some are "lifted up" by it "to their destruction," others to their deep disgrace and lasting distress: and we have all more cause to pray to be preserved from its fascinating influence, than from the depth of poverty, or from the anguish of the severest disppointment and afflictions.—The narrow way is *one* and straight; but the paths of transgression are numerous and various: and new ones are continually struck out, by the perverse ingenuity and presumption of rebellious man. Extremes are on every side. To avoid enthusiasm and credulity, men become profane and infidel; and, in shunning infidelity, they rush into superstition. Those who are not chargeable with immorality or gross profaneness, may yet provoke the Lord by their hypocrisy or self-righteous pride.

a 2 Kings xv. 32, 33. 1 Chr. iii. 12. Is. i. 1. Hos. i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Joatham.*

JOTHAM *was* [a] twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

b xxvi. 4. 2 Kings xv. 34.

2 And [b] he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit

c xxvi. 16—21. Ps. cxix. 120. Acts v. 13.

d 2 Kings xv. 35.

[c] he entered not into the temple of the LORD. And [d] the people did yet corruptly.

e xxiii. 15. 20. Jer. xx. 2

3 He built the [e] high gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of

* Or, *the tower.* xxxiii. 14. Neh. iii. 26.

[*] Ophel he built much.

f xi. 5—10. xiv. 7. xxvi. 9, 10.

g Josh. xiv. 12, 13. Luke i. 39.

4 Moreover [f] he built cities in [g] the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.

h xx. 1. Judg. xi. 4, &c. 2 Sam. x. 1—14. Jer. xlix. 1—6.

5 He fought also with [h] the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year an hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. [†] So much did the children of

† Heb. *This.*

Ammon pay unto him, both the second year, and the third.

6 So Jotham became mighty, because he [‡] prepared his ways before the

‡ Or, *established,* xix. 3.

LORD his God.

i xx. 34. xxvi. 22, 23. xxxii. 32, 33.

7 ¶ Now [i] the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

8 He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.

k 2 Kings xv. 38.

9 And [k] Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

We are not indeed, at present, kept at that awful distance from sacred things, which the people of God formerly were: yet let us not suppose, that we are in no danger of offending in this way. The sacred ministry may be intruded into, with a presumption and impiety bordering upon sacrilege and blasphemy; while mercenary and ungodly men make those professions, engagements, and protestations, in the presence of God, "for filthy lucre's sake," which they deride as enthusiastick or superstitious! The Lord's table may be approached in hypocrisy, pride, unbelief, and impenitency; or even as a step to preferment, by infidels and debauchees who are the slaves to every 'ust! and in many ways men may be guilty of most awful and presumptuous profanations. Against these abuses the ministers of God must caution all persons, however wealthy, honourable, or powerful, with plain declarations of the truths and precepts of Scripture, and solemn warnings respecting the consequences of transgression. Yet, alas! few are found, who are *valiant men,* that dare, in meekness and faithfulness, oppose the powerful who attempt the most scandalous profanations; and venture all the consequences of their displeasure in refusing to concur in them. But the Lord will assuredly stand by those few, and mark their opposers with evident tokens of his anger. —No wonder that ungodly men are so enraged at opposition from the ministers of God; for even believers at some times cannot endure it. But his rebuke brings them to themselves, and they then make haste to renounce their wayward purposes; submit patiently to his severest corrections; and are humbled for the pride of their hearts. And, whatever humiliating or disgraceful events take place; however we may be excluded from the earthly courts of the Lord, 'the communion of his saints,' and the comforts of society; if we are brought to true repentance, and at length obtain eternal life, we shall bless God for the whole. (*Notes,* and *P. O. Dan.* iv. 28—37.) But the Lord always resists the proud; and contempt, either on earth or in hell, is the never failing consequence of self-confidence and arrogance. When, however, the Lord sees good to throw prosperous and useful men aside, as a broken vessel; if he raises up their children, or other able persons, to fill their places, that the community be not losers, they may rejoice in renouncing all worldly concerns, and in employing the remnant of their days in preparing for death and heaven.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.*—*2 Kings* xv. 32—36.—*He entered not.* (2) Jotham imitated his father in the best part of his conduct; but did not attempt to enter the temple, or to burn incense, as Uzziah had done. (*Notes,* xxvi. 4. 16—23.)—*The people did yet corruptly.*] 'They offered incense in high places; (*2 Kings* xv. 35;) 'and as some think committed idolatry.' *Bp. Patrick.* The general character also of the people, as to unrighteousness, fraud, oppression, and other crimes; as well as their ungodliness, hypocrisy, or idolatrous worship, seems to be implied.

V. 3. *Ophel.*] This seems to have been a cliff, or high rock, where a tower and wall were built to fortify the city. These Jotham greatly strengthened and improved.

V. 4. 'He took care to fortify his kingdom strongly 'on all sides, against his enemies.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is probable that at the end of three years, the Ammonites recovered strength, and refused to pay the tribute.

V. 6. It has been observed, that most, if not all, the pious kings of Judah, have some evil thing laid to their charge: but Jotham has not; except as "the people did "corruptly," and the high places were not demolished.

V. 7. It is supposed, that Jotham's deeds so attracted attention, that they were recorded in the chronicles of Israel, as well as in those of Judah; though but little has been transmitted to us concerning him.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ahaz reigns very wickedly, 1—4. He is defeated with terrible slaughter of his army by the kings of Syria and Israel, 5—7. The Israelites lead to Samaria an immense number of captives, 8. The people are induced, by the remonstrance of a prophet, and the interference of the princes, to treat them kindly and send them home, 9—15. Ahaz, attacked by the Edomites and Philistines, sends to the king of Assyria, but receives no benefit from his assistance, 16—21. In his distress he adds to his idolatries, 22—25. He dies, and is succeeded by Hezekiah, 26, 27.

a 2 Kings xvi. 1, 2. 1 Chr. iii. 13. Is. i. 1. vii. 1—12. Hos. i. b Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Achaz.*

a AHAZ *was* twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, b like David his father;

b xvii. 3.

c xxi. 6. xxii. 3, 4. 1 Kings xvi. 31—33. 2 Kings x. 26—28.

d Ex. xxxiv. 17. Lev. xix. 4.

e Judg. ii. 11. 13.

* Or, *offered sacrifice.*

f 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. vii. 31, 32. xix. 2—6. 13.

2 For c he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also d molten images for e Baalim.

3 Moreover he * burnt incense in f the valley of the son of Hinnom, and g burnt his children in the fire, h after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

g xxxiii. 6. Lev. xviii. 21. 2 Kings xvi. 3. Ps. cvi. 37, 38. Jer. ii. 34. Ez. xvi. 20, 21. Mic. vi. 7.

h xxxiii. 2. Deut. xii. 31.

4 He i sacrificed also, and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

i Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. xii 2, 3. 2 Kings xvi. 4.

5 Wherefore the LORD k his God l delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought *them* to † Damascus: and he also was delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

k xxxvi. 5. Ex. xx. 2, 3.

l xxiv. 24. xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 17. Judg. ii. 14. 2 Kings xvi 5. Is. vii. 1. 6.

† Heb. *Darmasek.*

6 For m Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah n an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, *which were* all ‡ valiant men: o because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

m 2 Kings xv. 27. 37. Is. vii. 4, 5. 9. ix. 21.

n xiii. 17.

‡ Heb. *sons of valour.*

o xv. 2. Deut. vi. 14, 15. xxviii. 15. 25. xxix. 24—26. xxxi. 16, 17. xxxii. 30. Josh. xxiii. 16. Is. xxiv. 5, 6. Jer. ii. 19.

7 And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the governor of the

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The severest judgments of God have mercy connected with them, either to the persons themselves, or to others, who thence learn caution and circumspection.—It ought to be the constant aim of every one of us, to imitate the faith, piety, equity, kindness, self-denial, patience, and meekness, of those servants of God with whom we are acquainted, and of whom we read or hear; and carefully to avoid their failings, and the sins into which they have been betrayed: but the reverse of this is general, and natural to mankind.—If we would attain to eminence in godliness or usefulness, we must diligently "prepare our ways before the LORD our God;" acting habitually as under his inspection, and depending on his assistance and merciful acceptance, from love to his name and zeal for his glory.—Many pious men have not fortitude or vigour to combat the difficulties, which must be expected by those, who attempt reformation, in opposition to inveterate prejudices, errors, superstitions, and immoralities; yet all in publick stations should remember, that this is incumbent upon them, and forms that improvement of their talents, which God requires. They should therefore "arise, and "be doing," according to the duties of their situations, "and the LORD will be with them for good."—But even when the most unexceptionable example is united to the most strenuous and persevering endeavours, the success of pious reformers will not answer their desires and expectations. Many of "the people will still do corruptly:" and, in righteous displeasure against those who hate to be reformed, the Lord often prematurely removes wise, prosperous, and pious rulers in church or state; and sends others, whose follies and vices severely punish a people, who did not value their mercies till they were withdrawn from them.

NOTES

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1—4. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2 Kings* xvi. 3, 4. *Lev.* xx. 2—5. *Matt.* v. 21, 22, *v.* 22.

V. 5. JEHOVAH was 'the God of Ahaz,' as his Creator, Upholder, and Governor; as Ahaz was born among the professing and covenant-people of God, dedicated to him by circumcision, and educated in a religious manner; as he reigned over Judah, where alone the worship of God was instituted; and as he was bound by every obligation to serve and obey him. But he was not 'the God of Ahaz,' as he is the God of true believers, according to the covenant of grace; he was not Ahaz's Portion and Salvation: nor was Ahaz the Lord's servant and worshipper, for he was a most wicked apostate and idolater. In short, he had not the privilege of having "the LORD for his God," his "Shield, and exceeding great Reward;" but he had the guilt of violating the strongest obligations to his service; and of continuing impenitent and ungodly, in the midst of every advantage and means of grace. Had he been born and educated a heathen, he might perhaps have escaped remarkable judgments: but, as he was an apostate, "the "LORD his God" delivered him to be punished, into the hands of the Syrians and Israelites. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xvi. 5—9.) His people also were involved in the same guilt, and in the same punishment. They did corruptly under pious Jotham: for their correction Jotham was removed, and wicked Ahaz succeeded; and his idolatry and enormous crimes were punished by dreadful havock made among his subjects. Thus, the sins and sufferings of kings and people resemble the case of the human body; in which the head must share the sufferings of the members, and the members those of the head, by reason of that unity which subsists between them. (*Note, 2 Sam.* xxiv. 1, 2. *P. O.* 1—9.)

V. 6—8. This is the greatest slaughter of the men of

house, and Elkanah *that was* * next to the king.

8 And the children of Israel [p] carried away captive of their [q] brethren, two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters; and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

9 ¶ But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name *was* Oded; and [r] he went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, [s] because the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage *that* [t] reacheth up unto heaven.

10 And now ye purpose to [u] keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bond-men and bond-women unto you: *but are there* [x] not with you, even with you, sins against [y] the LORD your God?

11 Now hear me therefore, and [z] deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: for [a] the fierce wrath of the LORD *is* upon you.

* Heb. *the second to.*

p Deut. xxviii. 25. 41.

q xi. 4. Acts vii. 26. xiii. 26.

r xix. 1, 2. xxv. 15, 16. 1 Kings xx. 13. 22. 42. 2 Kings xx. 14, 15.

s 5. Judg. iii. 8. Ps. lxix. 26. Is. x. 5. xlvii. 6. Ez. xxv. 12. 15. xxvi. 2. Ob. 10—16. Zech. i. 15.

t Gen. xi. 4. Ezra ix. 6. Rev. xviii. 5.

u Lev. xxv. 39—46.

x Jer. xxv. 29. Rom. xii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.

y 5.

z Is. lviii. 6. Jer. xxxiv. 14, 15. Heb. xiii. 1—3.

a Ezra x. 14. Matt. v. 7. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 13.

Judah that we read of. (xiii. 17.) And, as they were "all "valiant men," and Israel was not in a very prosperous state, the defeat of Judah with such tremendous slaughter must be ascribed to some *supernatural* terror or confusion. "Because they had forsaken the Lord," 'who therefore 'forsook them, and took away their courage, that they 'could make no resistance.' *Bp. Patrick.* Ahaz himself escaped: but he had a son and two of his chief officers slain, one of whom was next under him in authority; and an immense spoil, and multitude of prisoners, were collected from the defenceless country by the rapacious victors. It does not appear, however, that Jerusalem was taken by them. (*Notes, Is.* vii. 1—9.)

V. 9—11. The Lord, provoked with Judah's idolatries, had delivered them into the hands of their still more idolatrous brethren, who had shewn the most exorbitant rage and cruelty in destroying them: and, as if this had been a small thing, they proceeded to gratify their inhuman avarice, by seizing all the women and children, to sell them, or to keep them for slaves. But, if the Lord had so severely punished their offending brethren of Judah, could the men of Israel expect to escape his fierce indignation? Were there no sins among *them* to provoke his displeasure? Rather, were they not already abundantly sufficient, without augmenting them by this iniquitous and cruel treatment of the women and children, who had never injured them? Or, could they hope for the mercy of God, if they neither shewed mercy nor justice to their brethren? They were therefore required to set the captives at liberty; because they themselves were exposed to the fierce wrath of God. This was the Lord's message to the conquerors by his prophet; and it naturally leads us to consider some questions concerning slavery.—Let it then be remembered, that there do not at present subsist any such distinctions between nations, as God for wise reasons, was pleased, for a time, to establish between Israel and the Gentiles; but every man is now our *neighbour*, and in one sense our *brother*; our *fellow man*, if not our *fellow Christian*.—They indeed attempt too much who argue, that slavery in *all cases* is contrary to scriptural principles; and this has given its advocates some advantage in the controversy. But no man, well acquainted with the word of God, needs fear to maintain, that the modern slave-trade stands in diametrical opposition to both the law and the gospel; as well as to the true interests of mankind. Who can possibly hold his *unoffending* brother in bondage, for his own gain, without violating the rule of doing to others, as he would that they should do unto him, and as he might fairly expect that they should do unto him? (*Note, Matt.* vii. 12.) Suppose that an African should kidnap the son of an English merchant, carry him to Africa, and, pretending property in him, should sell him for a slave; and so he should be sold from one to another for life, and his children after him. Suppose that Africans gave such prices for Englishmen, as encouraged them to steal and sell one another, till it became a regular trade; would not free-born Britons execrate buyers, sellers, stealers, and all concerned in such a traffick? Those who have forfeited their lives by crimes against the state, have also forfeited their natural right to liberty; and might justly be sold for slaves, *by publick authority*, declaring the crimes for which they were thus punished. Some other criminals, and some kind of fraudulent debtors, might be sold for a *limited* time, consistently with equity. Perhaps some prisoners taken in battle, in those wars, which are evidently undertaken by all concerned in them, from avarice and cruelty, might thus be punished, without transgressing the law of God; for the *policy* of it forms quite a distinct question. But to seize, enslave, and sell a fellow creature, who has, by *no criminality* known to us, or cognizable by us, merited so severe a treatment, must in all cases be contrary to the law of "loving our neighbour as ourselves." The poor Africans cannot be proved to be either criminals, debtors, or prisoners taken in rapacious or revengeful wars, waged by them against those who enslave them: on the contrary, they appear generally to be persons, who have been kidnapped from their relatives, or bought of them; or taken prisoners in wars, excited on purpose to supply that infamous market. If any of them be criminals, the European merchants know it not: they have no authority from either God or man to be their executioners; and their descendants certainly are not criminals. Were it indeed true, (which is far from being the case), that if not bought by the Europeans, they would be slain by the conquerors; we need only answer, 'You must not "do evil, that good may come." If you have no other way of rescuing them, you had better leave them to fight their own battles, and treat their captives as they please, without interfering: and you certainly would do so, if *avarice* were no more concerned in the business than *humanity* is.' It is true, that the scripture through-

b 2 Chr. xxviii. 5.

12 Then certain of [b] the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, [c] stood up against them that came from the war,

c Jer. xxvi. 6.

13 And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the LORD *already*, ye intend to [d] add *more* to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and *there is* fierce wrath against Israel.

d Num. xxxii. 14. Josh. xxii. 17, 18. Matt. xxiii. 32. 35. Rom. ii. 5.

14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil, before the princes and all the congregation.

15 And the men which were [e] expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil [f] clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and [g] gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, [h] the city of palm trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.

e 12.

f Job xxxi. 15—23. Is. lviii. 7. Matt. xxv. 35—45. Acts ix. 39. 1 Tim. v. 10. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 John iii. 17, 18.

g 2 Kings vi. 22. Prov. xxv. 21, 22. Luke vi. 27. Rom. xii. 20, 21.

h Deut. xxxiv. 3. Judg. i. 16.

16 ¶ At that time [i] did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria to help him.

i 2 Kings xvi. 5—7. Is. vii. 1—9. 17.

17 For again [k] the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away * captives.

k xxv. 11, 12. Lev. xxvi. 18.

* Heb. *a captivity.*

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out speaks of slavery as actually existing: but the *judicial* law was very distinct from the *moral* law, as has before been shewn. (*Note, Ex.* xxi. 1—6.) Like other municipal laws, it aimed to prevent those evils, which originated from abuses and human passions, and which could not be terminated except by constant miracle; as in the case of divorces. The apostles and evangelists were *preachers*, not *legislators;* they were not empowered to subvert the foundations of civil government throughout the world; and they found slavery universally and inseparably interwoven with them. Every one must therefore perceive what confusion, what reproach, and what additional enmity to Christianity, must have been occasioned by such an attempt. They indeed laid down the principles, which, when reduced to practice, will infallibly annihilate slavery: and, taking things as they then stood in civil society, they taught all Christians, how to accommodate themselves to their stations, consistently with their profession, even if they were slaves, and slaves in a heathen family.—The question is, therefore, to be decided not by *facts*, but by *The Moral law of God*, and the tendency of the GOSPEL. The practice could not *then* be regularly opposed, without creating convulsions in society; nor can it ever be successfully rectified by *preachers:* it is the work of enlightened, humane, and pious *legislators*.—Individual believers under both dispensations possessed slaves: they took matters as they were; and treated their slaves with such equity and humanity, as rendered it a kindness to them, to take them out of ungodly families. And a pious West-Indian, who laments the enormities which he cannot but witness, arising from this unnatural trade, and who sincerely wishes and prays for its entire abolition, may, in the mean time, deem it better, quietly to set his neighbours an example of treating slaves with brotherly lenity and kindness, conducive to their real happiness, than indiscriminately to liberate them: when perhaps it might occasion fatal effects upon the minds of the other planters and their slaves; if this were done by an individual, in opposition to all his neighbours, and without the interference of legal authority. When strangers are brought so far from home, and are not able to return, a truly pious and humane man may render the yoke tolerable to them. But, who had a right by compulsion to bring his unoffending brethren so far from their native land? And what proportion do pious and humane persons, in most communities, bear to those of an opposite character? A succession of very wise and good kings, if that could be ensured, might render even absolute monarchy a blessing. But, while mankind are what they are, men of reflection, and lovers of their brethren, will never be friends to despotism in kingdoms, or in families: and absolute monarchs and the holders of slaves, (except of such as are condemned by an equitable sentence, to that condition, as the punishment of their crimes,) will ever be justly exposed to the determined opposition of mankind, even when they do not merit detestation by any direct abuse of power.

V. 12—15. It is remarkable that Pekah is not mentioned in this transaction concerning the prisoners: but probably he was at the head of the army, when the prophet addressed them (6).—The courage of these princes, who ventured thus determinedly to oppose the whole army, insolent with victory and enriched with booty, was admirable and highly commendable, and their arguments were cogent, and coincided with the message of the prophet. The apostasy, idolatry, and recent cruelty of Israel rendered their trespass very great; and if they reduced the captives to slavery, it would add still more to their sins, and hasten the execution of the fierce wrath of God upon them.—The compliance of the army, in leaving both the captives, and the spoil, to the disposal of the princes, was very wonderful and perhaps unparelleled in history; and the humane treatment, and the *carrying back of the captives to their brethren*, deserves all possible applause.—The prophet's remonstrance had for the time its full effect: but, alas! both princes and people still cleaved to their idols, and went on in their other sins. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'What might not these great men have done, to bring 'them to repent of their idolatry, if they had been truly 'religious and exerted their authority?' *Bp. Patrick.* The narrative also shews, that even Israel, amidst all their idolatries and iniquities, had not forgotten, and were not disposed to question, the divine authority of the law of Moses.

V. 16—18. (2 *Kings* xvi. 7—9.) 'This is the first time

18 The [l] Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken [m] Beth-shemesh, and [n] Ajalon, and [o] Gederoth, and [p] Shocho with the villages thereof, and [q] Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.

19 For [r] the LORD brought Judah low, [s] because of Ahaz king of [t] Israel; for he [u] made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the LORD.

20 And [x] Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him, and [y] distressed him, but strengthened him not.

21 For Ahaz [z] took away a portion *out* of the house of the LORD, and *out* of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave *it* unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.

22 And [a] in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: [b] this *is that* king Ahaz.

23 For [c] he sacrificed unto the gods of [*] Damascus, which smote him; and he said, [d] Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, *therefore* will I [e] sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But [f] they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.

24 And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and [g] cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and [h] shut up the doors of the house of the LORD; and [i] he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem.

25 And in every several city of Judah he made high places to [†] burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.

26 ¶ Now [k] the rest of his acts, and of all his ways, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

27 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, *even* in Jerusalem: but [l] they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

[l] Ex. xvi. 27. 57.
[m] Josh. xv. 10. 1 Sam. vi. 9. 13.
[n] xi. 10. *Aijalon.*
[o] Josh. xv. 41.
[p] Josh. xv. 48. *Socoh.*
[q] Judg. xiv. 1. *Timnath.*
[r] Deut. xxviii. 43. 1 Sam. ii. 7. Job xl. 12. Ps. cvi. 41—43. Prov. xxix. 23.
[s] Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.
[t] xxi. 2.
[u] Gen. iii. 7. 11. Ex. xxxii. 25. Rev. iii. 17, 18. xvi. 15.
[x] 2 Kings xv. 29. xvi. 7—10. *Tiglath-pileser.* 1 Chr. v. 26. Hos. v. 13.
[y] 2 Kings xvii. 5. Is. vii. 20. xxx. 3. 16. Jer. ii. 37.
[z] xii. 9. 2 Kings xviii. 15, 16. Prov. xx. 25.
[a] xxxiii. 12. Ps. l. 15. Is. i. 5. Ez. xxi. 13. Hos. v. 15. Rev. xvi. 9—11.
[b] Esth. vii. 6. Ps. lii. 7.
[c] xxv. 14. 2 Kings xvi. 12, 13.
[*] Heb. *Darmesek.*
[d] Hab. i. 1.
[e] Jer. xliv. 15—18.
[f] Jer. xliv. 20—28.
[g] 2 Kings xvi. 17. 18. xxv. 13, &c.
[h] xxix. 3. 7.
[i] xxxiii. 3—5. Jer. ii. 28. Hos. xii. 11. Acts xvii. 16. 23.
[†] Or, *offer.*
[k] xx. 34. xxvii. 7—9. 2 Kings xvi. 19, 20.
[l] B. C. 726. xxi. 20. xxvi. 23. xxxiii. 20. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Prov. x. 7.

'that we read of the king of Assyria, excepting 2 *Kings* 'xv. 19, where Pul king of Assyria is mentioned as a 'powerful prince, who invaded the Israelites. Before his 'time, we read nothing of the Assyrian monarchy, which 'grew by degrees to its greatness from small beginnings. '...If their large empire had been of long standing, we 'should in all probability have heard of them before this 'time, as we do often afterwards.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xv. 19, 20.)—*The Philistines*, &c. (18) *Marg. Ref.* xxvi. 6.—*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 8. *Is.* xiv. 28—32.

V. 19. *He made Judah naked.*] The Lord himself was the glory and defence of Judah: but Ahaz, by seducing his subjects from his worship and service, had degraded them, stripped them of all their ornament, deprived them of all their protection, and left them defenceless and contemptible in the hands of their feeblest enemies. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Ex.* xxxii. 25.)

V. 20, 21. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 7—9.) Tiglath-pilezer 'did come to his assistance against the king of Syria,... he 'took Damascus, carried the people captive, and delivered 'Ahaz from the power of the Syrians. ...But this did 'Ahaz little good; for he... rather weakened him by ex- 'hausting his treasures, and by destroying Samaria, where- 'by the way was opened to invade his country the more 'easily in the next reign. Thus many countries, in latter 'ages, by calling in the assistance of some foreign prince 'against their enemies, have been overthrown and con- quered by those who came to their help.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 22, 23. *This is that king Ahaz.* (22) 'This is that notorious offender, who grew more outrageous in his idolatry and impiety, amidst his distresses! That abandoned prince, who disgraced the house of David, and accelerated the ruin of Judah! Who foolishly sacrificed to the gods of his enemies, supposing that they had smitten him; instead of humbling himself before the Lord, who had used the Syrians as his instruments for his correction! That Ahaz, who acted in a manner which tended to ruin himself, his family, and his kingdom; and persevered in it so obstinately, that he provoked the Lord to cut him off by a premature death, in the full career of his wickedness!' (*Note*, xxv. 14—16.)—'A most monstrous stupidity, to imagine 'they had any power over him, who could not defend 'themselves from Tiglath-pilezer.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 24—27. *Notes*, xxi. 18—20. xxix. 3—7. 2 *Kings* xvi. 10—20.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Those, who succeed eminently wise and pious men in the same important station, seldom enter into their views or imitate their conduct, in "doing that which is right in "the sight of the LORD:" nay, frequently they seem ambitious of being as opposite to them as possible; especially when they run into wickedness, after having received a pious education. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xxi. 3.)—When sinners "like not to retain God in their knowledge," he gives them up to the lusts of their own hearts, to perpetrate every thing horrible and unnatural: and when such monsters of iniquity are advanced to thrones, it is evident, that the Lord intends by them to punish a guilty land, by involving their subjects in the consequences of their crimes and follies. They, therefore, who are groaning under the oppression of cruel tyrants, or suffering from the effects of their infatuated counsels, are called on to humble themselves before God for *their own* sins, to submit to his justice, and to seek deliverance from his mercy. On the other hand, if we are governed with equity and clemency, and

CHAP. XXIX.

Hezekiah reigns well, opens the doors of the temple, and exhorts the priests and Levites to prepare every thing for the worship of God, 1—11. They sanctify themselves, and cleanse the temple and its vessels, 12—19. Hezekiah offers solemn sacrifices; and the Levites shew more zeal than the priests, 20—36.

[a] 1 Kings xviii. 1—3. 1 Chr. iii. 13. Is. i. 1. Hos. i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9, 10. *Ezekias.*

[a] HEZEKIAH began to reign *when* *he was* five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Abijah, the daughter of [b] Zechariah.

[b] xxvi. 5. Is. viii. 2.

2 And he [c] did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.

[c] xxviii. 1. xxxiv. 2. 2 Kings xviii. 3.

3 He, [d] in the first year of his reign, in the first month, [e] opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them.

[d] xxxiv. 3. Ec. ix. 10. Matt. vi. 33. [e] xxviii. 24. 2 Kings xvi. 14—18.

4 And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the [f] east-street,

[f] xxxii. 6. Neh. iii. 29. Jer. xix. 2.

live in peace and prosperity, through the prudent and successful administration of our rulers; we should bless God for his mercies, and shew forth our gratitude in our daily conduct: and it is the constant duty of us all to pray for those who are, or shall be, placed over us, that they may be the instruments of God's goodness and mercy to us, and not of his wrath.—Tempters and examples of iniquity are often employed as scourges; and the sentence, which God *righteously* denounces, man may *unrighteously* execute.—It is a lamentable reflection, that so many thousands of lives, are sacrificed to the mad passions of potent individuals, who themselves escape: but they that thus are cut off, are sinners, and are punished for having forsaken or offended God.—The combined effects of several depraved passions is very dreadful: when revenge is satiated, avarice or ambition may take the reins; and if power be not wanting, the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the helpless, will be oppressed, crushed, and enslaved without redress; while the oppressor will rejoice in growing rich by these detestable measures. But the Lord beholds and disapproves; and, in one way or another, he will plead and avenge the cause of the oppressed.

V. 9—27.

It is happy, when the authority of God's word, or the expostulations of his ministers, deter men from persisting in mercenary cruelties; or excite legislators and princes to put a stop to their iniquity. If the oppressed have provoked God, to deliver them up into the hand of their oppressors; should not these remember, that "there are "with them also sins against the LORD?" Even rigorous justice towards an offending brother, is a grievous offence, in one that only lives and hopes through the mercy of God. (*Notes* and *P. O. Matt.* xviii. 23—35.) But for those, who have deserved the heavy wrath of God for their own sins, to injure and cruelly entreat their unoffending brethren, must "add exceedingly to the fierce wrath of the LORD that is "upon them." If "he shall have judgment without mercy, "who has shewed no mercy;" what will be his doom, who has been guilty of the most flagrant injustice to the inoffensive stranger, merely because he had it in his power to oppress him! Surely, in such a case, while the ministers of the gospel warn, exhort, and beseech the oppressors to deliver the captives up, whom they have taken of their brethren: the legislators and rulers of every state should peremptorily refuse admission into their dominions, to those bond-slaves, whom men have so unjustly reduced under their subjection. For we have offended against the Lord already, and this connivance must add still more to our sin and to our trespass, till fierce wrath come upon the nation. Nay, if the poor captives, who have been violently torn from their native country, and who have no power to return to their beloved relatives, could, when dismissed and kindly treated, be carried back again to them, it would be a conduct becoming the disciples of Christ; it might tend to render the name of CHRISTIAN respectable in those distant regions, where the cruelty, treachery, and avarice of those who bear it, have rendered it odious; and thus at length prepare the way for the propagation of the gospel among these poor benighted heathens. And, instead of injuring the interests of the community, or of any individuals; (except the most atrocious of the oppressors, who have no right to be considered;) we may venture, upon general scriptural principles, to foretel, that above all other measures, it would tend the most effectually to the lengthening of our tranquillity and prosperity. (*Note*, *Dan.* iv. 27.)—But if those, who commiserate their oppressed fellow-creatures, long to see their grievous servitude terminated, they must unite in prayer for the divine blessing upon the exertions of those, who honourably stand forth in this benevolent cause. For, except the Lord touch the hearts of such as are to decide upon it, every exertion will be in vain.—When sinners are left to their own hearts' lusts, they grow more and more callous, and desperate in wickedness; and "trespass yet more and more" in their distress, as if in defiance of God; seeking redress in their miseries, from those sins whence all their sufferings spring, and which will terminate in their ruin and in that of all who adhere to them. For when God casts down, none can raise up; and all helpers will increase distress, instead of affording deliverance.—The progress of wickedness and misery is often rapid: and it is awful to reflect upon the case of one, who has "trespassed more and "more," and added one impiety to another, and done all in his power to lead others into the same destructive courses; being at once "driven away in his wickedness," into the eternal world. (*Note, Prov.* xiv. 32.) Yet, even this apparent severity of God, against the ringleaders in iniquity, proves mercy to thousands, when righteous and useful persons are raised up in their stead.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1, 2. *Notes, 2 Kings* xviii. 1—3.

V. 3—5. 'This demonstrates his great piety and zeal 'for God, that he began so soon to reform religion. ... 'The surest way to establish himself, he thought, was to

5 And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites; [g] Sanctify now yourselves, and [h] sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy *place*.

6 For [i] our fathers have trespassed, and done *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and [k] have forsaken him, and have [l] turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and [*] turned *their* backs.

7 Also [m] they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense, nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy *place* unto the God of Israel.

8 [n] Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to [†] trouble, [o] to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes.

9 For, lo, [p] our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives *are* in captivity for this.

10 Now [q] *it is* in my heart [r] to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, [s] that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.

11 My sons, be not now [‡] negligent: for [t] the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and [§] burn incense.

12 Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of

g xxxv. 6. Ex. xix. 10. 15. 1 Chr. xv. 12.
h 16. xxxiv. 3—8. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Matt. xxi. 12, 13. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. 2 Cor. vi. 16. vii. 1. Eph. v. 26, 27.
i xxviii. 2—4. 23—25. xxxiv. 21. Ezra v. 12. ix. 7. Neh. ix. 16. 32. Jer. xvi. 19. xliv. 21, 22. Lam. v. 7. Dan. ix. 8. 16. Matt. x. 37. xxiii. 30—32.
k Jer. ii. 13. 17.
l Jer. ii. 27. Ez. viii. 16.
* Heb. *given the neck.*
m xxviii. 24. Lev. xxiv. 2—8. 2 Kings xvi. 17, 18.
n xxiv. 18. xxxiv. 24, 25. xxxvi. 14—16. Deut. xxviii. 15—20.
† Heb. *commotion,* o Lev. xxvi. 32. Deut. xxviii. 59. 1 Kings ix. 8. Jer. xviii. 16. xix. 8. xxv. 9. 18. xxix. 18.
p xxviii. 5—8. 17. Lev. xxvi. 17.
q vi. 7, 8.
r xv. 12, 13. xxiii. 16. xxxiv. 30—32. Ezra x. 3. Neh. ix. 38. x. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiv. 15. 18. 1. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 5.
s 2 Kings xxiii. 3. 26.
‡ Or, *deceived.* Gal. vi. 7, 8.
t Num. iii. 6—9. viii. 6—14. xviii. 2—6. Deut. x. 8.
§ Or, *offer sacrifice.* Num. xvi. 35—40. xviii. 7.

'establish true religion; though he run a great hazard 'in attempting the abolishing idolatry, which had been 'confirmed by some years prescription.' *Bp. Patrick.* It seems that the publick worship at the temple was entirely suppressed and prohibited, during the latter years of king Ahaz. (7. xxviii. 24. 2 *Kings* xvi. 17, 18.) The only reason advanced for a contrary opinion, is this: it is not said, that the sacred fire on the altar of burnt-offering was extinguished, or that it was re-kindled by fire from heaven, as at the dedication of the temple. If, however, the service was not totally put a stop to, the people in general were shut out from attending.—Hezekiah must have witnessed this impiety of his father, with deep regret and indignation: but immediately upon his succession to the throne, he threw open the doors of the temple, and proceeded to re-establish the worship there, as in the days of David. Yet the priests and Levites delayed to do their duty, till excited to it by the king. Perhaps Urijah was still the high priest; (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 10—16;) the chief priests were infected with idolatry, and disaffected to the service of God; and their inferiors, even if well disposed, might be held back by the authority of the leading men, till required and authorized by Hezekiah.—*Sanctify*, &c. (5) Personal repentance, and purification from legal and moral defilements, were requisite in the priests and Levites, before they could, according to order, proceed to purify the temple. (*Marg. Ref.* g, h.)—Much rubbish, dirt, and rust, would be contracted, through disuse and neglect, in the temple, the courts, and the sacred vessels: but the idolatry with which they had been polluted, and the altar, made after the model of that which Ahaz saw at Damascus, formed by far the worst filthiness, from which they needed to be cleansed.

V. 6, 7. (*Marg. Ref.*) *Our fathers*, &c. (6) When the honour of God was concerned, Hezekiah did not hesitate to criminate those who had gone before. He did not indeed directly mention Ahaz, his father, because that was not needful; and the neglect and base compliances of the priests and Levites, had greatly contributed to the wickedness of the king and his nobles. (*Notes, Matt.* x. 37—39. 2 *Cor.* v. 16. *P. O.* 1 *Pet.* i. 17—21, *latter part.*)

Turned away, &c.] 'This seems to signify, that Ahaz 'brought in a way of worship directly contrary to the law 'of God, which commanded them to worship toward the 'ark, which was placed in the west. But he ordered that 'they should turn their backs upon that,... and worship 'toward the east, where he had set his altar. And at last 'he shut up the doors of the temple, that they should not 'worship there at all.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Ez.* viii. 16.)

V. 8, 9. The defeat and dreadful slaughter recorded in the foregoing chapter seem here referred to, as the effect of some extraordinary terror from God on the minds of the Jews; and the Edomites and Philistines had been successful, because God had employed them as the weapons of his indignation. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxviii. 6—8. 16—19.)

V. 10, 11. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 1—3. 1 *Kings* viii. 15—21. 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 2.) 'He foresaw there was immediate 'destruction impending upon the whole nation for their 'iniquities, unless they did heartily and speedily repent of 'them. ...Therefore this good king thought it absolutely 'necessary forthwith to make a thorough reformation, and 'engage the whole nation in a solemn covenant to worship 'God purely. Thus Conradus Pellicanus.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xv. 12—15. *Deut.* xxix. 10—15. *Josh.* xxiv. 25—27. 2 *Kings* xi. 17—20. xxiii. 3. *Neh.* ix. 38. x. 1. 28—39.) Hezekiah attempted to prevail with the priests and Levites to attend to their duty, by argument and affectionate exhortation, and not by compulsion. This condescending address assured them of his readiness to support and protect them, as a father would do his obedient children. He warned them not to be *deceived;* for God would certainly call them to a strict account, if they neglected the work to which he had chosen them: or he exhorted them not to be *remiss*, when extraordinary exertions were become absolutely necessary.

Be not now negligent. (11) אַל־תִּשָּׁלּוּ: "Be not de-"ceived." *Marg.* Do not err: 'do not persist in that 'error; in which you have neglected that worship of God, 'to which you were chosen.' *Junius in Robertson.*

V. 12—19. All these leaders in the work were Levites of the different families of that tribe. (*Marg. Ref.* u—c;)

[u] Ex. vi. 16—25. Num. iv. 2, &c. 1 Chr. vi. 16—18. xv. 5. xxiii. 12—20.
[x] 1 Chr. vi. 19. 44. xv. 6. xxiii. 21—23.
[y] 1 Chr. vi. 20, 21. xv. 7. xxiii. 7—11.

Azariah, of the sons of the [u] Kohathites: and [x] of the sons of Merari; Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and [y] of the Gershonites; Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah:

[z] Lev. x. 4. *Elizaphan.* 1 Chr. xv. 8.
[a] 1 Chr. vi. 39. xv. 17. xxv. 2.
[b] 1 Chr. vi. 33. xv. 19.
[c] 1 Chr. xxv. 3. 6.

13 And of the sons of [z] Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and of the sons of [a] Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:

14 And of the sons of [b] Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the sons of [c] Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.

[d] 5.

15 And they gathered their brethren, and [d] sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, [*] by the words of the LORD, [e] to cleanse the house of the LORD.

[*] Or, *in the business.* xxx. 12.
[e] 1 Chr. xxiii. 28.
[f] iii. 8. v. 7. Ex. xxvi. 33, 34. 1 Kings vi. 19, 20. Heb. ix. 2—8. 23, 24.
[g] Ez. xxxvi. 29. Matt. xxiii. 27.

16 And the priests went into [f] the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse *it*, and brought out [g] all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD, into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took *it*, to carry *it* out abroad into the brook [h] Kidron.

[h] xv. 16. 2 Kings xxiii. 4—6. John xviii. 1. *Cedron.*
[i] 7. iii. 4. 1 Kings vi. 8. 1 Chr. xxviii. 11.
[k] Ex. xii. 2—8.

17 Now they began on the first *day* of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to [i] the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in [k] the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.

18 Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and [l] the altar of burnt-offering, with all the vessels thereof, and [m] the shew-bread table, with all the vessels thereof.

[l] iv. 1. 7.
[m] iv. 8. xiii. 11.

19 Moreover, [n] all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified: and, behold, they *are* before the altar of the LORD.

[n] xxviii. 24.

20 ¶ Then Hezekiah the king [o] rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD.

[o] Gen. xxii. 3. Ex. xxiv. 4. Josh. vi. 12. Jer. xxv. 4.

21 And they brought [p] seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he-goats, for [q] a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD.

[p] Num. xxiii. 1. 14. 29. 1 Chr. xv. 26. Ezra viii. 35. Job xlii. 8. Ez. xlv. 23.
[q] Lev. iv. 3—14. Num. xv. 22—24. 2 Cor. v. 21.

22 So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and [r] sprinkled *it* on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.

[r] Lev. i. 5. iv. 7. 18. 34. viii. 15. 19. 24. Heb. ix. 21, 22.

23 And they brought [†] forth the he-goats *for* the sin-offering before the king and the congregation; and [s] they laid their hands upon them:

[†] Heb. *near.*
[s] Lev. i. 4. iv. 15. 24.

24 And the priests killed them, and they made [t] reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded *that* the burnt-offering and [u] the sin-offering *should be made* for all Israel.

[t] Lev. vi. 30. viii. 15. Ez. xlv. 15. 17. Dan. ix. 24. Rom. v. 10, 11. 2 Cor. v 18—21. Col i. 20, 21. Heb. ii. 17.
[u] Lev. iv. 13, &c.

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not the chief in rank, but the most eminent for zeal and diligence. The high priest is not mentioned. Some of the other priests concurred, and cleansed the inside of the sanctuary, whither the Levites might not enter.—When the ark was to be removed, and on other necessary occasions, the priests might enter the holy of holies, though not at other times. (*Note, Num.* iv. 5.)—Ahaz died about the close of the year; and Hezekiah had given timely orders to the priests and Levites, for them to begin this work with the new year. It is surprising that Ahaz did not cut in pieces all the tables of shew-bread, and the other golden and silver furniture of the temple; but merely cast them aside.

[*] *According to the commandment of the king,* &c. (15) When Ahaz commanded Urijah contrary to the law of God, both he, and the priest who obeyed his impious command, acted most wickedly. (*Note,* 2 *Kings* xvi. 10—16.) But the priests and Levites acted right, in proportion as they obeyed "the commandment of the king by the words of "the Lord." Hezekiah properly improved his talent, without intermeddling out of his province; and they as properly yielded obedience.—Why should not the case be the same, under the Christian dispensation? Was Hezekiah's interposition any part of the ritual law of Moses, which Christianity has superseded? (*Note,* xxx. 12.)

V. 20. Perhaps Hezekiah arose earlier on that day than common, that he might set the people an example of earnestness in the service of God. He would not lose a day, nor an hour, after the temple was ready, before he opened the solemn worship of God, by sin-offerings and other sacrifices. (*Notes, Ps.* cxix. 57—63. *Matt.* vi. 33, 34.)

V. 21—24. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Lev.* i. 5—9.)—One bullock was appointed for a sin-offering for the high priest, and one for the whole congregation; but on this extraordinary occasion, when so many and great enormities had been committed, multiplied atoning sacrifices were offered. (*Notes, Lev.* iv. 13—21. *Num.* xv. 22—29.) The ceremony, of the king and the congregation laying their hands upon the head of the goats, expressed their confession of guilt, and the substitution of the guiltless animal to suffer

25 And [x] he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, [y] according to the commandment of David, and of [z] Gad the king's seer, and [a] Nathan the prophet: [b] for *so was* the commandment [*] of the LORD by his prophets.

26 And the Levites stood with [c] the instruments of David, and [d] the priests with the trumpets.

27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar. And [†] when the burnt-offering began, [e] the song of the LORD began *also* with the trumpets, and with [‡] the instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel.

28 And [f] all the congregation worshipped, and [§] the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and* all *this continued* until the burnt-offering was finished.

29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all *that were* [‖] present with him, [g] bowed themselves, and worshipped.

30 Moreover, Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD, [h] with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And [i] they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have [*] consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near, and bring [k] sacrifices and [l] thank-offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices, and thank-offerings; and [m] as many as were of a free heart, burnt-offerings.

32 And [n] the number of the burnt-offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, *and* two hundred lambs: all these *were* for a burnt-offering to the LORD.

33 And the [o] consecrated things *were* six hundred oxen, and three thousand sheep.

34 But [p] the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt-offerings: wherefore [q] their brethren the Levites [†] did help them, till the work was ended, and until the *other* priests had sanctified themselves: [r] for the Levites *were* more [s] upright in

x 1 Chr. ix. 33. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4, 5. 42. xxv. 1—7.
y viii. 14. xxxv. 15. 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. xxviii. 12. 19.
z 2 Sam. xxiv. 11. 1 Chr. xxi. 9. xxix. 29.
a 2 Sam. vii. 2—4. xii. 1—7.
b xxx. 12.
* Heb. *by the hand of the LORD, by the hand of his prophets.*
c 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. Am. vi. 5.
d v. 12, 13. Num. x. 10. Josh. vi. 4—9. 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi. 6. Ps. lxxxi. 3. xcviii. 5, 6. cl. 3.
† Heb. *in the time.*
e vii. 3. xx. 21. xxiii. 18. Ps. cxxxvi. 1.
‡ Heb. *hands of instruments.*
f Ps. lxviii. 24—26. Rev. v. 8—14.
§ Heb. *sang.* Ps. lxxxix. 15
‖ Heb. *found.*
g xx. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. Ps. lxxii. 11. Rom. xiv. 11. Phil. ii 10, 11.
h 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xvi. 7—36.
i Ps. xxxii. 11. xxxiii. 1. xcv. 1, 2. c. 1, 2. cxlix. 2. Phil. iv. 4.
* Or, *filled your hand.* xiii. 9
k Lev. i. iii.
l Lev. vii. 12.
m Lev. i. 3. xxiii. 38. Ezra i. 4.
n 1 Kings iii. 4. viii. 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 21. Ezra vi. 17
o 31.
p 5. xxx. 16, 17.
q xxxv. 11. Num. viii. 15. 19. xviii. 3. 6, 7.
† Heb. *strengthened them.*
r xxx. 3.
s 1 Chr. xxix. 17. Ps. vii. 10.

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in their stead; which prefigured him "who bare our sins "in his own body on the tree." (*Notes, Lev.* i. 4. xvi. 20—22.) It is not, however, here stated, that the prescribed rules, respecting the sin-offerings, for the priest, the ruler, or the nation, as to carrying the blood into the most holy place, and burning the bodies without the camp, was observed. Perhaps this was not done: and in that case, these sin-offerings must be considered, as in some respects different from those prescribed in that part of the law. (*Notes, Lev.* iv. 4—7. 11, 12. vi. 30. *Heb.* xiii. 9—14, *vv.* 11, 12.)—The word here rendered *he-goats* (21), is not used in scripture till after the captivity, and learned men think that this is one proof that Ezra compiled these books. —The burnt-offering and the sin-offerings were presented, not only in behalf of the kingdom of Judah, but for all Israel, even the ten tribes, which were at this time governed by Hoshea. Hezekiah seems in this to have had respect to the plan which he afterwards proposed, and which is recorded in the ensuing chapter; namely, of uniting the whole nation of Israel in celebrating the passover, and in the worship of God.

V. 25—30. The temple-psalmody was regulated with the concurrence of these other prophets, as well as by the appointment of David. (*Notes*, xxiii. 11—21, *v.* 13. 1 *Chr.* ix. 22. xv. 16. xvi. 4—6. xxv. 1—8. *Ezra* iii. 8—11. *Ps.* xxxiii. 2, 3. lxxxi. 1—5. xcv. 1—6. cl.)

The priests with the trumpets. (26.) The blowing of trumpets by the priests, on various occasions, and in particular over the sacrifices, was a part of the ritual law of Moses, and is here exactly distinguished from the psalmody instituted by David and the prophets. (27, 28. *Notes*, v. 12, 13. xiii. 4—12, *v.* 12. *Num.* x. 2—10, *v.* 10. *P. O.* 1—10.)—*Asaph the seer.* (30) *Notes, Ps.* lxxiii. *title.* lxxiv. *title.*

V. 31, 32. As the burnt sacrifices were wholly-consumed on the altar, the offering of them evinced greater zeal and liberality, than the oblation of peace-offerings, a great part of which was eaten by the offerer and his friends. (*Notes, Lev.* i. iii.)—Comparing the sacrifices offered on this occasion, with those of Solomon when the temple was dedicated; (vii. 5—10. *Note*, 1 *Kings* viii. 63—65;) though here it is said the burnt-offerings were in abundance; we may form some idea, how greatly the riches and prosperity of the kingdom of Judah were diminished; or, how greatly the general spirit of piety had declined. (xxx. 24.)

V. 33. It is probable, that *the consecrated things* denote the peace-offerings and thank-offerings.

V. 34. It does not appear that any idolatrous priests were punished: but perhaps some were disgraced and excluded from attendance; while many neglected to sanctify themselves, being averse to the sacred service. It was therefore deemed more proper, that upright and duly sanctified Levites should flay the sacrifices, than unclean or profane priests. This is considered by many as irregular, but it is no where prohibited. Indeed, before the Levites were given to the sons of Aaron, it is probable, that they

heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

t 32. u Ex. xxix. 13. Lev. iii. 5, 16. ; Gen. xxxv. 14. Lev. xxiii. 13. Num. xv. 5. 7. 10. y 1 Chr. xvi. 37— 42. Ezra vi. 18. 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

35 And also t the burnt-offerings *were* in abundance, with u the fat of the peace-offerings, and x the drink-offerings for *every* burnt-offering. y So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order.

36 And z Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that a God had prepared the people: for b the thing was *done* suddenly.

z 1 Chr. xxix. 9. 17. Ezra vi. 22. 1 Thes. iii. 8, 9. a xxx. 12. 1 Chr. xxix. 18. Ps. x. 17. Prov. xvi. 1. b Acts ii. 41.

who brought the sacrifice both slaughtered and flayed it; (*Note, Lev.* i. 5—9;) afterwards these services seem to have formed a part of the ministry assigned to the Levites, at the will of the priests: but at length it became customary for the priests to perform them. The Levites might not in any case sprinkle the blood, burn the fat and flesh, or approach the altar.—'The Levites were men of greater 'integrity than the priests: at least there were more men 'of zeal found among them, that readily offered themselves to the service of God. See xxx. 17.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 35. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 36. The great and sudden change produced in the conduct of the people; and the alacrity with which they concurred in measures, to which much opposition had been expected, evidenced that "God had prepared" them: and Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced in it, as a token that he would prosper them in endeavouring a more complete reformation. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* xxx. 12.) God 'had 'given this good mind to them, to join so forwardly in 'this reformation. "For the thing was done suddenly;" 'which argued a divine motion, whereby they were excited 'without long persuasions.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—19.

The removal of a single individual of very bad character, from any publick situation, and the succession of a wise and pious person in his stead, may be productive of most important and extensive good effects: for authority, influence, and example, give such energy to the attempts of princes and nobles, that the consequences of their conduct are beyond all calculation. What an honour is it to be employed, in diffusing piety and felicity through whole kingdoms! But how dreadful will be the condemnation of those, who spread guilt and misery in so extensive a manner!—Whether a godly man inherit a kingdom, or an estate; whether he change his station in society or his place of abode, or be removed to a new situation in the church; his *first actions* will be of considerable importance, and often leave an abiding impression: and regulations may frequently be then made without difficulty, before different habits and expectations have been formed; which would afterward become almost impracticable.—Even in that nation, in which God had appointed that apostates and idolaters should be punished with death, the most effectual revivals of true religion were produced by example, exhortation, and encouragement: and if it were in the hearts of kings and rulers, thus to join themselves in covenant with the Lord, and zealously to stir up all orders of people to do their duty, by earnest persuasions and affectionate expostulations, without using violence, or imposing on men's consciences; many would be excited willingly to concur in their pious designs, and to "come "according to the commandment of the king, *by the words* "*of the* LORD." (*Notes,* 10, 11. xxx. 12.) Happy and honourable will they be, who shall thus become "nursing "fathers" to the church, not by bribes and preferments, but by countenancing those, who zealously labour to promote acknowledged truth and practical godliness, even though not all exactly in the same way.

V. 20—36.

The nominal ministers of religion have, in all ages, been lamentably backward, in labouring and venturing to promote the cause of God: and the higher their *dignities,* and the greater their *emoluments,* the more evident, alas, frequently, has been their aversion to the *work* of the ministry. Too generally indeed the infidelity and impiety of all orders in the community are justly chargeable upon the vices, the supineness, or the insufficiency of the stated ministers. Instead of exhorting all others to do their duty, no exhortations have been found effectual, to induce them to attend to their own: nay, they have often been found disposed to over-awe and browbeat their inferior brethren, who were willing to "labour in the word and doctrine;" and to supply their lack of service, that immortal souls might not perish for want of instruction. But if the honour of a parent is not to be regarded, where the glory of God is concerned, such clergymen, however dignified, must not expect to be treated with respect, when the very existence of true religion is at stake: and the reputation of the clerical function must be supported by the holy lives, superior knowledge in divine things, and unwearied labours of the clergy; or else it will sink into neglect and contempt. The true minister of Christ, however, should take heed first to himself and then to his ministry. His own conscience, heart, and life must first be purified, by repentance, and faith in the divine Saviour; and then he may hope to prosper in endeavouring to convert others also, and to promote the pure and spiritual worship of God.—In all reformation, personal or publick, we must first be convinced, in what particulars we have done wrong, and then consider how we may do better. Neglect of God and omission of duty lead to more direct impiety and iniquity; and our own transgressions prepare us to become tempters and seducers of others. Thus religion is run down, and the wrath of the Lord comes on apostate professors of the gospel, and on apostate nations. In returning to him, therefore, we must renounce our sins and begin to practise neglected duties, to use the means of grace, and to watch against the wickedness of the heart. We, indeed, have no occasion for multiplied sacrifices; as the one atonement of Christ is sufficient for all who rely on it: but we need repeated confessions of guilt, constant humiliation before God, and application to the Saviour's blood, for forgiveness and acceptance: we need to maintain daily communion with our reconciled Father through Christ, and to receive continual communications from him: and we should present our spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and devote our time, talents, and substance,

CHAP. XXX.

Hezekiah proclaims a solemn passover to be kept in the second month, and calls on both Judah and Israel to unite in celebrating it, 1—5. His message to the Israelites, and the reception with which it met, 6—12. A great multitude, having destroyed the altars for idolatry in Jerusalem, prepare to keep the feast, 13—16. Hezekiah prays for those who are not ceremonially clean, and is graciously answered, 17—20. They keep the feast fourteen days with great joy, 21—26. The priests bless the people, 27.

a xi. 13. 16. AND Hezekiah sent [a] to all Israel
b 10, 11. xxv. 7. xxxv. 6. Hos. v. 4. vii. 8, 9. xi. 8. and Judah, and wrote letters [b] also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they
c Deut. xvi. 2—6. should come [c] to the house of the
d Ex. xii. 3—20. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. LORD at Jerusalem, [d] to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel.

e 1 Chr. xiii. 1—3. Prov. xi. 14. xv. 22. Ec. iv. 13. 2 For [e] the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the pass-
f Num. ix. 10, 11. over [f] in the second month.

3 For they could not keep it [g] at that time, [h] because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

g Ex. xii. 6. 18.
h xxix. 34.

4 And the thing [*] pleased the king and all the congregation.

[*] Heb. *was right in the eyes of.* 1 Chr. xiii. 4.

5 So they [i] established a decree [k] to make proclamation throughout all Israel, [l] from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: [m] for they had not done *it* of a long *time in such sort* as it was written.

i Ezra vi. 8—12. Esth. iii. 12—15. viii. 8—10. ix. 20, 21. Dan. vi. 8.
k xxiv. 9. xxxvi. 22. Lev. xxiii. 2. 4. Dan. iv. 1, &c.
l Judg. xx. 1.
m xxxv. 18.

6 So [n] the posts went with the letters from [†] the king and his princes, throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, [o] turn again unto the LORD God of

n Job ix. 25. Esth. viii. 14. Jer. li. 31.
† Heb. *the hand of the.*
o Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. iv. 1. Ez. xxxiii. 11. Hos. xiv. 1. Joel ii. 12, 13. Jam. iv. 8.

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yea, our bodies and souls, with a free heart, as sacrifices acceptable to the Father through the Redeemer's name. To these things we are encouraged by the joyful sound of his gospel: when we abound in these sacred exercises, according to the commandment of the holy prophets and apostles of Christ, we shall be enabled, though in ourselves most miserable sinners, to "rejoice in the Lord," and to glory in his salvation. Those ministers, who are most diligent in preparing for their work, and in performing it, will eventually be most employed and honoured, even though inferior in external distinctions; and slothful disqualification will never excuse any man's negligence before God. But he alone can prepare the heart of man for vital godliness: when much real good is effected in a little time, the glory must be ascribed to him; and all who love him, or the souls of men, will rejoice. If we would have such blessings, we must make it our constant prayer to him, thus to "prepare our hearts" and those of others; for when he works, great things may *suddenly* be effected. The Lord grant, that none called ministers may be negligent; but that they may all act as chosen by him, to stand before him, and to serve him; and zealously do his will, that his wrath may be turned from them, and from others on every side, by his blessing upon their labours, and in answer to their fervent prayers and supplications!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1. The other tribes of Israel were as much bound to obey the law of Moses, as Judah and Benjamin were; but Hezekiah had no authority over them. Yet the circumstances, in which they were placed, encouraged him to address them by letters, with an amicable and pious invitation; which implied, that they might attend at the temple with perfect safety, though they were not his subjects. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xii. 26—29. 2 *Kings* xvii. 2. xviii. 9—12.)—Ephraim and Manasseh, as principal tribes, seem to be put for the whole kingdom of Israel.

V. 2—4. Hezekiah and his counsellors justly concluded, that the regulation of the fourteenth day of the second month, which had been made for individuals, who were hindered from eating the passover at the appointed season, might, in their present circumstances, be extended to the whole congregation. (*Notes*, *Num.* ix. 6—14.)—A sufficient number of the priests had not been duly sanctified, to prepare the temple for that ordinance at the stated time, or to officiate in it; the people, long disused from attendance, were not generally assembled; those who were present seemed well disposed to celebrate that solemn and significant ordinance; and it might have an abiding good effect, if the favourable opportunity were seized. (*Notes*, xxxv. 1—19. *Ex.* xii. 3—27.) For these reasons, it was determined to summon the people to attend, and to keep the passover in the second month.

V. 5. *As it was written.*] It is probable, that the passover and the other solemn feasts, were sometimes totally omitted for many years together; at other times very carelessly attended, and by very few persons, compared with what the law required: and the ten tribes had never been accustomed to repair to Jerusalem, since the division of the kingdom. (*Notes*, 26, 27. xi. 13—17. 1 *Kings* xii. 26—32.)

V. 6—9. Hoshea was king of Israel at this time, and it does not appear, that he attempted to hinder his subjects from resorting to Jerusalem to worship, if they chose it. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xvii. 2.)—In the preceding reign, Israel had made a most dreadful slaughter of the men of Judah: yet Hezekiah considered the Israelites as brethren, and greatly desired to bring them back, by kind treatment, to the religion of their fathers; therefore he sent his proclamation, or letters, into the parts of the land belonging to the ten tribes, as well as throughout his own dominions.—The word rendered "posts" signifies *runners*: for men were then, and still are in many places, trained, and kept on purpose, to convey dispatches speedily by running.—Even then, the Israelites were but a remnant, which had es-

Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are [p] escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.

7 And be not ye [q] like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers *who* therefore gave them up to desolation, [r] as ye see.

8 Now [s] be ye not stiff-necked as your fathers *were, but* [t] yield yourselves unto the LORD, and [u] enter into his sanctuary, [v] which he hath sanctified for ever: and [w] serve the LORD your God, that [x] the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

9 For [y] if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children *shall find* compassion before them that lead them captive, [z] so that they shall come again into this land: for [a] the LORD your God *is* gracious and merciful, and [b] will not [c] turn away *his* face from you, if ye return unto him.

10 So [d] the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: but [e] they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

11 Nevertheless, [f] divers of Asher, and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, [g] humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

12 Also in Judah [h] the hand of God was to give them one heart to do [i] the commandment of the king and of the princes, [j] by the word of the LORD.

13 ¶ And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in [k] the second month, a very great congregation.

14 And they arose, and took away

[p] xxviii. 20. 1 Kings xv. 19. 29. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. i. 9.
[q] Ez. xx. 18. Zech. i. 3, 4.
[r] xxix. 8.
[s] Heb. *harden not your necks.* xxxvi. 13. Ex. xxxii. 9. Deut. x. 16.
[t] Heb. *give the hand.* 1 Chr. xxix. 24. *marg.* Ezra x. 19. Ps. lxviii. 31. Rom. vi. 13. 16. 19.
[u] Ps. lxiii. 2. lxviii. 24. lxxiii. 17.
[v] Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.
[w] Deut. vi. 13. 17. Josh. xxiv. 15. Matt. iv. 10. John xii. 26. Rom. vi. 22. Col. iii. 22—24. Rev. vii. 15.
[x] xxviii. 11. 13. xxix. 10. 2 Kings xxiii. 26. Ps. lxxviii. 49.
[y] vii. 14. Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Deut. xxx. 2—4. 1 Kings viii. 50. Ps. cvi. 46.
[z] Jer. xxix. 12—14. xxxi. 27, 28.
[a] Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. 15. cxlv. 7, 8. Mic. vii. 18.
[b] xv. 2. Is. lv. 7. Ez. xviii. 30—32.
[c] Jer. xviii. 7.
[d] 6. Esth. iii. 13. 15. viii. 10. 14. Job ix. 25.
[e] xxxvi. 16. Gen. xix. 14. Neh. ii. 19. Job xii. 4. Luke viii. 53. xvi. 14. xxii. 63, 64. xxiii. 35. Acts xvii. 32. Heb. xi. 36.
[f] 18. xi. 16. Acts xvii. 34.
[g] xii. 6, 7. 12. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. xxxiv. 27. Ex. x. 3. Lev. xxvi. 41. Dan. v. 22. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 10. 1 Pet. v. 6.
[h] xxix. 36. 1 Chr. xxix. 18, 19. Ezra vii. 27. Ps. cx. 3. Jer. xxxii. 39. Phil. ii. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14.
[i] Deut. iv. 2. 5, 6. 1 Thes. iv. 2.
[j] xxix. 25. Acts iv. 19.
[k] *See on* 2.

caped from the ravages of Pul and Tiglath-pilezer: and far heavier judgments awaited them for their apostasy and idolatry; which could not be averted, except by turning again to the God of their fathers. Hezekiah, however, most affectionately and plainly, cautioned them, not to copy the crimes of their fathers and brethren, whose miseries they had witnessed: he warned them not to be "stiff "necked," or *obstinate in rebellion:* (*Note, Deut.* x. 16:) and he exhorted them to "yield themselves unto the "LORD;" that is, to yield the victory to him, to submit to his authority, to lay down their rebellious arms, to implore mercy, and to become his servants. (*Note, Rom.* vi. 12, 13.) He intreated them also to "enter into his sanc-"tuary, which he had sanctified for ever:" that is, to renounce their idolatries and self-invented worship, and to resort with their sacrifices to the temple at Jerusalem, and there to keep the solemn feasts.—The temple was not only the centre of God's worship, and the pledge of his gracious presence with his people; but likewise the type of those spiritual blessings which are from everlasting to everlasting upon all true believers.—Hezekiah also encouraged those whom he addressed, to hope, from the abundant mercy and grace of God to the penitent, that if thus they turned to him, the fierceness of his wrath would be turned away from them; and even to expect the restoration of their brethren and children, who were already in captivity: for God, having all hearts in his hand, could and would make the enemies of those who pleased him to be at peace with them, and to shew them compassion. In this, he evidently referred to the promises contained in the books of Moses. (*Marg. Ref.* y—b.)—It is observable, that these letters carefully avoided all mention of the claim of David's family to dominion over all Israel; and of former injuries and quarrels, or whatever could give any shadow of offence, either to the prince or his subjects, except in the immediate concerns of religion.

V. 10, 11. The nation of Israel was almost ripe for destruction; and it is by no means wonderful, that most of them insulted and mocked the messengers, who carried these faithful expostulations and invitations: indeed we may rather wonder, that they met with no harsher treatment. Some, however, out of the several tribes were prevailed on; and, humbling themselves for former sins, resorted to Jerusalem; so that, Hezekiah's pious design was not ineffectual, though not so successful as he had wished it to be.

V. 12. The language of this verse is entitled to special attention. "The commandment of the king and his "princes, by the word of the LORD," met with ready and general obedience from the men of Judah, because "the "hand of God was to give them one heart to do it." If the rulers had commanded any thing contrary to the word of the LORD, or beyond it, in affairs of religion; it would have been a misapplication of their authority: but, as they required nothing but what God had expressly enjoined, they duly improved their talent; and the people, by the grace of God, knew and performed their duty.—It does not appear, to me at least, that Christianity has at all altered the duty either of rulers or subjects in this respect. (*Notes*, xxix. 10, 11, 12—19, *v.* 15) 'There was a marvel-'lous unanimity in Judah, who were so obedient to the 'motions of the divine grace, (without which so great a 'charge could not have been made,) as generally to comply 'with the king's proclamation, made with the consent of 'the princes. They looked upon it as a divine command, 'which was brought to them by that authority: and it ap-'peared so to be, by the mighty power of God, which 'wrought their hearts to a cheerful obedience.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13. The emphatical language here used fully proves, that the concourse of people to celebrate this passover, was exceedingly great, compared with all other instances with which the writer was acquainted. (*Note*, xxxv. 18, 19.)

V. 14. The people assembled at Jerusalem some days

the [l] altars that *were* in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast *them* into [m] the brook Kidron.

15 Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the second month: and the priests and the Levites [n] were ashamed, [o] and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the LORD.

16 And [p] they stood in their [*] place [q] after their manner, according to the law of [r] Moses, the man of God: [s] the priests sprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites.

17 For *there were* many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore [t] the Levites had the charge of [u] the killing of the passovers, for every one *that was* not clean, to sanctify *them* unto the LORD.

18 For a multitude of the people, *even* [x] many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, [y] had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat [z] the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah [a] prayed for them, saying, [b] The good LORD pardon every one

19 *That* [c] prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, [d] though *he be* not *cleansed* according to the purification of the sanctuary.

20 And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and [e] healed the people.

21 And the children of Israel that were [†] present at Jerusalem kept [f] the feast of unleavened bread seven days, with [g] great gladness: and the Levites and [h] the priests praised the LORD day by day, *singing* with [‡] loud instruments unto the LORD.

22 And Hezekiah spake [§] comfortably unto all the Levites, [i] that taught [k] the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, [l] and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

23 And the whole assembly [m] took counsel [n] to keep other seven days: and they kept *other* seven days with gladness.

24 For Hezekiah king of Judah [‖] did [o] give to the congregation a thousand bullocks, and seven thousand sheep: and the princes gave to the congrega-

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before the passover; and they employed the intermediate time, in clearing the city of altars for idolatry, and from other abominations. This was an excellent preparation for the solemn ordinance, which they were about to celebrate. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 4—23.)

V. 15. The zeal and earnestness of the king, the princes, and the people in general, made the priests and Levites ashamed of their supineness, and stirred them up to prepare themselves, and attend on their work: 'they 'blushed to see the people so forward, and themselves so 'negligent.' *Bp. Patrick.* "The hand of God" was in this also, or they would have been the more irritated, as examples in ancient and in modern times abundantly prove. (*Notes*, 12. *Matt.* xxi. 14—16. 23—27.)

V. 16—20. (*Marg. Ref.*) Either the Levites, or the offerers, might *receive* the blood of the victims; but the priests alone might *sprinkle* it.—It is evident from this passage, that, in ordinary cases, the persons who brought the paschal lambs slew them; or this exception would not have been stated: and it is at least probable, that the case was at first the same with other sacrifices. (*Notes*, xxix. 34. *Lev.* i. 5—9.)—But many of the ten tribes, having come at a short warning, and being destitute of instruction, were ceremonially unclean, and therefore not regularly prepared to eat the passover. (*Notes, Num.* ix. 6—14.) Yet it would have greatly discouraged them, had they been excluded from that sacred ordinance, to which they had been invited: they appeared sincere and earnest in returning to the Lord, and there was a prospect of important usefulness. They were therefore allowed to eat the passover, when the Levites had killed it for them, notwithstanding their ceremonial disqualification: and Hezekiah, sensible that there was danger in this deviation, earnestly prayed to the good and merciful LORD, "to "pardon every one that prepared his heart to seek...the "LORD,...though not cleansed according to the purifica- "tion of the sanctuary." (*Marg. Ref.* a—d.) To this prayer the Lord granted a favourable answer, "and healed "the people." Perhaps he had visited them with some sickness for their irregular attendance, which he then graciously healed. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 29—34.) Or, he gave peace to their consciences, and healed their souls.

V. 21, 22. The sacrifices, psalmody, and worship of the people, were accompanied by the reading and expounding of the law: and some of the Levites were employed to instruct the people, in the good, the profitable, and pleasant knowledge of the Lord: (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 9:) and the king peculiarly noticed and encouraged them in this useful work, which was very much wanted. (*Notes*, xv. 1—7, *v.* 3. xvii. 7—9. *Deut.* xxxi. 10—13. *Ezra* vii. 6—10. *Neh.* viii. 1—9. 18. ix. 1—3. xiii. 1—3.) This would excite others to apply themselves to the study of the law, that they too might be qualified for this service.—By "making confession," may be meant, either confessing their sins, or acknowledging the unmerited goodness of the Lord, or both combined.

V. 23—25. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, xxix. 31, 32.) This passover must have been not long before the time of har-

tion a thousand bullocks, and ten thousand sheep: and [p] a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and [q] the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, [r] rejoiced.

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for [s] since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel, *there was* not the like in Jerusalem.

27 Then [t] the priests the Levites arose, and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and [u] their prayer came *up* to [*] his holy dwelling-place, *even* unto heaven.

p xxix. 34.

q *See on* 18.—Ex. xii. 43—49.

r 1 Chr. xvi. 10, 11. Ps. xcii. 4. civ. 34.

s vii. 9, 10.

t *See on* Num. vi. 23—26. Deut. x. 8.

u *See on* 1 Kings viii. 30. 39. Acts x. 4.

* Heb. *the habitation of his holiness.* Deut. xxvi. 15. Ps. lxviii. 5. Is. lvii. 15. lxiii. 15. lxvi. 1.

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vest: but the hearts of the people were so enlarged with holy affections, that they were neither weary of the sacred service, nor in haste to return to their secular business. (*Notes, Ex.* xxiii. 14—18. *Lev.* xxiii. 10—21. *Deut.* xvi. 9.) 'They did not observe other seven days of unleavened 'bread, but offered sacrifices with praises and thanksgiv-'ings, and feasting, seven days.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The people in general, and those who came out of the kingdom of Israel, would be unprepared for the expense attending these sacrifices: and therefore both Hezekiah and his princes liberally gave cattle for sacrifices; in which no doubt they acted properly, and should be imitated according to the nature of the Christian dispensation, by princes and nobles, liberally supplying what is wanting to support the worship of God, and to make glad the hearts of their poorer brethren, (*Notes, Ez.* xlv. 16, 17.) The example had also a salutary influence on the priests, who sanctified themselves, to take their part in the service.—Probably, "the strangers that came out of the land of Israel," as distinguished from "the congregation of Israel," were not Israelites by birth, but circumcised proselytes.

V. 26. The observance of this passover, and the solemnities that attended it, were attended with great joyfulness of heart, and crowned with a peculiar blessing: many of the priests and people were brought to a serious sense of religion, and an important revival was introduced among them; even superior to any, which had taken place since the days of Solomon: and in no instance had seven additional days been added to the time assigned to any festival, since the dedication of the temple by him. (*Notes, 1 Kings* viii. 63—66.)—As this occurred in the first year of Hezekiah's reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years, it must be supposed that he witnessed the effects of so good a beginning, to the end of his life. It was done *suddenly*, but, by the grace of God, it was done *effectually*.—Doubtless, the passovers and other solemn feasts were kept up, and attended to, during this reign, though not in so remarkable a manner as this first passover.

V. 27. This seems to have closed the solemnity, in a most suitable and impressive manner; and the fervent prayer of the priests was heard in heaven, and graciously accepted. (*Notes, Num.* vi. 23—27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Favourable opportunities of fixing good impressions ought by no means to be neglected: and it is better that *circumstantial* irregularities should be admitted, than that divine ordinances should not be observed, or substantial usefulness prevented.—When duties have been long omitted, the time ought to be more carefully redeemed, that no further delays may be occasioned: former negligence, though it cannot be *excused*, may be *forgiven*; but persevering ungodliness will infallibly end in destruction. —We ought to embrace every proper opportunity of addressing men upon their eternal concerns, and of engaging as many as possible in the service of God: and we may employ *arguments* and *persuasions* with those, over whom we claim no authority. Injuries or enmities, however many or great, should not render us indifferent about the salvation of any man: no expense or labour ought to be regarded in our endeavours to do good: nor should we be discouraged by the prospect of the neglect, contempt, or even rage, of the very persons, whose happiness we are seeking. Numbers may and will "laugh us to scorn:" but several will be humbled and benefitted; and perhaps where success was least expected, where impiety and profligacy were most notorious, and among those who appeared ripe for destruction. Such attempts should be made in plainness, meekness, and affection; all reproaches and upbraidings, and every thing assuming, or needlessly offensive, should be avoided; important and undeniable truths and duties should chiefly be insisted upon; and the conscience and passions, especially hope and fear, should be vigorously addressed. The consequences of impenitent rebellion against God should be solemnly stated, and contrasted with the happy effects of returning to him by humble, penitent faith; and the whole enforced, by arguments deduced from fact and experience. Addresses to this effect are peculiarly seasonable, while men are suffering for their crimes; and still deeper miseries present themselves to their view, from which they have no prospect of deliverance, but by the merciful interposition of God. And when, among their acquaintance and relatives, the prosperity of eminently pious persons can be compared with the misery of those who are notoriously profligate; the argument thence deduced, for repentance and returning to God, will have peculiar energy: for even the irreligious must see the absurdity of copying the wicked examples of fathers or brethren, who have been evidently ruined by their vices. But the rich mercy of God forms the grand argument, by which to enforce repentance on the sinner's conscience. "There is forgiveness with him," and "plenteous redemption" in the Saviour's blood; and we are under a dispensation of mercy. Nothing but stiff-necked, obstinate, impenitent wickedness can ruin us. The chief of sinners, "who yield themselves to the LORD," shall certainly be saved. Let them therefore trust in his mercy, attend upon his ordinances, and join themselves to his people, that they may serve him; and then the fierceness of his wrath will turn away from them; but not otherwise. To this "we should exhort one another

CHAP. XXXI.

The people destroy the idols, and their temples and altars, through the cities of Judah and in Ephraim and Manasseh, 1. Hezekiah orders the courses of the priests and Levites, and provides for their maintenance, as well as for the stated sacrifices, 2—4. The people readily bring their first-fruits and tithes, 5—10. Hezekiah appoints officers to dispose of these oblations, 11—19. A high commendation of his zeal and integrity, 20, 21.

"daily, lest any of us be hardened, through the deceit-"fulness of sin:" to this we should invite and persuade all others without exception, as far as we are able; for "him that cometh" to the Saviour, "he will in no wise "cast out:" but "will grant" unto all who believe in him, "that being delivered from the hand of their ene-"mies, they may serve him without fear, in righteous-"ness and true holiness, before him, all the days of their "life;" and the covenant made with them will prove for the good of their children and brethren also.—Oh, that messengers were sent forth to carry these invitations to every city and village, through our land, and every land! It is true, the Lord alone can render them effectual; but he works by the word of his ministers, and also by the commandment of kings and princes, when it accords with his word.—Faith comes by hearing; and true religion has uniformly flourished, in proportion to the measure in which faithful, scriptural, preaching has abounded. In general, persons of wealth or authority might be instrumental in promoting this faithful preaching of the word of God, if they had the inclination, and were willing to bear the expense of it: nor can superior rank enjoy a higher privilege. All who are employed in such a work, should do it with their might; and neither be discouraged nor exasperated by opposition or reproach; and they will find at length that "their labour was not "in vain in the Lord."

V. 13—20.

When we are humbled for our transgressions, and declare war against all our idols, expecting and seeking forgiveness and salvation only through the atonement of Christ, we become welcome communicants at the Lord's table. The unhumbled and impenitent indeed, the man who lives in known sin, and he who comes 'trusting in 'his own righteousness,' instead of the 'manifold and great 'mercies of God,' may presume to commemorate the death of Christ; but he is an intruder, who comes to the marriage-feast, without the wedding-garment. (*Note, Matt.* xxii. 11—14.) Yet when the sinner has indeed begun to prepare his heart to seek the Lord; though his views be feeble, obscure, and in many things erroneous, and his approach be not exactly regular; he must not be discouraged, despised, or treated with harshness. Our blessed Advocate, who "breaketh not the bruised reed," will intercede for him; we too ought to pray for and encourage him; and "the good LORD will pardon" every one who bears this character. No trembling believer, therefore, who desires to trust in the Redeemer, and to shew his gratitude by obeying his plain command, needs to be alarmed, lest he should fail in that exactness, which he supposes is required in this ordinance: for the good LORD lays no snares in the way of humble, upright enquirers.—Previous preparation is indeed profitable; but the true believer is *habitually* ready, and ought not to retire for want of *actual* preparation. Yet every defect is sin, and needs forgiveness; and should be matter of humiliation, though not of discouragement. (*P. O.* 1 *Cor.* xi. 23—34.)—Man's authority cannot disannul or alter divinely instituted externals in the worship of God: yet these may be idolized; and the Lord will, on some occasions, approve the conduct of those, who prefer the *spirit* to the *letter* of an instituted observance, where both *cannot possibly* be attained; and who seize an opportunity of glorifying him, in seeking the conversion and salvation of souls, by postponing or relaxing in the exact observance of an external regulation.

V. 21—27.

Many allowances ought indeed to be made for those, who are newly brought forth out of very ignorant places, to attend on the ordinances of God; yet they must not be left in their mistakes. His ministers must diligently "teach them the good knowledge of the LORD," of his perfections, mysteries, ordinances, and precepts, that they may proceed with increasing understanding and alacrity. Those, who labour in this important work, should be encouraged and counselled by their superiors, and by all capable of doing it; for it is a very arduous work, and often brings a man into many perplexities and discouragements. —When those who have been hitherto most careless, wicked, and profane, deeply humble themselves before God and return to him by true faith, they may in due time expect great gladness in his ordinances. Their confessions of sin will be made pleasant by the hope of forgiveness, and by that peace and joy which are the sweet fruits of the sanctifying Spirit. They, who taste this happiness in the worship of God, will not speedily grow weary of it, but will be glad to prolong the delightful employment, and must be, as it were, torn away to return to their secular occupations.—When the ignorant, the mean, and the profligate, as well as those of superior stations, become earnest in God's service, Pharisees will either be exasperated or ashamed: and it is happy for themselves and for others, when they are at length brought to true repentance, and fall in with, and help forward, the work of God in their several places. And if numbers of ministers, that have been ungodly and mercenary, become obedient to the faith, we may be sure, that God is powerfully at work, and has much more to do. (*Note, Acts* vi. 7.)—True godliness will be attended with proportionable joy; and numbers met together, to whom the Lord has given one heart to delight in his ordinances, will share and augment each other's rejoicing. But such seasons on earth are transient: trials and conflicts await us after our choicest consolations; yet, these are highly beneficial to us.—The solemn and affectionate benedictions and prayers of the Lord's ministers, by which the people are dismissed from sacred ordinances, are not to be slighted: though spoken on earth, they are heard in heaven, the holy dwelling place of our reconciled God. The intercession of our great High Priest, however, is chiefly to be valued: he never fails to plead for every believer, and he never pleads in vain. A few more interruptions of our joy, by conflicts and temptations, (whilst

NOW [a] when all this was finished, [b] all Israel *that were* * present went out to the cities of Judah, and [c] brake the † images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars, out of all Judah and Benjamin, [d] in Ephraim also and Manasseh, ‡ until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.

2 And Hezekiah appointed [e] the courses of the priests and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt-offerings, and for peace-offerings, to minister, and [f] to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD.

3 *He appointed* also [g] the king's portion of his substance for the burnt-offerings, *to wit* [h] for the morning and evening burnt-offerings, and [i] the burnt-offerings for the sabbaths, and [j] for the new moons, and for [k] the set feasts, as *it is* written in the law of the LORD.

4 Moreover he commanded the people, that dwelt in Jerusalem, to give [l] the portion of the priests and the Levites, [m] that they might be encouraged in [n] the law of the LORD.

5 And [o] as soon as the commandment § came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance [p] the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and ‖ honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all *things* brought they in abundantly.

6 And *concerning* [q] the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in [r] the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid *them* * by heaps.

7 In [s] the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished *them* in the seventh month.

8 And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they

a xxx.
b 1 Kings xviii. 38—40. 2 Kings xxiii. 2—20.
* Heb. *found.* Gen. xix. 15. Esth. iv. 16. *margins.*
c xiv. 3. xxiii. 17. xxxii. 12. xxxiv. 3—7. Ex. xxiii. 24. Deut. vii. 5. 2 Kings xviii. 4.
† Heb. *statues.*
d xxx. 18. xxxiv. 6,7. 2 Kings xvii. 2. xxiii. 15.
‡ Heb. *until to make an end.*
e v. 11. viii. 14. xxiii. 8. 1 Chr. xvi. 37. 40. xxiii. xxiv. xxv. xxvi. Ezra vi. 18. Luke i. 5.
f xxix. 24—26. 1 Chr. xvi. 4—6. 41, 42. xxiii. 30. xxv. 1—3. Neh. xi. 17. Ps. cxxxiv. 1—3. cxxxv. 1—3. 26. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
g xxx. 24. 1 Chr. xxvi. 26. Ez. xlv. 17. xlvi. 4—7. 12—18.
h *See on* Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 3—8.
i *See on* Num. xxviii. 9, 10.
j *See on* Num. xxviii. 11—15.—Num. xxviii. 16—31. xxix. Deut. xvi. 1—17. Ps. lxxxi. 1—4. Col. ii. 16, 17.
k Lev. xxiii. 2, &c.
l 16. Lev. xxvii. 30—33. Num. xviii. 8—21. 26—28. Mal. iii. 8—10.
m Neh. xiii. 10—13. 1 Cor. ix. 10—14
n Mal. ii. 7.
o xxiv. 10, 11. Ex. xxxv. 5. 20—29. xxxvi. 5, 6. 2 Cor. viii. 2—5.
§ Heb. *brake forth.*
p Ex. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 22. 26. Num. xviii. 12. Neh. x. 35—39. xii. 44. xiii. 31. Prov. iii. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Jam. i. 18. Rev. xiv. 4.
‖ Or, *dates.*
q xi. 16, 17.
r Lev. xxvii. 30. Deut. xiv. 28.
* Heb. *heaps, heaps.*
s Lev. xxiii. 16—24.

in him we still have peace,) and we shall be with him to behold his glory: then our worship, our love, and our rejoicing, will be uninterrupted, unalloyed, and eternal.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1. (*Note*, xxx. 14.) Either this destruction of the appendages of idolatry in Israel was confined to those cities and villages, which had come under the dominion of the kings of Judah; or else, Hoshea not objecting to it, the people, in their zeal for the honour of the God of Israel, went into different parts of his kingdom, for this purpose; while the idolaters were intimidated from making any opposition. (*Notes*, xxxiv. 3—7. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 15—20.) When this was done, they returned home: and it is probable that some of the Israelites, who had been at the feast, retired into the land of Judah, during the ravages of Shalmaneser, and so escaped the general ruin. 'They would not return home, till they 'had done all they could to establish and promote true re-'ligion. Of so great import it is (as Pellicanus here ob-'serves) to have a good king, and a well instructed people.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 2. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, xxiii. 11—21, *v.* 18, 19.) David, as a prophet, had made many of these arrangements, to which as king he required the obedience of the priests and Levites. Jehoiada, both as high priest, and as acting in the name of the young king, restored them: but Hezekiah, who was not a prophet or priest, took the lead and gave the directions on this occasion; yet he added nothing to what had before been instituted, and altered nothing in it. "The king's commandment was according "to the word of the Lord." (*Notes*, xxx. 12. 1 *Chr.* xxiii. 2—6. 24—28.)

The tents, &c.] The buildings which surrounded the temple, in which the priests and Levites were stationed, resembled the tents in which soldiers are regularly encamped.

V. 3, 4. The publick sacrifices were generally purchased by contributions from the people: but Hezekiah at this time, chose to be at the expense of them out of his own stated revenue; (*Note*, *Ez.* xlv. 17;) that the people might be the more ready to obey his commandment, in bringing their tithes and first-fruits, according to the law of God, for the maintenance of the priests and Levites. This was intended to encourage the priests and Levites to apply themselves entirely to studying, teaching, and fulfilling the law of the Lord; being assured that their families would not be left destitute. (*Notes*, xxx. 21, 22. *Neh.* xii. 44—47. xiii. 10—13. 1 *Cor.* ix. 7—18.)

V. 5—7. The several productions here mentioned were laid in different heaps, in some convenient place, but not properly guarded or taken care of. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is probable, that some of the first-fruits, tithes, and offerings, were generally sold, and the money reposited in one common stock. 'They began to offer first-fruits in the third 'month when their harvest began, and finished their tith-'ing in the seventh month, when their harvest was ended, '*Ex.* xxiii. 16.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Hezekiah commanded nothing more than what was enjoined by the law: but he used his authority to enforce on the people the requirements of the law, and "the hand of God was to give them one heart to "perform the commandment of the king and of the princes, "by the word of the LORD." (*Note*, xxx. 12.)

V. 8. Hezekiah and his princes commended the libe-

t Gen. xiv. 20. Judg. v. 9. 1 Kings viii. 14, 15. 1 Chr. xxix. 10—20. Ezra vii. 27. 2 Cor. viii. 16. Eph. i. 3. 1 Thes. iii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 3.
u vi. 3. Gen. xiv. 19. 2 Sam. vi. 18. 1 Kings viii. 55, 56.
v xxvi. 17. 1 Kings ii. 35. 1 Chr. vi. 8. 14. Ez. xliv. 15.
x Prov. iii. 9, 10. Hag. ii. 18, 19. Mal. iii. 10, 11. 1 Tim. iv. 8.
y 2 Kings iv. 43, 44. Matt. xv. 37. Phil. iv. 18.
z Gen. xxvi. 12. xxx. 27—30. xxxix. 5. 23. Lev. xxv. 21. xxvi. 4, 5. Deut. xxviii. 8. Prov. x. 22. 2 Cor. ix. 8—11.
* Or, *store-houses.* Neh. x. 38, 39. xiii. 5. 12, 13.

a *See on* 1 Chr. xxvi. 20—26.

1 Heb. *at the hand.*
b 4. 11.—*See on* xxx. 12.
c *See on* 10.—1 Chr. ix. 11. xxiv. 5. Neh. xi. 11.
d 1 Chr. xxvi. 12. 14. 17.
e Lev. xxii. 18. xxiii. 38. Num. xxix. 39. Deut. xii. 6. 17. xvi. 10. Ezra i. 4. iii. 5. vii. 16. Ps. cxix. 108.

t blessed the LORD, u and his people Israel.

9 Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.

10 And v Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, x Since *the people* began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, y we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for z the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left *is* this great store.

11 Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare * chambers in the house of the LORD; and they prepared *them,*

12 And brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated *things* faithfully: a over which Cononiah the Levite *was* ruler, and Shimei his brother *was* the next.

13 And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Asahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, *were* overseers † under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, b at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and c Azariah the ruler of the house of God.

14 And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, d the porter toward the east, *was* over e the free-will offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the LORD, and f the most holy things.

f Lev. ii. 10. vi. 16, 17. vii. 1—6. x. 12, 13. xxvii. 28.

15 And ‡ next him *were* Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in g the cities of the priests, in *their* § set office, to give to their brethren by courses, h as well to the great as to the small:

‡ Heb. *at his hand.* 13. *marg.*
g Josh. xxi. 9—19. 1 Chr. vi. 54—60.
§ Or, *trust.* 1 Chr. ix. 22. *marg.*
h 1 Chr. xxv. 8.

16 Beside their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, *even* unto every one that entereth into the house of the LORD, i his daily portion for their service in their charges, according to their courses;

i Lev. xxi. 22, 23.

17 Both to the k genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from l twenty years old and upward, in their charges, m by their courses;

k Num. iii. 15. 20. iv. 38. 42. 46. xvii. 2, 3. Ezra ii. 59.
l Num. iv. 3. viii. 24. 1 Chr. xxiii. 24. 27.
m *See on* 2.—1 Chr. xxiv. 20—31. xxv. xxvi.

18 And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their ‖ set office n they sanctified themselves in holiness:

‖ Or, *trust.* 15. 1 Chr. ix. 22. *margins.*
n Is. v. 16. Rom. xv. 16.

19 Also of the sons of Aaron the priests, *which were* in o the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, p the men that were expressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.

o 15. Lev. xxv. 34. Num. xxxv. 2—5. 1 Chr. vi. 54. 60.
p 12—15. xxviii. 15.

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rality of the people; they also prayed for them, and gave thanks to the Lord, who had given them the power and inclination to bring such abundance. (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19. 2 *Cor.* viii. 1—5. 16—24. ix. 8—15.) 'They 'gave thanks to God, who had given them such plenty of 'good things, and had likewise given them a heart to offer 'it plentifully.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9, 10. The king and the princes supposed, from the abundance which they beheld, that the priests, who had the superintendence of the business, had preserved the whole; and they enquired, wherefore they had not distributed the oblations of the people. But it was answered, that the Lord had blessed the people with such an abundant increase, that all this was left, after the priests and Levites had been sufficiently provided for! (*Notes, Hag.* i. 5—11. ii. 15—19. *Mal.* iii. 7—12.) The disinterestedness of the priests was highly commendable; for they might easily have enriched themselves, without being suspected: and the whole transaction enlarges our idea of the blessing which had attended the preceding solemnity: for before this, the priests seem to have been generally very careless and ungodly. (*Notes, Mal.* i. 9—14.)—It is probable, that Azariah was the chief priest, under the high priest, and nearly related to him. (13. 1 *Chr.* vi. 13, 14.)

V. 11—14. (*Neh.* x. 37—39. xii. 44. xiii. 5. 9. *Notes,* 1 *Kings* vi. 5, 6. *Neh.* xiii. 10—14.) Hezekiah commanded 'to build new store-houses...; because there was not room 'enough wherein to lay all the offerings and tithes, and 'other dedicated things. As he took care, they should all 'be faithfully laid up, so he set trusty persons to see that 'they were no less faithfully preserved, for their proper 'uses.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 15—19. The priests and Levites, as they attended in their courses, had a certain portion allotted to them, according to their office and charge. The sons of the priests, who attended with them, as it seems, from three years of age, to learn the work of the sanctuary, previously to the time of their officiating, had a provision made for them. A list was taken of the wives, and of the other children, of the priests and Levites, and a proportionable allowance was assigned them: as also to those, who were excluded or excused from attendance; and for all of those who were absent from the temple, employed as magistrates and teachers in their several districts. Thus none appropriated an exorbitant proportion, and none wanted a suitable provision: "for in their set office, they sanctified "themselves in holiness;" they separated themselves from other employments, and devoted themselves to serve God in their proper office, in a holy and believing expectation that he would provide for them; (for so the words seem

20 And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and [q] wrought *that which was* good, and right, and truth, before the LORD his God.

21 And in every work, that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, [r] he did *it* with all his heart, and [s] prospered.

[q] 1 Kings xv. 5. 2 Kings xx. 3. xxii. 2. John i. 47. Acts xxiv. 16. 1 Thes. ii. 10.

[r] Deut. vi. 5. x. 12. 1 Kings ii. 4. 1 Chr. xxii. 19. Ec. ix. 10. Jer. xxix. 13.

[s] xiv. 7. xx. 20. xxvi. 5. Josh. i. 7. 1 Chr. xxii. 13. Ps. i. 3. Matt. vi. 33.

to mean:) nor were they disappointed. And this regular provision kept them from the temptation of entangling themselves in worldly cares and employments, to the neglect of their ministry. 'This seems to be a reason, why 'such care was taken of their wives and children; because 'their husbands were wholly given up to the service of 'God, and could not follow any other employment, where-'by to provide for the maintenance of their families.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Neh.* xiii. 10—13. 2 *Tim.* ii. 3—7.)

V. 20, 21. The general conduct of Hezekiah was good in itself; he acted with equity and impartiality towards all his subjects in these regulations, and strict attention to the laws and institutions previously established. His heart also was upright in the sight of God: and in all that he attempted, to establish the worship of the Lord, and to obey and enforce the observance of his law, seeking his favour and glory, he was earnest and hearty, and single in his aim and dependence; and he was prospered accordingly. What a commendation was this as given by God himself! What a happy instrument was this pious king of good to his people! and what an encouraging and worthy example is this for princes, magistrates, ministers, and Christians to imitate!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The finishing of one duty should form an introduction to the beginning of another; and he, who "delighteth "greatly in God's commandments," will not complain of this as a weariness.—Publick ordinances, and divine consolations, should stir up men to cleanse their hearts, houses, or shops, and every thing in which they are concerned, from the filthiness of sin, and the idolatry of covetousness: and to exhort and excite others to do the same, by every method, consistent with relative duties and the peace of society.—The subsequent improvement of solemn ordinances, is of the greatest importance to personal, family, and publick religion. It is then our business to meditate on, and reduce to practice, what we have learned; to express our pious affections in every kind of good work; and to take care that the vigour of them do not subside, through unwatchfulness, neglect of prayer, or worldly indulgences. Inattention to these duties renders the private conversation and behaviour of most, who profess the gospel, inconsistent with their publick profession, and apparently religious affections: their growth in grace is thus prevented, and religion does not appear so venerable by far as it otherwise would do.—Examples should concur with exhortations or injunctions, whether men act as magistrates or ministers: and this will give them greater effect, in many cases, than menaces, coercive measures, or severe rebukes. Those, who would have others expend their wealth in useful works, ought to take the lead: nay, the easiest method of enforcing the laws, and prevailing with others to pay their dues, is often found to be by receding from personal claims, and joining liberality with justice, in the magistrate's own conduct.—The proper use of superior riches is, to do superior good with them: and if this were generally understood and believed, the most blessed effects would be produced.—Every exercise of human authority in the church of God must be regulated and bounded by his law, and must enforce obedience to it, and not make additions to it, or alterations in it.—While ministers ought to attend upon their proper work, in their several places; they should be encouraged in it, and not constrained or tempted to neglect it, by the want of a suitable maintenance for their families; or made uneasy and distressed in attending on it: nor should any excuse be afforded to those, who by choice leave the word of God for secular engagements.—A man is never impoverished by prudent liberality, in works of piety and charity: indeed, this is the way to ensure the blessing of God on his substance and his labours. (*Marg. Ref.*) And when the portion, which is *due* to the ministers of religion, and to the poor, is conscientiously rendered to them, it shall be recompensed as if it were a free will offering.

V. 11—21.

A proper use of authority, joined with a good example, and convincing arguments, will induce many to do their duty in those things, in which they before were entirely negligent: but, whatever means are used, when men abound in good works, we should bless the Lord for it; and due commendation should not be withheld from them.—Disinterestedness, impartiality, and frugality, are requisite in those who have the management of publick charities, or other publick funds: for when proper care is taken of the sums already contributed, and they are evidently expended for the sole purpose intended, encouragement is given to further contributions.—It would tend greatly to the welfare of the church, if ministers were provided for, with some degree of equality, proportioned to their diligence, their families, and their necessary expenses: and it is a shameful abuse, that funds anciently appropriated for the maintenance of the clergy, are in a great measure applied to aggrandise those who do very little for them; whilst the real labourers in the vineyard are scarcely kept from starving, and leave no provision for their families when taken from them. Legislators should rectify such abuses. But the faithful servant of God needs not be discouraged: let him study to live, and to preach, according to the word of truth, and "give himself wholly" to his work; and let him do it in faith, and the Lord will not suffer him to want; yea, he will provide for his children after him. But all pious men are not able to go on comfortably in this manner; and it is a grievous thing, that their spirits should be depressed, and their hands weakened, in their work, on this account: but it is still far worse, when they are tempted to leave their proper employment, to earn a morsel of bread for their wives and

CHAP. XXXII.

Sennacherib invades Judah; and Hezekiah fortifies Jerusalem, and encourages the people, 1—8. Sennacherib's blasphemous messages and letters, 9—19. Hezekiah and Isaiah pray for deliverance: an angel destroys the Assyrian army; and their king, when returned to Nineveh, is slain by his sons when worshipping his idol, 20, 21. Hezekiah prospers and is renowned, 22, 23. In his sickness he prays, and is miraculously recovered: his heart is lifted up, but he afterwards humbles himself, 24—26. His riches and works, 27—30. His misconduct in respect of the ambassadors from the king of Babylon, 31. He dies, his memory is honoured; and Manasseh succeeds him, 32, 33.

AFTER [a] *these* things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib [b] king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to [*] win them for himself.

2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that [†] he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

3 He [c] took counsel with his princes and his mighty men [d] to stop the waters of the fountains which *were* without the city: and they did help him.

4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and [e] the brook that [‡] ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the [f] kings of Assyria come, and [g] find much water?

5 Also [h] he strengthened himself and built up all the wall [i] *that was* broken, and raised *it* up to the towers, and [k] another wall without, and repaired [l] Millo *in* the city of David, and made [§] darts and shields in abundance.

6 And [m] he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him [n] in the street of the gate of the city, and spake [‖] comfortably to them, saying,

7 Be [o] strong and courageous, [p] be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that *is* with him: [q] for *there be* more with us than with him:

8 With him *is* [r] an arm of flesh; but [s] with us *is* the LORD our God, to help us, and [t] to fight our battles. And the people [*] rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

9 ¶ After this did [u] Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he *himself laid siege* against [x] Lachish, and all his [†] power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto

a xx. 1, 2. 2 Kings xviii. 13. Is. xxxvi. 1, &c.
b 2 Kings xv. 19. xvii. 6. xviii. 11. 19, 20. Is. vii. 17, 18. viii. 6—8. x. 5, 6. Hos. xi. 5.
* Heb. *break them up.* Is. x. 7—11. xxxvii. 24, 25. Mic. ii. 13.
† Heb. *his face was to war.* 2 Kings xii. 17. Luke ix. 51. 53.
c xxx. 2. 2 Kings xviii. 20. Prov. xv. 22. xx. 18. xxiv. 6. Is. xl. 13. Rom. xi. 34.
d 2 Kings xx. 20. Is. xxii. 8—11
e 30. xxx. 14.
‡ Heb. *overflowed.*
f *See on* 1.—2 Kings xviii. 9. 13. xix. 17. Is. x. 8.
g 2 Kings iii. 9. 16, 17. xix. 21.
h xii. 1. xiv. 5—7. xvii. 1, 2. xxiii. 1. xxvi. 8. Is. xxii. 9, 10.
i xxv. 23.
k 2 Kings xxv. 4. Jer. xxxix. 4.
l Judg. ix. 6. 2 Sam. v. 9. 1 Kings ix. 24. xi. 27. 2 Kings xii. 20.
§ Or, *swords*, or *weapons*. xxvi. 14, 15.
m xvii. 24—19. 1 Chr. xxvii. 3, 4, &c.
n Ezra x. 9. Neh. viii. 1—3. 16.
‖ Heb. *to their heart.* xxx. 22. Gen. xxxiv. 3. Is. xl. 2. *marg.*
o Deut. xxxi. 6, 7. 23. Josh. i. 6—9. 1 Chr. xxviii. 10. 20. Is. xxxv. 4. Dan. x. 19. Zech. viii. 9. 23. Eph. vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
p xx. 15. 2 Kings xviii. 30. xix. 6, 7.
q 2 Kings vi. 16. Rom. viii. 31. 1 John iv. 4.
r Job xl. 9. Jer. xvii. 5.
s xiii. 12. xiv. 11. Ps. xlvi. 7. 11. Is. viii. 10. xli. 10. Acts xviii. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 22.
t xx. 15. Deut. xx. 1. 4. Josh. x. 42.
* Heb. *leaned.* 15. xx. 20. Is. xxxvi. 18.
B. C. 710.
u *See on* 2 Kings xviii. 17. Is. xxxvi. 2.
x Josh. x. 31. xii. 11. xv. 39. Is. xxxvii. 8. Mic. i. 13.
† Heb. *dominion.*

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children. May the Lord raise up in every nation zealous men, who in such matters, and in all others, will "work "that which is good, and right, and truth, before the "LORD;" and who will do their utmost, "with all their "hearts in the service of the house of God, and in the law, "and in the commandments," to seek the honour of the Lord!—Whether we have few or many talents, may we thus improve them, and encourage others to do the same: we shall then assuredly be prospered in some measure; and shall obtain that "honour which cometh from God," being graciously addressed by him with, "Well done, "good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy "Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. Most of the transactions, recorded in the preceding chapters, took place in the first year of Hezekiah's reign: and from that time he proceeded to establish and complete his reformation, without any very memorable occurrences, till his fourteenth year, in which Sennacherib's first invasion occurred. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 13—16.)

V. 3, 4. (*Marg. Ref.*) The brook, here mentioned, is supposed to have been Kidron, or Cedron, called also "the upper water-course of Gihon" (30). Through subterraneous or concealed channels, Hezekiah brought the waters of this rivulet into the city, to supply certain pools there formed for the use of the inhabitants. Or, by some means, he turned or concealed the course of it, in order that the Assyrians might be distressed for water, if they undertook the siege of Jerusalem.—"The kings of Assyria" had, during several successions, been formidable enemies to Israel and Judah: and this measure was intended, not only for a present defence against Sennacherib, but also as a security against future invasions of him or his successors. (*Note, Is.* xxii. 8—14.)

V. 5—8. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xx. 14—19. 2 *Kings* vi. 15—17. 1 *John* iv. 4—6.) These measures seem to have been adopted, and this most encouraging exhortation given, at the approach of Sennacherib's first invasion: and the people in general had a strong confidence, that the Lord would deliver them according to the word of Hezekiah. 'They relied on what he said, as if it had been spoken to 'them by God himself.' *Bp. Patrick.* Some, however, seem to have confided rather in their fortifications.—Yet Hezekiah himself was afterwards induced to submit to Sennacherib, and pay him tribute; on this he departed, but not long after he renewed his attempts. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 13—16.)

V. 9—16. *Notes*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 17—25.—*That ye abide*

all Judah that *were* at Jerusalem, saying,

10 [y] Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the [*] siege in Jerusalem?

11 Doth not Hezekiah persuade you [z] to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, [a] The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

12 [b] Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, [c] Ye shall worship before [d] one altar, and burn incense upon it?

13 Know ye not what [e] I and my fathers have done unto all the people of *other* lands? [f] were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand?

14 Who *was there* [g] among all the gods of those nations, that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that [h] your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?

15 Now therefore let not Hezekiah [i] deceive you, nor [k] persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how [l] much less shall your God deliver you of mine hand?

16 And his servants spake [m] yet *more* against the LORD God, and [n] against his servant Hezekiah.

17 He [o] wrote also letters [p] to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, [q] As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.

18 Then [r] they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that *were* on the wall, [s] to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.

19 And they [t] spake against [u] the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* [x] the work of the hands of man.

20 And for this *cause* [y] Hezekiah the king, and [z] the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, [a] prayed and cried to heaven.

21 And [b] the LORD sent an [c] angel, which [d] cut off all the mighty men of valour, and [e] the leaders and captains, in the camp of the king of Assyria: so he returned [f] with shame of face to his own land. And when [g] he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels, [†] slew him there with the sword.

22 Thus [h] the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*, and [i] guided them on every side.

23 And many brought [k] gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, [l] and [‡] presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that [m] he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.

24 ¶ In those days [n] Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he [§] gave him a sign.

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y See on 2 Kings xviii. 19. Is. xxxvi. 4.
* Heb. *strong-hold.*
z See on 2 Kings xviii. 27. Is. xxxvi. 12. 18.
a 15. 2 Kings xix. 10. Ps. iii. 2. xi. 1—3. xxii. 8. xlii. 10. lxxi. 11. Matt. xxvii. 43.
b See on xxxi. 1. 2 Kings xviii. 4. 22. Is. xxxvi. 7.
c See on Deut. xii. 13, 14. 26, 27.
d iv. 1. Ex. xxvii. 1—8. xxx. 1—6. xl. 26—29. 1 Kings vii. 48.
e 2 Kings xv. 29. xvii. 5, 6. xix. 11—13. 17, 18. Is. x. 9, 10. xxxvii. 12, 13. 18—20. Dan. iv. 30, 37.
f See on 19. 2 Kings xviii. 33—35. xix. 18, 19.—Ps. cxv. 3—8. Is. xliv. 8—10. Jer. x. 11, 12. 16. Acts xix. 26. 1 Cor. viii. 4.
g See on Is. x. 11, 12.
h Ex. xiv. 3. xv. 9—11. Is. xlii. 8.
i See on 2 Kings xviii. 29. xix. 10.
k 11. 1 Kings xxii. 22. Is. xxxvi. 18. Acts xix. 26. Gal. i. 10.
l Ex. v. 2. Dan. iii. 15. John xix. 10, 11.
m Job xv. 25, 26. Ps. lxxiii. 9.
n John xv. 21.
o See on 2 Kings xix. 14. Neh. vi. 5. Is. xxxvii. 14.
p See on 2 Kings xix. 22. 28. Is. x. 15. xxxvii. 23, 24. 28, 29. Rev. xiii. 6.
q 2 Kings xix. 12.
r 2 Kings xviii. 26—28. Is. xxxvi. 13.
s 1 Sam. xvii. 10. 26. Neh. vi. 9.
t See on 13—17.
u vi. 6. Ps. lxxvi. 1, 2. lxxviii. 68. lxxxvii. 1—3. cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xiv. 32. Heb. xii. 22.
x Deut. iv. 28. xxvii. 15. 2 Kings xix. 18. Ps. cxxxv. 15—18. Is. ii. 8. xxxvii. 19. xliv. 16—20. Jer. i. 16. x. 3. 9. xxxii. 30. Hos. viii. 5, 6.
y See on 2 Kings xix. 14—19. Is. xxxvii. 14—20.
z 2 Kings xix. 2—4. Is. xxxvii. 2—4.
a xiv. 11. xx. 6—12. Ps. l. 15. xci. 15.
b See on 2 Kings xix. 20. 35. Is. xxxvii. 21. 36, 37.
c 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Matt. xiii. 49, 50. Acts xii. 23.
d Job ix. 4. Ps. lxxvi. 5. 7. 12.
e Is. x. 8. 16—19. 33, 34. xvii. 12—14. xxix. 5—8. xxx. 30—33. xxxiii. 10—12. xxxvi. 9. Rev. vi. 15, 16. xix. 17, 18.
f Ps. cxxxii. 18. Prov. xi. 2. xvi. 18.
g See on 2 Kings xix. 36, 37. Is. xxxvii. 37, 38.
† Heb. *made him fall.*
h Ps. xviii. 48—50. cxliv. 10. Is. x. 24, 25. xxxi. 4, 5. xxxiii. 22.
i Ps. xlviii. 14. lxxiii. 24. Is. lviii. 11. John xvi. 13. 2 Thes. iii. 5.
k 2 Sam. viii. 10, 11. Ezra vii. 15—22. 27. Ps. lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10. Is. lx. 7—9. Matt. ii. 11.
l xvii. 11. 1 Kings iv. 21. x. 10. 25.
‡ Heb. *precious things.* ix. 9, 10. 24.
m i. 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 25.
B. C. 718.
n See on 2 Kings xx. 1—3. Is. xxxviii. 1—3.
§ Or, *wrought a miracle for him.* See on 2 Kings xx. 4—11. Is. xxxviii. 4—8. 21, 22.

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in the siege, &c. (10) Or "in the strong-hold in Jerusa-"lem." *Marg.*—*How much less*, &c. (15) This haughty conqueror supposed that JEHOVAH was even inferior to the gods of the nations! Probably he grounded this notion on the inferiority of Judah, in extent and population, to many of the kingdoms which he had subdued; especially as he was master of almost the whole land already.—'If 'the LORD had a mind to help them, he would have them 'believe, that he was not able;' because no gods had been 'able to deliver those that worshipped them, from his 'power.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17—22. *Notes, 2 Kings* xviii. 26—35. xix.—*God of Jerusalem.* (19) Sennacherib called JEHOVAH "the God "of Jerusalem," either because that city alone remained in the hands of his worshippers; or because Hezekiah, by abolishing the high places, seemed to have confined to Jerusalem alone, the worship of his God, which before had been spread over the land.

V. 23. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Is.* lx. 4—9.

V. 24—26. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xx. *Is.* xxxviii. xxxix.) These events are supposed, by many learned men, to have been previous to Sennacherib's first invasion, as evidently occurring in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. (*Note, 2 Kings* xviii. 13. xx. 1.)—The princes and the people of Judah, as well as the king, had been very ungrateful for their many mercies: and when "Hezekiah "was humbled for the pride of his heart," and had received Isaiah's alarming message, it is probable he made

25 But Hezekiah [o] rendered not again, according to the benefit *done* unto him; for [p] his heart was lifted up: [q] therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.

26 Notwithstanding [r] Hezekiah humbled himself for the [*] pride of his heart, *both* he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them [s] in the days of Hezekiah.

27 ¶ And Hezekiah had [t] exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself [u] treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of [†] pleasant jewels;

28 [x] Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and [y] stalls for all manner of beasts, and [z] cotes for flocks.

29 Moreover he provided him cities, and [a] possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for [b] God had given him substance very much.

30 This same Hezekiah also [c] stopped the upper water-course of [d] Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. [e] And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

31 Howbeit [f] in *the business of* the [‡] ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of [g] the wonder that was *done* in the land, God [h] left him [i] to try him, [k] that he might know all *that was* in his heart.

32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his [§] goodness, behold they *are* written [l] in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, *and* [m] in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

33 And Hezekiah [n] slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the [‖] chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem [o] did him honour at his death. [p] And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

o Deut. xxxii. 6. Ps. cxvi. 12, 13. Hos. xiv. 2. Luke xvii. 17, 18.
p 2 Ki. xxv. 19. xxvi. 16. Deut. viii. 12—14. 17. 2 Kings xiv. 10. xx. 13. Ez. xxviii. 2, 5. 17. Dan. v. 20. 23. Hab. ii. 4. 2 Cor. xii. 7. 1 Tim. iii. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.
q xxiv. 18. *See on* 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 10—17. 1 Chr. xxi. 1. 12—17.
r xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. xxxiv. 27. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. 2 Kings xx. 19. Jer. xxvi. 18, 19. Jam. iv. 10.
* Heb. *lifting up.*
s xxxiv. 27, 28. 1 Kings xxi. 29. —*See on* 2 Kings xx. 16—18. Is. xxxix. 6—8.
B. C. 700.
t i. 12. ix. 27. xvii. 5.
u 1 Chr. xxvii. 25, &c.
† Heb. *instruments of desire.*
x xxvi. 10.
y 1 Kings iv. 26.
z 2 Sam. vii. 8.
a xxvi. 10. Gen. xiii. 2—6. 1 Chr. xxvii. 29—31. Job i. 3. xlii. 12.
b xxv. 9. Deut. viii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 12. Prov. x. 22. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.
B. C. 712.
c *See on* 4.—Is. xxii. 9—11.
d 1 Kings i. 33. 38. 45.
e Josh. i. 7, 8. Ps. i. 1—3.
f 2 Kings xx. 12, 13. Is. xxxix. 1, 2.
‡ Heb. *interpreters.*
g 2 Kings xx. 8—11. Is. xxxviii. 8.
h Judg. xvi. 20. Ps. xxvii. 9. li. 11, 12. cxix. 116, 117. John xv. 5.
i Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. viii. 16. Job i. 11, 12. ii. 3—6. Ps. cxxxix. 1, 2. 23, 24. Prov. xvii. 3. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 7.
k Deut. viii. 2. xiii. 3.
§ Heb. *kindnesses.* xxxi. 20, 21.
l Is. xxxvi.—xxxix.
m 2 Kings xviii.—xx.
B. C. 698.
n *See on* 1 Kings i. 21. ii. 10. xi. 43.
‖ Or, *highest.*
o xvi. 14. Gen. l. 10, 11. Num. xx. 29. Deut. xxxiv. 8. 1 Sam. xi. 20. xxv. 1. Prov. x. 7.
p *See on* xxxiii. 1, &c.

open confession of his offence, and called upon the people to join with him in solemn humiliation and prayer on that account. It may, however, be doubted, whether the ambassadors from the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem before Sennacherib's last invasion of the land; as the treasures, which Hezekiah shewed them, seem to have been obtained by the result of that invasion, and the presents, which were afterwards brought to him. (*Note*, 27—29.)—This chapter is in great measure an abridgment of those chapters in the Second of Kings, and in the prophecy of Isaiah, which are referred to.—*Gave him a sign.* (24) Or, "wrought a miracle for him." *Marg.*

V. 27—29. The riches, here spoken of, seem to have arisen, in great measure, from the immense spoil found in the Assyrian camp. (*Notes, Is.* xxxiii. 2—6. 23, 24.) *Storehouses*, &c. (28) (*Notes*, xxvi. 10. 1 *Chr.* xxvii. 25—31. *Job* i. 2, 3, *v.* 3. xlii. 10—17, *v.* 12. *Prov.* xxvii. 23—27. *Ec*, v. 9—12.

V. 30—33. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 3, 4, *v.* 4.—2 *Kings* xx. 20, 21.—*The princes.* (31) "The princes of Babylon sent to "enquire of the wonder that had been done in the land:" but it is not certain, that the Chaldeans observed any change in the motion of the heavenly bodies. The report of the miracles which attended Hezekiah's recovery, might suffice for that purpose. Yet, in Isaiah it is said, "The "sun returned, &c." (*Note, Is.* xxxviii. 8.)—The Lord on this occasion withdrew from Hezekiah the immediate efficacy of his grace, and left him to follow the dictates of his own natural propensity, "to try him, that he might "know all that was in his heart." The omniscient God before knew the whole; but, having by the trial made the ease evident, he thus pointed it out to Hezekiah, and to all succeeding ages, for their humiliation, warning, and instruction. (*Notes, Deut.* viii. 2, 3.) For it hence appears undeniable, that the best of men, if left to themselves, are prone to pride and ostentation, to idolize themselves and their fellow creatures, to withdraw their dependence from God, to rob him of his glory, and to be ungrateful for his mercies. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 7—10.) 'God suffered him to behave according to his own inclinations, without any special motion from him; that 'Hezekiah might know, he was not so strong as he 'imagined, if he were left to himself without God. ... 'God made proof of Hezekiah, as he had done of many 'other good men, whether he would entirely obey him or 'not. ... God no doubt ... saw the pride and vanity that 'lurked in Hezekiah's heart; which was hid from every 'one but God himself, who now suffered him to discover 'it for his humiliation.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*They buried*, &c. (33) *Notes*, xvi. 13, 14. xxi. 18—20. xxiv. 15, 16.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—23.

Satan and his emissaries are most eager to give us disturbance, when we are most usefully employed: but God restrains them, till he sees it needful to correct our misconduct, or to try our faith and constancy, and then they are permitted, under certain restrictions, to assault us.—It is very lawful and proper to employ prudent precautions and means of defence; and to be united and vigorous in every adviseable measure, when there is a prospect of danger or difficulty: but it is seldom that men *attend* to these things, without *confiding* in them. We should therefore encourage ourselves and each other, to trust wholly in

CHAP. XXXIII.

Manasseh reigns long, is very wicked, multiplies idolatries, corrupts the people, and rejects the admonitions of God, 1—10. He is carried captive to Babylon; he humbles himself greatly before God, with earnest and fervent prayer; and is restored to his kingdom, 11—13. He fortifies his dominions, and restores the worship of God, 14—17. His acts and prayers, 18, 19. He dies, and Amon succeeds, who reigns wickedly, and is murdered, 20—24. The people slay the murderers, and make Josiah king, 25.

[a] MANASSEH *was* [b] twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem;

2 But did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [c] like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

3 For [d] he [*] built again the high places [e] which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and [f] he reared up altars for Baalim, and [g] made groves, and worshipped all [h] the host of heaven, and served them.

4 Also [i] he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, [k] In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.

5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven, [l] in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

6 And he [m] caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also [n] he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and [o] dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

7 And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, [p] in the house of God, of which [q] God had said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, [r] which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

[a] xxxii. 33. 2 Kings xxi. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 13. Matt. i. 10. *Manasses.*
[b] xxxiv. 1, 2. Ec. x. 16. Is. iii. 4. 12.
[c] xxviii. 3. xxxvi. 14. Lev. xviii. 24—30. xx. 22, 23. Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 9—14. 2 Kings xvii. 11. 15. xxi. 2. 9. Ezra ix. 14. Ps. cvi. 35—40. Ez. xi. 12.
[d] Ec. ii. 19. ix. 18.
[*] Heb. *returned and built.*
[e] xxx. 14. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 12. 2 Kings xviii. 4. xxi. 3.
[f] xxviii. 2—4. Judg. ii. 11—13.
[g] Deut. xvi. 21. 1 Kings xiv. 23. Jer. xvii. 2.
[h] Deut. iv. 19. xvii. 3. 2 Kings xxiii. 5. 6. 11. Jer. viii. 2. xix. 13. Zeph. i. 5. Acts vii. 42.
[i] 15. xxxiv. 3, 4. 2 Kings xxi. 4, 5. Jer. vii. 30.
[k] vi. 6. vii. 16. xxxii. 19. Deut. xii. 11. 1 Kings viii. 29. ix. 3.
[l] iv. 9. Jer. xxxii. 34, 35. Ez. viii. 7—18.
[m] xxviii. 3. Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2. Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 10. 2 Kings xxi. 6. xxiii. 10. Jer. vii. 31, 32. Ez. xxiii. 37. 39.
[n] Lev. xix. 26. xx. 6. Deut. xviii. 10—14. 1 Sam. xv. 23. 2 Kings xvii. 17. Is. xlvii. 9—12. Gal. v. 20.
[o] 2 Kings xxi. 6. xxiii. 24. 1 Chr. x. 13. Is. viii. 19. xix. 3.
[p] 2 Kings xxi. 7. 8. xxiii. 6.
[q] *See on* 4.—1 Kings viii. 29. Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.
[r] vi. 6. 1 Kings viii. 44. 48. xi. 13. 32. Ps. lxxviii. 68.

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the Lord: and if he is for us, there will be more with us than with our foes; should all the men on earth, and all the legions of fallen angels, combine and actually approach to assault us. What need then have we to fear the strongest arm of flesh, when we have the "LORD our "God to help us, and to fight our battles?" These are words, that may safely be rested upon, by all who "repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." Yet such a confidence will excite the contempt and reviling of idolaters, infidels, and other proud, ungodly men: those who venture to do their duty, in defiance of the persecuting rage of some powerful king, professing to rely on the Lord of hosts, will be deemed obstinate and infatuated: and in various difficulties, it will be enquired, whether "they will be persuaded to give themselves over "to die by famine and thirst." The more undaunted any one is, while trusting the Lord in the path of duty, the more will some impious wretches rail, blaspheme, menace, boast, and triumph; especially when grown insolent by success, and intoxicated with absolute authority. But let the oppressed and insulted believer pray earnestly to the Lord, that he may not be driven from his confidence. In due time it will appear, that "none ever hardened himself against God and prospered;" and that none were ever confounded who put their trust in him. For, as the power and justice of God are displayed in the destruction of his enemies; so, his rich and free mercy are glorified in the salvation of his people.

V. 24—33.

Alas! how seldom do we in any good degree render to the Lord according to his benefits! None, who know themselves, and watch over their own hearts, will venture to cast a stone at Hezekiah; but they will all, one by one, depart convicted in their consciences of similar guilt, and crying out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"—If we be not left to expose our foolish and wicked pride before the world, the Lord sees and abhors the risings of it in our hearts, and might justly pour out his wrath upon us: yet, if humbled for this pride of our heart, he will forgive us and continue to bless us. But we ought to watch and pray always, that we may not "enter into temptation," and that God would not leave us to ourselves: we ought to repress every vain-glorious thought, and to welcome even afflictions and severe rebukes, and painful conflicts and temptations, when they keep us from being "exalted "above measure." Blessed be God, death will soon end the believer's conflict; then every sin will be abolished, and he may safely be trusted with the most glorious exaltation and uninterrupted felicity; and will no more, to all eternity, be tempted to intercept the least mite of that revenue of praise, which belongs to the God of his salvation.—While we are here, we ought to honour those to whom honour is due, though they be far from perfect: and we may well respect the memories, and should imitate the example, of those who have been pious and useful in their generation: for, a short time may perhaps awfully convince survivors, that the loss of them was far greater, than at first could be at all supposed.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1—5. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxi. 1—5.) Perhaps Hezekiah named his son Manasseh from the circumstance, that many of the tribe of Manasseh, had come at his invitation, to attend the passover. (*Note,* xxx. 11.)

V. 6—8. Manasseh 'seems to have studied to find out 'what God had forbidden in his law, that he might prac-

8 Neither [s] will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land, which I have appointed for your fathers; [t] so that they will take heed [u] to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances [x] by the hand of Moses.

9 So Manasseh [y] made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, *and* [z] to do worse than [a] the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 And [b] the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.

11 Wherefore [c] the LORD brought upon them [d] the captains of the host [*] of [e] the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh [f] among the thorns, and [g] bound him with [†] fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

12 And [h] when he was in affliction, [i] he besought [k] the LORD his God, [l] and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,

13 And prayed unto him: and [m] he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and [n] brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh [o] knew that the LORD he *was* God.

s *See on* 2 Sam. vii. 10. 1 Chr. xvii. 9.
t *See on* vii. 17—22. Deut. xxviii. 1—14. xxx. 15—20. Is. i. 19, 20. Ez. xxxiii. 25, 26.
u Deut. iv. 40. v. 1. 31—33. vi. 1. viii. 1. xxvii. 26. Luke i. 6. Gal. iii. 10—13.
x *See on* Lev. viii. 36. x. 11.
y 1 Kings xiv. 16. xv. 26. 2 Kings xxi. 16. xxiii. 26. xxiv. 3, 4. Prov. xxix. 12. Mic. vi. 16.
z *See on* 2. 2 Kings xxi. 9—11.—Ez. xvi. 45—47.
a Lev. xviii. 24. Deut. ii. 21. Josh. xxiv. 8. 2 Kings xvii. 8—11.
b xxxvi. 15, 16. Neh. ix. 29, 30. Jer. xxv. 4—7. xliv. 4, 5. Zech. i. 4. Acts vii. 51, 52.
c Deut. xxviii. 36.
d Is. x. 8. xxxvi. 9.
* Heb. *which were the king's.*
e Neh. ix. 32. 37. Is. v. 26—30. vii. 18—20.
f 1 Sam. xiii. 6.
g 2 Kings xxiii. 33. xxv. 6. Job xxxvi. 8—11. Ps. cvii. 10—12.
† Or, *chains.*
h xxviii. 22. Lev. xxvi. 39—42. Deut. iv. 30, 31. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Hos. v. 15. Mic. vi. 9. Luke xv. 16—18.
i 18, 19. Ps. l. 15. Acts ix. 11.
k *See on* xxviii. 5.
l 19. 23. xxxii. 26. Ex. x. 3. Luke xviii. 14. 15. Jam. iv. 10. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.
m Ezra viii. 23. Job xxii. 23. 27. xxxiii. 16—30. Ps. xxxii. 3—5. lxxvi. 5. Is. lv. 6—9. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Luke xxiii. 42, 43. John iv. 10.
n Ezra vii. 27. Prov. xvi. 7. xxi. 1. Matt. vi. 33.
o Deut. xxix. 6. Ps. xlvi. 10. Jer. xxiv. 7. Dan. iv. 34, 35. John xvii. 3. Heb. viii. 11.

'tise it.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxi. 6—8.)—*A carved image, the idol,* &c. (7) "A graven image of the "grove," 2 *Kings* xxi. 7.

V. 9, 10. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxi. 9, 10.) 'A most prodi-'gious change from the height of piety in his father's time, 'into the sink of impiety in this! ... Victorinus Strigelius, '... professor of theology at Heidelberg, left this remark 'in his lectures on this place, near an hundred and forty 'years ago:' (that is, soon after the establishment of the reformation in Germany:)—"'Now we have the word of "'God abundantly in all wisdom, and pious princes pa-"'tronize both those that preach, and those that learn the "'gospel. But this plenty of the word we now enjoy, (I "'tremble to speak it, but I must speak it, because it will "'come to pass,) shall be taken away: and that sad "'mournful time will come, when the publick assemblies "'of the church shall be scattered, and a few pious souls "'shall meet with fear in a corner, to communicate among "'themselves the fragments of the heavenly doctrine, and "'give God thanks for these remainders.' Which we 'have seen fulfilled in that country, and in France, and 'other places.' *Bp. Patrick.*—This apparent prophecy seems to have been merely a presage grounded on the vicissitudes of things, especially in respect of religion, and the tendency of prosperity to induce carnal security.

V. 11. There is not the least intimation, in the Second Book of Kings, either of Manasseh's captivity, or of his repentance: and it might have been concluded from the narrative there given, that he persevered in his career of impiety and iniquity, with impunity, till his death. Here, however, we find a most instructive view of his latter years; and this very man became as eminent an instance of the power, riches, and freeness of divine mercy and grace, as any recorded in the scripture.—When he and his people had long disregarded the admonitions of the prophets, and added persecutions, and multiplied murders, to their other crimes; (9, 10. *Notes, 2 Kings* xxi. 16. xxiii. 26, 27;) "the LORD brought upon them the captains of the "host of the king of Assyria." We are not informed what devastations these invaders made in Judah and Jerusalem: but Manasseh, being either vanquished or intimidated, attempted to conceal himself in a thicket; where, being discovered, he was taken prisoner, loaded with fetters, and sent to Babylon. God, in his providence, gave the Assyrians the power and opportunity of making this invasion, and he left them to follow their own ambition, or other worldly motives; and he also gave them success, in order to chastise Manasseh's enormous wickedness.—Many suppose, that Esar-haddon, having got possession of Babylon, and entirely changed the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, about the same time sent to invade Judah, and carried Manasseh captive to Babylon, in the twenty-second year of his reign. But the scripture does not mention the date of this event, nor the name of the Assyrian king: and from the scriptural description of Manasseh's reign, as exceedingly wicked, it seems highly improbable, that he lived above thirty years after his repentance and reformation, as upon this supposition he must have done. 'This was three and thirty years before 'his death, as the Jews make account. ... But both Kimchi 'and Abarbinel confess, that this relies upon a weak foun-'dation; as doth the other thing that he was carried away 'in the twenty-second year of his reign.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12, 13. When Manasseh was deprived of his authority and liberty, and secluded from his evil counsellors and companions, and from all his pleasures; in chains, and in a prison; without any other prospect, than of ending his days in that wretched situation; he had leisure to reflect on what had passed. He would then, no doubt, recollect the honour, prosperity, and great deliverances, with which his father had been favoured; his own good education, with the instructions and warnings of the prophets; and his atrocious, multiplied, and daring crimes: and he would remember that his miseries had been foretold by his faithful monitors. Thus, by the special grace of God, his solitude and affliction brought him to view his own conduct and character in another light than he had done before; and he began to pray for mercy and deliverance, "humbling himself greatly before the God of his fathers." (*Note, Luke* xv. 17—19.) He confessed his sins, condemned himself, and was covered with shame before God, abhorring his crimes, and loathing himself for them, as guilty of most aggravated ingratitude, impiety, and iniquity; yet still hoping to be pardoned, through the abundant

14 ¶ Now after this [p] he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of [q] Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at [r] the fish-gate, and compassed about [*] Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and [s] put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.

15 And [t] he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast *them* out of the city.

16 And he [u] repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon [v] peace-offerings, and [x] thank-offerings, and [y] commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.

17 Nevertheless [z] the people did sacrifice still in the high places, *yet* unto the LORD their God only.

18 ¶ Now [a] the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and [b] his prayer unto his God, and the words of [c] the seers that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they *are written* [d] in the book of the kings of Israel.

19 [e] His prayer also, and *how God* was intreated of him, and [f] all his sin, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, [g] before he was humbled; behold, they *are* written among the sayings of [†] the seers.

20 So [h] Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and [i] Amon his son reigned in his stead.

21 ¶ Amon *was* two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned [j] two years in Jerusalem.

22 But he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [k] as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them;

23 And [l] humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon [‡] trespassed more and more.

p xxxii. 5.
q xxxii. 30. 1 Kings i. 33. 45.
r Neh. iii. 3. xii. 39. Zeph. i. 10.
* Or, *the tower.* xxvii. 3. Neh. iii. 26, 27.
s xi. 11, 12. xvii. 19.
t *See on* 3—7.—2 Kings xxi. 7. Is. ii. 17—21. Ez. xviii. 20—22. Hos. xiv. 1—3. Matt. iii. 8.
u xxix. 18. 1 Kings xviii. 30.
v Lev. iii. 1, &c.
x Lev. vii. 12—18.
y 9. xiv. 4.—*See on* xxx. 12.—Gen. xviii. 19. Luke xxii. 32.
z xv. 17. xxxii. 12. 1 Kings xxii. 43. 2 Kings xv. 4.
a xx. 34. xxxii. 32. —*See on* 1 Kings xi. 41.
b *See on* 12, 13. 19.
c 10. 1 Sam. ix. 9. 2 Kings xvii. 13. Is. xxix. 10. xxx. 10. Am. vii. 12. Mic. iii. 7.
d *See on* 1 Kings xiv. 19. xv. 31.
e 11, 12. 9. Prov. xv. 8. Acts ix. 11.
f *See on* 1—10.
g *See on* 12.—xxx. 11. xxxvi. 12. Jer. xliv. 10. Dan. v. 22.
† Or, *Hosai.*
h B. C. 642. *See on* xxxii. 33. 2 Kings xxi. 18.
i 2 Kings xxi. 19—25. 1 Chr. iii. 14. Matt. i. 10.
j 1. Luke xii. 19, 20. Jam. iv. 13—15.
k *See on* 1—10. 2 Kings xxi. 1—11. 20.—Ez. xx. 18.
l *See on* 1. 12. 19. —Jer. viii. 12.
‡ Heb. *multiplied trespass.* xxviii. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 13.

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mercy of the Lord, who had always, in the days of his ancestors, shewn himself ready to forgive repenting rebels. These humble supplications the Lord graciously accepted: and he inclined the king of Assyria to liberate his prisoner, and to reinstate him in his authority. "Then Manasseh "knew that the LORD he was God," alone able to punish, or to deliver: he likewise became acquainted with him as a God of salvation; and learned to fear, trust, love, and obey him. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 9.)

V. 14. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 15—17. It is evident, that Manasseh, on his return from Babylon, entirely renounced all idolatry; and set himself to suppress it in his kingdom, to revive the worship of God at the temple, and by his example and authority to prevail with the people to attend on it. These were "fruits meet for repentance."—It has indeed been asserted, that his publick reformation was very imperfect, and that he did not shew the zeal and vigour, which a true penitent ought to have done. It does not however, appear, from this short account, that he was remarkably deficient. He would have done better, if he had demolished the idols, instead of casting them out of the city. But he totally suppressed all open idolatry: and it might arise from other causes than Manasseh's want of zeal, that the high places were not removed. The inveterate habits of the people; the powerful opposition of that party, which had concurred in his former idolatries, and of the nation in general; and the weakness of his authority, through ill success, and the power of the Assyrian monarch; would occasion obstacles, which he might not be able to overcome. (*Notes,* xiv. 2—5. xvii. 6. xx. 31—34, *v.* 33. 1 *Kings* xv. 14.) But there is not the most remote intimation, that God did not accept his endeavours. Yet the opposition or hypocrisy of the people, who had readily concurred in his iniquities, but refused to imitate his repentance, prevented it from being a national blessing; as his crimes had formed and occasioned a load of national sin, "which the LORD would "not pardon." (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxiii. 26, 27. *Jer.* xv. 2—4.)

V. 18, 19. The repeated mention of Manasseh's *prayer,* "and how God was intreated of him," and of his being *humbled,* are well worthy of our notice. This humble, supplicating frame of mind forms, as it were, a crisis in the sinner's case; and from the moment that he is brought into it, he enters upon a new state, and commences a new life, however wicked he before has been. (*Marg. Ref.*) The prayer, contained in the Apocrypha, and ascribed to Manasseh, probably was composed long after: but no doubt he prayed continually and fervently, for all the blessings and mercies which so atrocious a sinner needed; and with particular confessions of his sins, and with all that unstudied copiousness, which a burdened conscience, a broken heart, trembling fears, wavering hopes, and fervent desires, will invariably dictate. (*Notes, Job* xxxiii. 19—30. *Acts* ix. 10—14, *v.* 11.) 'As if he had said, *How he con-* 'tinued to pray till God was intreated of him.' *Bp. Patrick.* —Instead of "the seers" (19), the marginal reading is *Hosai,* and some suppose it to have been the name of a prophet in those days.

V. 20. *Note,* 2 *Kings* xxi. 18.

V. 21—25. (*Note,* 2 *Kings* xxi. 20—24.) As soon as Manasseh was dead, Amon re-established all his father's

m xxiv. 25, 26. xxv. 27, 28. 2 Sam. iv. 5—12. 2 Kings xxi. 23—26. Ps. lv. 23. Rom. xi. 22.

24 And [m] his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

n Gen. ix. 5, 6. Num. xxxv. 31, 33.

25 But the people of the land [n] slew all them that had conspired against king Amon: and [o] the people of the land made [p] Josiah his son king in his stead.

o xxvi. 1. xxxvi. 1.

p See on xxxiv. 1.

idolatries; either bringing back those images which had been thrown aside, or forming others of the same kind. Perhaps he flattered himself, that he too should live many years; and should repent in his old age, if that were necessary, and so at last be saved, as his father was supposed to have been. But whatever warnings or convictions he had, he never "humbled himself" in true repentance; but "trespassed more and more." Or, "This Amon multi-"plied trespass." (*Marg.*) He was therefore soon cut off in his sins, and made an example of just severity; and placed as a beacon, to warn all men, not to draw perverse conclusions from the example of the Lord's patience and mercy to Manasseh, and thus encourage themselves in impenitent wickedness. (*Notes, Dan.* v. 18—24. *P. O.* 18—31. *Luke* xxiii. 39—43.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

It would be extremely distressing to pious parents, magistrates, or ministers, if they could foresee the consequences of their removal, in the conduct of their children or people, and in the subversion of their most important regulations. Yet good instructions and examples may remain, like seed under the ground, for a long time unperceived, and yet at length spring up and bring forth much fruit. Without disquieting ourselves about futurity, we may therefore cheerfully commit our families, and our endeavours to do good, as well as our souls and bodies, into the hand of God, assured that our labours will not prove wholly ineffectual. (*Ps.* xc. 17. *Note, Ec.* ix. 1—3.)—The tendency of human nature to evil is so strong, that nothing but divine grace can give it a contrary bias: and when that power is in any degree suspended or withheld, men return to evil, as a stone falls downwards; and run, with rapid and accelerated motion, continually further and further into transgression. But the Lord notices both the number, the variety, and the aggravations of our offences: and mercies and opportunities ungratefully abused, the truth held in unrighteousness, the seduction or compulsion of others to sin, warnings slighted or despised, and mischief extensively committed, add exceedingly to the heinousness of men's offences. (*Note, Luke* vii. 40—43.) Yet, "where sin hath abounded, grace hath "often much more abounded:" (*Note, Rom.* v. 20, 21:) and some of every description of sinners shall be brought to repentance and salvation, to prove that "with God "nothing is impossible."

V. 11—25.

When the objects of the Lord's special love disregard the rebukes of his word, he will let them feel his chastening rod: and they may truly say, "Before I was afflicted, "I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Adversity, solitude, and sequestration from gay companions, and scenes of business, pleasure, and dissipation, connected with present sufferings and the prospect of death and eternity, cause many to reflect, who in prosperity were careless and presumptuous. The effects of a pious education, or of solid religious instructions, often shew themselves in affliction: the troubles themselves verify the warnings of pious relatives or teachers; and worse things arise before the mind, as the dreaded consequence of continuing in sin. Yet all this would not have an abiding effect, if afflictions were not a 'means of grace,' which God himself uses and blesses, as evidently, as he does those which he commands us to employ for ourselves and for each other. When men are left to themselves, "in their distress they "trespass yet more against the LORD." But when he gives the blessing, the hardest, stoutest, and proudest heart softens, and becomes broken and contrite. His hand should therefore be noticed in all our afflictions; and our prayers presented that they may be sanctified, and converted into blessings to our souls.—Those, who have been most daring in rebellion against God, are sometimes the most cowardly, when assaulted by their fellow-creatures. "In the fear of the LORD, there is strong confidence:" but guilt appals the sinner, and his courage fails him in the hour of danger. There is, however, no possibility of fleeing or hiding ourselves from God: our only hope consists in humbling ourselves before him; and if our distresses and perils induce us to this, they will prove the most effectual means of promoting our felicity.—"The "LORD is rich in mercy; with him there is plenteous re-"demption;" and he so delights in pardoning and saving transgressors, that he permits the vilest to come to his throne of grace. Wherever there is a sinner of whom it can truly be said, "Behold he prayeth," there will the Lord be found a God that heareth prayer. There is indeed immense difficulty in bringing the wicked thus to seek the Lord; but none in prevailing with him, to hear and forgive the returning penitent who calls upon him in truth. (*Notes, Is.* lv. 6—9.) He often answers the mere cry of distress with temporal deliverances; while relapses into former crimes, and perseverance in them, prove that the supplicants were never truly humbled or penitent. But when a sinner in his affliction beseeches the Lord, and "humbles himself greatly before him;" when he condemns himself, ingenuously confesses his sins, and is covered with shame, and melted into godly sorrow; when he renounces all hope but in undeserved mercy, and every plea but in the Redeemer's name, and seeks forgiveness and salvation before all other things; he will assuredly find access and acceptance; and his future life will evince, that his repentance, faith, and love, have united in bringing him to hate and renounce all his sins, and to "walk hence-"forth in newness of life." If it were possible, he would undo his former wicked works, and lead into the ways of truth and peace all those, whom he had before seduced into the paths of sin and ruin: if his former life has been profane or immoral, his future conduct will appear a perfect contrast to it; and he will make an entirely contrary use of his wealth, abilities, or influence, after "he is humbled"

CHAP. XXXIV.

Josiah reigns well, and destroys idolatry both in Judah and Israel, 1—7. He provides for the repair of the temple, 8—13. Hilkiah finds the book of the law, and reads it before the king; who is greatly alarmed, and sends to enquire of God by the prophetess Huldah, 14—22. Huldah predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, but not till after Josiah's death, 23—28. He causes the law to be read in a solemn assembly, and renews the covenant between God and the people, 29—33.

a xxxiii.25.1 Kings xiii. 2. 2 Kings xxii. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 14, 15. *Jer.* i. 2. Zeph. i. 1. Matt. i. 10, 11. *Josias.*

b xxiv. 1. xxvi. 1. xxxiii. 1. 1 Sam. ii. 18. 26. 1 Kings iii. 7—9. Ec. iv. 13.

c xiv. 2. xvii. 3. xxix. 2. 1 Kings xiv. 8. xv. 5. 2 Kings xxii. 2.

d Deut. v. 32. Josh. i. 7. xxiii. 6. Prov. iv. 27.

B. C. 634.

e 1 Chr. xxii. 5. xxix. 1. Ps. cxix. 9. Ec. xii. 1. 2 Tim. iii. 15.

f *See on* 1 Chr. xxviii. 9.—Prov. viii. 17. Matt. vi. 33.

B. C. 630.

g *See on* xxxiii. 17. 22. 2 Kings xxiii. 4. 14.

[a] JOSIAH *was* [b] eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years.

2 And he did *that which was* [c] right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and [d] declined *neither* to the right hand nor to the left.

3 For in the eighth year of his reign, [e] while he was yet young, he began [f] to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year [g] he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from [h] the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.

h xxx. 14. *See on* 2 Kings xviii. 4.

4 And they [i] brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the [*] images that *were* on high above them he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images he brake in pieces, and [k] made dust *of them,* and strowed *it* upon the [†] graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.

i xxxiii. 3. Ex. xxiii. 24. Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. vii. 5. 25.

* *Or, sun images.* xiv. 5. 2 Kings xxiii. 4, 5. 11.

k 7. Ex. xxxii. 20. Deut. ix., 21. 2 Kings xxiii. 12. Ps. xviii. 42. Is. xxvii. 9.

† Heb. *face of the graves.* 2 Kings x. 26, 27. xxiii. 4. 6.

5 And [l] he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and [m] cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.

l 1 Kings xiii. 2. 2 Kings xxiii. 16. Jer. viii. 1, 2.

6 And *so did he* [n] in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their [‡] mattocks round about.

m 7. Num. xxxv. 33. Jer. iii. 10. iv. 14. Ez. xxii. 24.

n xxx. 1. 10, 11. xxxi. 1. 2 Kings xxiii. 15—20.

‡ Or, *mauls.* 1 Sam. xiii. 20, 21. Prov. xxvi. 18. Is. vii. 25.

7 And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had [o] beaten the graven images [§] into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, [p] he returned to Jerusalem.

o *See on* h.—Deut. ix. 21.

§ Heb. *to make powder.*

p xxxi. 1.

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and has begun to pray, to what he did before. (Comp. 3—5. 9. with 15, 16.) Sincere piety, and love to the truths, ordinances, and commandments of God, will be manifest in his subsequent conduct; and he will desire and aim at more than he can accomplish, both in serving God himself, and in attempting to prevail with others to do the same. The blood of Christ cleanses such penitents from all sin: their afflictions will either be sanctified and counterbalanced with comfort, or removed; in due time the Lord will extricate them from all the difficulties, in which their former sins had involved them; and he will be greatly glorified in their repentance, future conduct, and eternal salvation. Let sinners then be willing to know the worst of their case; for it is by no means desperate: let them consider all their pains and sorrows as so many calls to humble themselves before God, to call upon him, and to "acquaint themselves with him, that they may be at peace." And let not the hearts of those, who are thus seeking him, yield to discouragement; but let them humble themselves yet more and more, and "pray always and not faint."—Let pardoned sinners exert themselves to evidence their gratitude, and to glorify the God of their salvation; and let them walk humbly before him, and hope, pray for, and endeavour the conversion of their fellow sinners, not excepting the very worst: "for the things which are impossible with "man, are possible with God."—But, on the other hand, let those, who take encouragement from the gospel presumptuously to expect salvation, without repentance and newness of life, read in Manasseh's deep humiliation, earnest prayers, and consequent newness of life, their own fatal and horrible delusion, who practically say, "Let us "sin on, that grace may abound." Let those who trifle and procrastinate, because a merciful God has long borne with a few most notorious rebels, and at length granted them repentance and forgiveness of sins, meditate upon the example of Amon; and tremble, lest he should make them monuments of his righteous vengeance.—But indeed we have all sinned: let us all then enquire seriously, whether we have been and are deeply humbled, or not: and whether we are pouring out our prayers before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God, day by day, in this self-abased frame of mind: whether we have experienced a change in our judgment, disposition, aim, and general conduct; or whether we still continue unhumbled, impenitent, "trespassing still more and more," and imitating the wickedness, and only the wickedness, of those who are gone before us. The two characters are easily distinguished; and they comprise all mankind, and distinguish between those who are *now* in the broad road to destruction, and those who are in the narrow way of eternal life. May God help us to be honest to ourselves, and to form a just conclusion concerning our own characters, before death (which probably may come much sooner than we expect,) fixes us for ever in an unchangeable state!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1, 2. *Note, 2 Kings* xxii. 1, 2.

V. 3—7. This passage seems a compendious account of Josiah's reformation, perhaps without much respect to the order of time. He began seriously to attend to religious subjects, in the eighth year of his reign. 'He gave 'very early proofs of his pious inclinations; for when he 'was but sixteen years old, and had newly taken on him 'the administration of affairs, he began to worship God 'publickly, and propounded David unto himself for his 'pattern. When he was twenty years old, he began to 'bring others to the true religion, by reforming abuses in 'the worship of God.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Something was at-

B. C. 624.
q Jer. i. 2, 3.

8 ¶ Now in q the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land,

r 2 Kings xxii. 3. 12. 14. Jer. xxvi. 24. xxix. 3. xxxvi. 10. xxxix. 14. xl. 11. Ez. viii. 11.
s Jer. xxi. 1. xxix. 21. 25. xxxvii. 3.
t 2 Sam. viii. 16. xx. 24. 1 Chr. xviii. 15.

and the house, he r sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and s Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the t recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God.

u 14, 15. 18. 20. 22. 2 Kings xxii. 4. xxiii. 4.
x See on xxiv. 11—14. 2 Kings xxii. 5—7. Phil. iv. 8

9 And when they came to u Hilkiah the high priest, x they delivered the money *that was* brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of

y xxx. 10. 18. xxxi. 1.

y Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin; and

z 7.

z they returned to Jerusalem.

a 2 Kings xii. 11, 12. 14. xxii. 5, 6. Ezra iii. 7.

10 And they put *it* a in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the LORD, to repair and mend the house:

11 Even to the artificers and builders gave they *it*, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to * floor the houses which b the kings of Judah had destroyed.

* Or, *rafter.*
b See on xxxiii. 4—7. 22.

c 2 Kings xii. 15. xxii. 7. Neh. vii. 2. Prov. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 2.

12 And the men did the work c faithfully: and the overseers of them *were* Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set *it* forward; and *other of* the Levites,

d 1 Chr. vi. 31, &c. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4, 5. 41, 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1, &c.

d all that could skill of instruments of musick.

e ii. 18. viii. 10. Neh. iv. 10.

13 Also *they were* over e the bearers of burdens, and *were* overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service: and of the Levites *there were* f scribes, and g officers, and h porters.

f Ezra vii. 6. Jer. viii. 8. Matt. xxvi. 3.
g xix. 11. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4. xxvi. 29, 30.
h viii. 14 1 Chr. ix. 17. xv. 18. xvi. 38. 42. xxvi. 1, &c. Ezra vii. 7.

14 ¶ And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, i Hilkiah the priest found a book of k the law of the LORD *given* by † Moses.

i See on 2 Kings xxii. 8.—Deut. xxxi. 24—26.
k xii. 1. xxxi. 4. xxxv. 26. Ezra vii. 10. Ps. i. 2. Is. v. 24. xxx. 9. Jer. viii. 8. Luke ii. 39.
† Heb. *the hand of Moses.* Lev. viii. 36. x. 11. xxvi. 46.

15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan.

16 And l Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to ‡ thy servants, they do *it*.

l See on 2 Kings xxii. 9, 10.
‡ Heb. *the hand of thy.*

17 And m they have § gathered together the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.

m See on 8—10.
§ Heb. *poured out,* or *melted.*

18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. n And Shaphan read ‖ it before the king.

n Deut. xvii. 19. Josh. i. 8. Ps. cxix. 46. 97—99. Jer. xxxvi. 20, 21.
‖ Heb. *in it.*

19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard o the words of the law, p that he rent his clothes.

o Rom. iii. 20. vii. 7—11. Gal. ii. 19. iii. 10—13.
p 2 Kings xix. 1. xxii. 11. 19. Jer. xxxvi. 22—24. Joel ii. 13.

20 And the king commanded Hilkiah, and q Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and r Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and s Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying,

q 2 Kings xxv. 22. Jer. xxvi. 24. xl. 6. 9. 14.
r 2 Kings xxii. 12. *Achbor.* Jer. xxvi. 22.
s 2 Kings xxii. 12. *Asahiah.*

21 Go, t enquire of the LORD for me, and for them u that are left in Israel and

t Ex. xviii. 15. 1 Sam. ix. 9. 1 Kings xxii. 5—7. Jer. xxi. 2. Ez. xiv. 1, &c. xx. 1—7.
u xxviii. 6. xxxiii. 11. 2 Kings xvii. 6, 7. xxii. 13. Is. xxxvii. 2—4. Jer. xlii. 2

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tempted in the twelfth year; (which was before Jeremiah began to prophesy;) but probably not much was effected till the eighteenth. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxii. 3—7. xxiii. 4—23. *Jer.* i. 1—3.) Yet the land was purged from its grosser abominations, before the repairing of the temple: but it is uncertain whether this extended to the land of Israel, or whether that be spoken of by anticipation: but it is plain that Josiah had authority over the country of the ten tribes, and the inhabitants of them.

V. 8—13. 'When he was twenty-six years old he proceeded further, having disposed the people to offer freely toward the reparation of the house of God.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xii. 4—16. xxii. 3—7.) *They returned*, &c. (9) These Levites seem to have gone through the land, soliciting contributions for repairing the temple, even from "the remnant of Israel;" and they returned to Jerusalem when they had completed that business.—The temple began to go to decay during the idolatries of Manasseh: and the wicked reign of Amon, and the long minority of Josiah, rendered it much in need of a thorough repair.

All that could skill, &c. (12) It seems, that the Levites, who attended by courses, in the intervals of their proper work, assisted by turns in superintending the workmen; nor were those excepted who were employed in psalmody: thus they became doubly useful, and saved the expense of other overseers. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxiii. 2—6.)

V. 14—19. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xxii. 8—11.) 'Both priests and people omitting the reading of the law, both publickly and privately, (for the publick omission caused a private neglect,) no wonder, that upon finding the book of the law, and hearing it read, they were startled at it, as if one were risen from the dead.' *Capellus* in *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xvii. 7—9. *Deut.* xvii. 18. xxxi. 10—13. *Josh.* i. 8. viii. 30—35.)

V. 20—28. *Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxii. 12—20. *Jer.* iii. 6—11.

in Judah, concerning the words of the
x Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—29. xxx. 17—19. xxxi. 16—18. xxxii. 15—25. Rom. iv. 15.
book that is found: x for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.

22 And Hilkiah, and *they* that the king *had appointed*, went to Huldah
y Ex. xv. 20. Judg. iv. 4. Luke ii. 41—45. ii. 36. Acts xxi. 9.
z See on 2 Kings xxii. 14. *Harhas*
* Heb. *garments.*
† Or, *school*, or, *second part.*
y the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of z Hasrah, keeper of the * wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the † college;) and they spake to her to that *effect*.

23 And she answered them, Thus
a See on 2 Kings xxii. 15—20.—Jer. xxi. 3—7. xxxvii. 7—10.
saith the LORD God of Israel, a Tell ye the man that sent you to me,

24 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, b I
b xxxvi. 14—20. Josh. xxiii. 16. 2 Kings xxi. 12. xxiii. 26, 27. Is. v. 4—6. Jer. vi. 19. xix. 3. 15. xxxv. 17. xxxvi. 31.
c See on 21.
will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* c all the curses that are written in the book, which they have read before the king of Judah:

25 Because d they have forsaken me,
d See on xii. 2. xv. 2. xxxiii. 3—9. — 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4. Is. ii. 8, 9. Jer. xv. 1—4.
and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore e my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and f shall not be quenched.

e Is. xlii. 25. Jer. vii. 20. Lam. ii. 4. iv. 11. Nah. i. 6. Rev. xiv. 10, 11.
f 2 Kings xxii. 17. —See on Jer. iv. 4. vii. 20.—Ez. xx. 48. Mark ix. 43—48
26 And g as for the king of Judah,
g 21. 23.
who sent you to enquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *concerning* the words which thou hast heard;

27 Because h thine heart was tender,
h See on 2 Kings xxii. 18, 19.—Ps. xxxiv. 18. li. 17. Is. lvii. 15. lxvi. 2. Ez. ix. 4. xxxvi. 26.
i See on xxxii. 26. xxxiii. 12. 19.—Jam. iv. 6—10.
and thou didst i humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and k didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I
k See on 19.—Jer. xxxvi. 23, 24.
have even heard *thee* also, saith the LORD.

28 Behold l I will gather thee to thy
l xxxv 24. See on 2 Kings xxii. 20.—Is. lvii. 1, 2. Jer. xv. 1. Ez. xiv. 14—21.
fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave m in peace, n neither shall
m Ps. xxxvii. 37
n 1 Kings xxi. 29. 2 Kings xx. 19. Is. xxxix. 8.
thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.

29 ¶ Then o the king sent, and p ga-
o 1 Sam. xii. 28. 1 Chr. xxix. 2. &c. Mark xiv. 8.
p xxx. 2. 2 Kings xxiii. 1—3.
thered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

30 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, r great and small: and q he read in their ears all the words of r the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD.
r Heb. *from great even to small.* xv. 12, 13. xviii. 30. Deut. i. 17. Job iii. 19.
q vi. 1, &c. xvii. 7—9. Deut. xvii. 18—20. Neh. viii. 2—5. Ec. i. 12. xii. 9, 10.

31 And the king stood s in his place,
r 15, 18, 19. 24. Ex. xxiv. 7. 2 Kings xxiii. 2. 21. Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.
s vi. 13. 2 Kings xi. 14. xxiii. 3. Ez. xlvi. 2.
and t made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, u with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant *which are* written in this book.
t xxiii. 16. xxix. 10. Ex. xxiv. 6—8. Deut. xxix. 1. 10—15. Josh. xxiv. 25. Neh. ix. 38. x. 29. Jer. l. 5. Heb. viii. 6—13.

32 And x he caused all *that were*
u xv. 12. 15. See on xxxi. 21.—Deut. vi. 5. Luke x. 27—29.
x xiv. 4. xxx. 12. xxxiii. 16. Gen. xviii. 19. Ex. viii. 2.
y present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand *to it*. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem y did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.
y Heb. *found.* xxix. 29. Jer. iii. 10.

33 And Josiah z took away all a the
z See on 3—7. 2 Kings xxiii. 4—20.
a See on 1 Kings xi. 5—7.
abominations out of all the countries that *pertained* to the children of Israel, and made all *that were* present in Israel to serve, *even* to serve the LORD their God. *And* b all his days they departed not l from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.
b Josh. xxiv. 31.
l Heb. *from after.*

—*All the curses*, &c. (24) This confirms the opinion, that the twenty-seventh, and following chapters of Deuteronomy were first read to Josiah.

V. 29—32. *Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 1—3.—*Read*, &c. (30) *Notes*, xvii. 7—9. *Neh.* viii. 1—9. 18. ix. 3. xiii. 1—3. *Rom.* iii. 19, 20. vii. 9—12.—*Covenant.* (31) *Notes*, xv. 12—15. 2 *Kings* xi. 17—20. *Neh.* ix. 1. 38. x. 1—17.—'He did 'not compel them, but they offered themselves freely, 'upon his persuasion, to renew their covenant with God, 'and promised to be firm to it; which perhaps, at that 'time they really resolved, though they soon revolted.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 33. While Josiah lived, the people were restrained from open idolatry: yet we learn from the prophets, especially Jeremiah, that, at this very time especially, they were ripening for destruction, by their hypocrisy and iniquity. (*Notes*, *Jer.* iii. 6—11. iv. 14. xxv. 3—7. *Zeph.* i. 1—8.)—'Though he suppressed all external idolatry, yet 'in their hearts they strongly inclined to it, and often prac-'tised it, as appears from *Jer.* iii. 10. xxv. 3, 4, &c.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Several years of our lives must pass before we become capable of performing useful services: our earliest youth should therefore be dedicated to God, that we may not waste any of our remaining span. Happy and wise are they, who seek the Lord at a period of life, when others are pursuing sinful pleasures, contracting bad habits, forming

CHAP. XXXV.

Josiah causes a solemn passover to be celebrated, 1—19. He is slain in battle against Pharaoh-necho, 20—24. Great lamentations are made for him, 25. His acts and goodness, 26, 27.

a xxx. 2 Kings xxiii. 21—23.

MOREOVER [a] Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and

b Ex. xii. 6. Num. ix. 3. Deut. xvi. 1—8. Ezra vi. 19. Ez. xiv. 21.

they killed the passover on [b] the fourteenth *day* of the first month.

c xxiii. 8. xxxi. 2. Num. xviii. 5—7. 1 Chr. xxiv. Ezra vi. 18.

2 And he set the priests in their [c] charges, and [d] encouraged them to the service of the house of the LORD.

d xxix. 5—11. xxxi. 2. 1 Chr. xxii. 19.

e xvii. 8, 9. xxx. 22. Deut. xxxiii. 10. Neh. viii. 7, 8. Mal. ii. 7.

f viii. 11. xxxiv. 14.

g *See on* v. 7.

3 And said unto [e] the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, [f] Put the holy ark [g] in the house, which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build: *it shall*

h Num. iv. 15—49. 1 Chr. xxiii. 26.

i Num. viii. 19. xvi. 9, 10. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

k 1 Chr. ix. 10—34. Neh. xi. 10—20.

l 1 Chr. xxiii.—xxvi.

m viii. 14.

n Ps. cxxxiv. 1. cxxxv. 2.

* Heb. *house of the fathers.*

† Heb. *sons of the people.*

o xxx. 15—17. Ex. xii. 6. 21, 22. Ezra vi. 20, 21.

p xxix. 5. 15. 34. xxx. 3. 15—19. Gen. xxxv. 2. Ex. xix. 10. 15. Num. xix. 11—20. Job i. 5. Ps. li. 7. Joel ii. 16. Heb. ix. 13, 14.

q xxx. 24. Is. xxxii. 8. Ez. xlv. 17.

‡ Heb. *offered.* 1 Kings viii. 63.

[h] not *be* a burden upon *your* shoulders: [i] serve now the LORD your God, and his people Israel.

4 And prepare *yourselves* by [k] the houses of your fathers, [l] after your courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel, and [m] according to the writing of Solomon his son.

5 And [n] stand in the holy *place* according to the divisions of the [*] families of the fathers of your brethren, the [†] people, and *after* the division of the families of the Levites.

6 So [o] kill the passover, and [p] sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that *they* may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

7 And [q] Josiah [‡] gave to the people,

ruinous connexions, and making work for bitter repentance; either gracious repentance in this world, or that which is attended with despair in the regions of misery. None can express the anguish which is prevented by early piety, and its happy consequences.—If we would be useful, we must first "take heed to ourselves;" and when we are established in faith and grace, we shall be fitted for instruments of good to others. In this important work we must expect many opposers, and but few cordial helpers: and the more we look into the world, the church, or our own hearts, by the light of God's word, the more evidently shall we see how very much reformation and renovation are every where needed. (*P. O. Ez.* viii. 1—6.)—The suppression of gross abominations makes way for the pure administration of God's ordinances: and when the filthiness and idols are cleansed out of our hearts, the Lord will prepare his temple there, and graciously come and dwell in it.—Liberality, integrity, and diligence are commendable in every work, but especially in whatever relates to the worship and service of God, and all undertakings immediately connected with it.—When God enables us to act conscientiously, according to our present knowledge, he will in due time give us still further and clearer views of his truth. (*Notes, Hos.* vi. 1—3. *John* vii. 14—17, *v.* 17.) The more we become acquainted with the Scripture, the more evidently shall we perceive our own guilt and danger: but if this discovery produces godly sorrow, contrition, humiliation, and further enquiries after the will of God, an answer of peace may be expected: while all the curses, which he has denounced, will fall upon the impenitent workers of iniquity.—Though we cannot prevent the ruin of sinners in general, or of collective bodies, we should endeavour by our examples, prayers, instructions, and the regular use of authority, in domestick, or in publick life, to engage as many as we possibly can to return to God, and walk before him, by trusting his promises and obeying his commandments.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXV. V. 1—3. *Note, 2 Kings* xxiii. 21—23.—*Taught,* &c. (3) The Levites, by courses, served the priests at the sanctuary, as their primary employment: but when at home in their several cities, they were the stated teachers of the people. (*Marg. Ref.* e.—*Notes,* xvii. 7—9. xxx. 21, 22, *v.* 22.)—*Put,* &c.] It is probable, that the most holy place had gone to decay, through neglect; and that while it was cleansed and repaired, the high priest had committed the ark to the custody of some Levites of the family of Kohath who had been set apart and sanctified for that service: but when it was carried again into its place, they would be at liberty for other services, to the glory of God, and the benefit of his people.

V. 4. The regulations, formed by David, and established by Solomon, concerning the courses of the priests and Levites, were committed to writing, and preserved for them to refer to continually. (*Notes,* viii. 12—15. 1 *Chr.* xxiii.—xxvi.) Josiah, in like manner as Hezekiah had done, required the priests and Levites to attend to their several duties, and encouraged them in so doing: but he neither added, nor altered, nor retrenched any thing; he merely enforced what had been established in the law, and in the regulations made by David and the contemporary prophets. (10. 16.) "The commandment of the king... "was by the word of the LORD." (*Note,* xxxi. 12.)

V. 5. The meaning of this verse seems to be, that the Levites should be as exact, in ascertaining to what family, or sub-division of a family, every man belonged, as those of the other tribes were: that each might know and do his proper work, with as much certainty and accuracy, as the others knew what lands belonged to them by inheritance. Some, however, suppose, that only the arrangement of the Levites at this time is intended; and that they were directed to stand in regular order, according to their families, to receive the paschal lambs, which their brethren of the other tribes would bring, according to their families, one for each household. (6. 10, 11.)

V. 6. *Notes,* xxx. 16—20. *Ex.* xii. 3—10, *v.* 6. *Lev.* i. 5—9.

V. 7—9. The people at this time were neither very rich, nor very zealous, and the ordinances were expensive.

of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover-offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these *were* of [r] the king's substance.

8 And [s] his princes [*] gave [t] willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: [u] Hilkiah, and Zechariah, and Jehiel, [x] rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover-offerings, two thousand and six hundred *small cattle*, and three hundred oxen.

9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethaneel his brethren, and Hashabiah, and Jeiel, and Jozabad, chief of the Levites [†] gave unto the Levites for passover-offerings five thousand *small cattle*, and five hundred oxen.

10 So the service was prepared, and [y] the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment.

11 And they killed the passover, and [z] the priests sprinkled *the blood* from their hands, and the Levites [a] flayed *them*.

12 And they removed the burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people to offer unto the LORD, [b] as *it is* written in the book of Moses: and so *did they* with the oxen.

13 And they [c] roasted the passover with fire, according to the ordinance: but the *other* holy *offerings* [d] sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and [‡] divided *them* speedily among all the people.

14 And afterwards they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: [e] because the priests the sons of Aaron *were busied* in offering of burnt-offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron.

15 And the singers the sons of Asaph *were* in their [§] place, [f] according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and [g] the porters *waited* at every gate; they might not depart from their service, for their brethren the Levites prepared for them.

16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah.

17 And the children of Israel *that were* [‖] present kept the passover at that time, and [h] the feast of unleavened bread, seven days.

18 And [i] there was no passover like to that kept in Israel, from the days of Samuel the prophet; [k] neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel *that were* present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

19 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.

r 1 Kings viii. 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 3.
s xxix. 31—33. 1 Chr. xxix. 6—9. 17. Ezra i. 6. ii. 68, 69. vii. 16. viii. 25—35. Neh. vii. 70—72. Ps. xlv. 12. Acts ii. 44, 45. iv. 34, 35.
* Heb. *offered.*
t 2 Cor. viii. 12. ix. 7.
u xxxiv. 14—20.
x 1 Chr. ix. 20. xxiv. 4, 5. Jer. xxix. 25, 26. Acts iv. 1. v. 26.
† Heb. *offered.* Is. i. 10—15. Jer. iii. 10. vii. 21—23. Mic. vi. 6—8.
y 4, 5. xxx. 16. Ezra vi. 18.
z xxix. 22—24. xxx. 16. Lev. i. 5, 6. Num. xviii. 3. 7. Heb. ix. 21, 22.
a xxix. 34.
b Lev. iii. 3. 5. 9—11. 14—16.
c Ex. xii. 8, 9. Deut. xvi. 7. Ps. xxii. 14. Lam. i. 12, 13.
d Lev. vi. 28. Num. vi. 19. 1 Sam. ii. 13—15. Ez. xlvi. 20—24.
‡ Heb. *made them run.* Rom. xii. 11.
e Acts vi. 2—4.
§ Heb. *station.*
f xxix. 25, 26. 1 Chr. xvi. 41, 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1—7. Ps. lxxvii. lxxviii. lxxxviii. *titles.*
g 1 Chr. ix. 17—19. xxvi. 14—19.
‖ Heb. *found.*
h xxx. 21—23. Ex. xii. 15—20. xiii. 6, 7. xxiii. 15. xxxiv. 18. Lev. xxiii. 5—8. Num. xxviii. 16—25. Deut. xvi. 3, 4. 8. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.
i xxx. 5. 2 Kings xxiii. 21—23.
k xxx. 26, 27.

That this therefore might not prevent their attendance on this solemn service, the king provided, at his own expense, an immense quantity of cattle suited to the solemnity; and after his example, the nobles, and the chief of the priests and Levites, liberally assisted their poorer brethren.—According to the calculation, that not fewer than ten, nor more than twenty persons, were to join for one lamb or kid, the numbers given on this occasion, would suffice for above four hundred thousand persons young and old: besides those given for peace-offerings and other sacrifices. (*Notes*, xxx. 23—25, *v.* 24. 1 *Kings* viii. 63—65.)—*Rulers of*, &c. (8) The heads of the several courses of the priests, or the captains of the temple. (*Marg. Ref.* x.)

V. 10, 11. 4—6. *Notes*, xxix. 34. xxx. 16—20, *vv*, 16, 17.

V. 12. The Levites separated, as speedily as they could, the parts of the peace-offerings, which were to be burnt, from the rest, and added them to the other burnt-offerings; that the remainder, together with the paschal lambs, might, without delay, be prepared and distributed as the occasion required. (*Notes*, *Lev.* iii.)

V. 13—17. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xii. 3—10, *v.* 8, 9. 1 *Sam.* ii. 13—16. 1 *Chr.* xxv. 1—7. *Ez.* xlvi. 19—24.) The priests were so fully employed, that they could not prepare the passover lambs for themselves; but the Levites, who were not otherwise engaged, prepared for them and for their brethren, who were occupied in other services; that all might be ready at the appointed hour.—'The singing and 'musick continued till all the sacrifices were offered, that 'is till night. ... And their brethren, who were not singers, 'took care to provide for them their portion, when they 'had done.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*According to the commandment*, &c. (16) *Note*, 4.

V. 18, 19. Hezekiah's remarkable passover seems to have been celebrated with greater fervency of devotion;

20 ¶ After all this, when Josiah had prepared the * temple, [l] Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against [m] Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.

21 But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, [n] What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? *I come* not against thee this day, but against the † house wherewith I have war: for [o] God commanded me to make haste: [p] forbear thee from *meddling with* God, who *is* with me, that he destroy thee not.

22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, [q] but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from [r] the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of [s] Megiddo.

23 And [t] the archers shot at king Josiah: and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore [‡] wounded.

24 His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in [u] the second chariot that he had; and [x] they brought him to Jerusalem, and [y] he died, and was buried [‖] in *one of* the sepulchres of his fathers. And [z] all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

25 And [a] Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and [b] all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made

* Heb. *house.*
l 2 Kings xxiii. 29. *Pharoah-nechoh.* Jer. xlvi. 2.
m Is. x. 9.
n 2 Sam. xvi. 10. Matt. viii. 29. John ii. 4.
† Heb. *house of my war.*
o 2 Kings xviii. 25. Is. xxxvi. 10.
p xxv. 19.
q xviii. 29. 1 Kings xiv. 2. xxii. 30.
r 21. xviii. 4—6. Josh. ix. 14.
s Judg. v. 19. 2 Kings ix. 27. xxiii. 30. Zech. xii. 11. *Megiddon.* Rev. xvi. 16. *Armageddon.*
t xviii. 33. Gen. xlix. 23. 2 Kings ix. 24. Lam. iii. 12, 13.
‡ Heb. *made sick.* 1 Kings xxii. 34. 2 Kings viii. 29.
u Gen. xli. 43.
x 2 Kings xxiii. 30.
y Ps. xxxvi. 6. Ec. viii. 14. ix. 1, 2.
‖ Or, *among the sepulchres.* xxxiv. 28.
z Zech. xii. 11
a Jer. xxii. 10.
b Job iii. 8. Ec. xii. 5. Jer. ix. 17—21. Matt. ix. 23.

but this of Josiah was far more regular, and in more exact conformity to the law; it was attended by very great multitudes, and the liberality of the king in furnishing the paschal lambs was without example. (*Notes*, xxx. 2—5. 16—27.)—Nothing is recorded on this subject, from the time that Israel obtained possession of the promised land: (*Note, Josh.* v. 10:) but even this passover, under Josiah, which exceeded all for several centuries, seems to have been very deficient as to genuine devotion.

V. 20—24. Josiah lived thirteen years after the remarkable passover before recorded, and zealously supported the worship of God to the end of his life. (*Notes*, 1—3, *v.* 3. xxxiv. 33. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 26, 27.) But the nation was all the while ripening for destruction; and was adjudged unworthy of so pious and excellent a prince.—Josiah's conduct at the close of his life has been treated with great severity by most commentators: and he has been charged with engaging in an *unjust* war, and *disregarding the express command of God;* which may in great measure be ascribed to the groundless censure passed on him by the apocryphal Esdras, 'Not regarding the words of the pro-'phet Jeremy, spoken by the mouth of the LORD.' (1 *Esdras* i. 28.) But the Scripture no where condemns him. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 29, 30.) Pharaoh, in marching his army through Josiah's territories, against his will, certainly committed an act of hostility. It is evident that Josiah was in possession of the whole land, and not of Judah only: (xxxiv. 6:) and probably he held the northern parts of it as a grant from the king of Babylon; and was not only in alliance with him, but bound to guard his frontiers against hostile invaders. Doubtless the kings of Judah had been in some measure dependent on the kings of Assyria and Babylon, from the time of Manasseh's captivity and release. Pharaoh declared indeed by his ambassadors, that he did not mean to attack Josiah, but to march against a power with which he was at war. He was, however, in the heart of Josiah's kingdom before he sent this embassy, and he avowed his intention of attacking his ally: and therefore Josiah may fairly, on both accounts, be justified from the charge of *unjustly* meddling with a war that did not belong to him; for no king upon earth would think it *unjust* to declare war against another prince, who should forcibly march an army into his dominions, in order to attack another prince who was in alliance with him. It is true the ambassadors assured Josiah that "God had "commanded Pharaoh to make haste;" and said, "For-"bear thee from *meddling with* God who is with me, that "he destroy thee not:" and he is therefore said, "not "to have hearkened to the words of Necho, from the "mouth of God." But Necho produced no proof, that he was a prophet of JEHOVAH, and Sennacherib had used similar language to Hezekiah, who had paid no regard to it. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 25.) The word used by Necho, (אֱלֹהִים) may signify *gods*, or *idols:* and criticks have noted, that the expression "from the mouth of God," is no where used in the Hebrew Bible, for a revelation from the true God; but that it is always "from the mouth of the LORD."—It is not indeed at all probable, that God had commanded Pharaoh-necho by Jeremiah, or by any other prophet, to undertake this expedition: for in that case Josiah would doubtless have been informed, and have submitted. And if Pharaoh had received any monition in a dream or vision, which he concluded to be from the God of Israel, (and so meant something more, than his own auguries and superstitions;) Josiah might not give credit to his testimony, in matters so closely connected with his own interests.—Josiah, however, seems to have been guilty of precipitation, and in not enquiring of the Lord when thus warned, before he proceeded to attack so formidable an enemy: his premature and violent death might therefore be a rebuke for his rashness; but it was chiefly a judgment on a hypocritical and wicked generation. Whatever sin Josiah committed, he doubtless repented of it: and the final state of one, who habitually lives a life of repentance, faith, and obedience, cannot be affected, by the manner in which he is suddenly taken away.—*The second chariot* seems to have been one that waited for him in case of necessity; into which he was removed, the other being perhaps covered with blood.

V. 25—27. Though the people would not imitate Je-

them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they *are* written in the lamentations.

26 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his * goodness, according to

* Heb. *kindnesses.* xxxi. 20. xxxii. 32.

that which was written in the law of the LORD,

27 And [c] his deeds, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

[c] xx. 34. xxiv. 27. xxv. 26. xxvi. 22. xxxii. 32. xxxiii. 19. 2 Kings x. 34. xvi. 19. xx. 20. xxi. 25.

siah's eminent piety, and disliked his reformation; yet they highly respected his character, and were sensible that they had sustained a very great loss. 'Whensoever they 'mentioned any calamity, they mentioned that as the 'greatest that had befallen them.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The book of Lamentations of Jeremiah was written on another occasion: (*Preface to Lamentations:*) and what that prophet composed on the death of Josiah has not come down to us. But both the prophet and the people, took several methods of doing honour to the memory of their prince; and of perpetuating the lamentations made on the account of his death; it is probable by an annual commemoration of that fatal event. (*Note, Jer.* xxii. 10—12.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—19.

Extensive good may be done by persons in authority, who spare no labour or expense, in promoting the honour of God; and who unite their example and influence with most zealous endeavours, to excite and encourage other members of the community to do their duty.—Even those who teach others, and are "holy to the LORD," not only by office, but in their hearts and lives, need to be repeatedly exhorted and charged, to serve God and his church, with increasing zeal and persevering diligence; and when one service is finished, to proceed with alacrity to another.—God alone can *efficaciously* sanctify and prepare our hearts for his holy worship; but the blessing must be sought, for ourselves and others, by attending to our several duties: and ministers should always sanctify themselves, before they attempt to prepare the people for the ordinances of God. In this way revivals of religion are both manifested and forwarded; and sacred ordinances at once honour the Lord, and become 'means of grace' to the souls of men. The support of them, in an orderly and publick manner, must always be attended with expense; and the multitude of the poor will often be unable to defray it. On this account religion will, in some places and at some times, be neglected, to the discouragement of many, and the ruin of far more: it then becomes a noble generosity for kings, princes, rulers, and wealthy persons, to step forward and to communicate liberally to the assistance of the poor, that they may not want "the Bread of "life" for their souls; and God will honour those who thus honour him. None however, are more bound to liberality in such cases, than the *superior clergy*, who enjoy large revenues appropriated to the maintenance of religion: for surely they ought willingly to assist their poorer brethren, who commonly do a great proportion of the work, without even a decent provision for themselves and their families! Were these things duly attended to, the service of God might be prepared, and his ordinances conducted, in harmony and to edification: while mutual love would be cemented; discouragements and temptations to envy, discontent, and revilings, would be obviated; and the affluent might expect to enjoy their abundance, in reputation, beloved by their inferiors, with the blessing of God, and to his glory: while the whole would cause numbers to pray for each other, and "to abound in many thanks-"givings unto God." (*Notes, 2 Cor.* ix. 6—15.)—Those who are continually so taken up in the work of God and his church, that they cannot attend to their secular interests, ought particularly to be provided for by their brethren who have more leisure. In all things indeed we need reciprocal assistance; and they, who are much employed in the publick exercises of religion, should be cautioned not to neglect their own souls, and the private exercise of meditation, and communion with God.—Alas! how are the ordinances of God disregarded, or formally attended on! The church *in its best days* has fallen short hitherto of what it ought to be *at all times:* our most religious hours, in publick or private, need forgiveness; and the mercy of God, through the Saviour's atonement, must still be our only plea, to the close of our days.—Very great exertions are requisite to produce even an outward attendance to religion: and after all, except we depend entirely on divine grace, the most excellent means and instruments will be ineffectual, and serve only to demonstrate the strength of man's depravity, and the justice of God in the sinner's condemnation: and abused mercies will after a time be withdrawn.

V. 20—27.

No man suffers or ever will suffer, who has not merited his sufferings; yet publick persons are often laid aside or removed, to punish the wickedness of the community: and even their indiscretions, contrary to their general character, and the fatal consequences of them, may be permitted as a national judgment.—We are not bound to believe all those, who profess to speak by the authority of God: but it is always right to act with caution, to search the scriptures, to seek the Lord's direction by prayer, and to consult wise, experienced, and pious friends; that we may discover as far as possible, what is the truth and will of God concerning us, and that we may not be found in any instance to fight against him.—Men seldom prosper in those measures which are unadvisedly adopted: and those, who are honoured with great usefulness, should be doubly circumspect in their conduct, and careful of their lives; because so many are interested in them.—Believers, however, even when taken away by a sudden or premature death, are removed to a better world: and their survivors should honour them, notwithstanding their imperfections; and will frequently perceive that they have great cause to mourn for them. (*Note, Is.* lvii. 1, 2.) Yet many join in lamenting the death, and commemorating the goodness, of useful men, who neither regard their admonitions, nor imitate their examples. And many mourn over their own calamities, who do not repent, and forsake those sins, which have provoked God to inflict them. Yet this alone can avert still more tremendous judgments

CHAP. XXXVI.

Jehoahaz succeeds Josiah, but Necho carries him into Egypt; and makes Jehoiakim king, 1—4. He reigns wickedly and is put in chains by Nebuchadnezzar, who carries some of the sacred vessels to Babylon, 5—7. Jehoiachin is made king, who in a short time is carried captive to Babylon, with other of the sacred vessels; and Zedekiah succeeds, 8—10. He reigns very wickedly, despises the warnings of Jeremiah, and rebels against Nebuchadnezzar, 11—13. The sins of the priests and people cause the utter destruction of Jerusalem, and the desolation of the land, for seventy years, 14—21. Cyrus's proclamation for rebuilding the temple, 22, 23.

THEN [a] the people of the land took [b] Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.

2 Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.

3 And the king of Egypt [*] put him down at Jerusalem, and [†] condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

4 And the king of Egypt [c] made Eliakim his brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And [d] Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.

5 [e] Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God.

6 Against him [f] came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in [‡] fetters, to carry him to Babylon.

7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried of [g] the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.

8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, [h] they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah: and [i] Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

9 ¶ Jehoiachin *was* [k] eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD.

10 And [§] when the year was expired, [l] king Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the [‖] goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made [m] Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.

11 ¶ Zedekiah *was* [n] one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

12 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God, *and* [o] humbled not himself [p] before Jeremiah the prophet, *speaking* from [q] the mouth of the LORD.

13 And he also [r] rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, [s] who had made him swear by God: but [t] he stiffened his neck, [u] and hardened his heart, from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

[a] xxvi. 1. xxxiii. 25. 2 Kings xxiii. 30.
[b] 2 Kings xxiii. 31—34. 1 Chr. iii. 15. Jer. xxii. 11. *Shallum.*
[*] Heb. *removed him.* 2 Kings xxiii. 33.
[†] Heb. *mulcted.*
[c] 2 Kings xxiii. 34, 35. 1 Chr. iii. 15.
[d] Jer. xxii. 10—12. Ez. xix. 3, 4.
[e] 2 Kings xxiii. 36, 37. Jer. xxii. 13—19. xxvi. 21—23. xxxvi. 1. 27—32.
B. C. 607.
[f] 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2. 5, 6. Ez. xix. 5—9. Dan. i. 1, 2. Hab. i. 5—10.
[‡] Or, *chains.*
[g] Ezra i. 7—11. Jer. xxvii. 16—18. xxviii. 3. Dan. v. 2—4.
[h] 2 Kings xxiv. 5, 6.
[i] 1 Chr. iii. 16, 17. *Jeconiah.* Jer. xxii. 24. 28. *Conmah.* Matt. i. 11, 12. *Jechonias.*
[k] 2 Kings xxiv. 8, 9.
[§] Heb. *at the return of the year.* B. C. 599.
[l] 2 Kings xxiv. 10—16. xxv. 27—30. Jer. xxix. 2. Ez. i. 2.
[‖] Heb. *vessels of desire.* 7. Jer. xxvii. 18—22. Dan. v. 2. 23.
[m] 2 Kings xxiv. 17. *Mattaniah.* 1 Chr. iii. 15, 16. Jer. xxxvii. 1.
[n] 2 Kings xxiv. 18—20. Jer. lii 1—3.
[o] xxxii. 26. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. Ex. x. 3. Dan. v. 22, 23. Jam. iv. 10. 1 Pet. v. 6.
[p] Jer. xxi. 1, &c. xxvii. 12, &c. xxviii. 1, &c. xxxiv. 2, &c. xxxvii. 2, &c. xxxviii. 14, &c.
[q] xxxv. 22.
[r] 2 Kings xxiv. 20. Jer. lii. 2. Ez. xvii. 11—20.
[s] Josh. ix. 15. 19, 20. 2 Sam. xxi. 2.
[t] 2 Kings xvii. 14. Neh. ix. 16, 17. Is. xlviii. 4.
[u] Ex. viii. 15. 32. ix. 17. Neh. ix. 29. Rom. ii. 4, 5. Heb. iii. 8. 13.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVI. V. 1—7. *Notes*, 10. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 29—34. xxiv. 1—7. *Jer.* xxii. 10—12. *Ez.* xix. 2—14. *Dan.* i. 1, 2.

V. 8. *Abominations*, &c.] *Notes*, *Jer.* xxii. 13—19. xxvi. 16—24. xxxvi. 20—32.

V. 9. *Eight.*] Either this is an error of the transcribers, which is most probable; or Jehoiachin reigned ten years with his father, which is very unlikely; for at his death he was eighteen years old. (2 *Kings* xxiv. 8.)

V. 10. Jehoiakim, probably, died towards the close of the year: and soon after the entrance of the new year, Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive, and carried him to Babylon, with many other prisoners, and many of the vessels of the temple. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 8—16. xxv. 27—30. *Jer.* xxii. 24—30. xxiv. 1—7. xxviii. 2—4. xxix. 2. *Ez.* i. 1—3.)

V. 11, 12. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 17—20. xxv. 1—7. *Jer.* xxi. xxii. 28—30. xxvii. xxviii. xxxiv. xxxvii. xxxviii.) The people 'still entertained false prophets, ... who "saw 'visions of peace" for Jerusalem, when there was no 'peace:' (*Ez.* xiii. 16:)... 'that is, made the people believe 'Jerusalem should not be taken, and so hardened their 'hearts in their obstinate wickedness.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13. *Swear*, &c.] Nebuchadnezzar had placed Zedekiah on the throne, requiring him to swear allegiance to him by the God of Israel. Having received his authority in this manner, and holding it by such a tenure, he could not revolt from the king of Babylon, without perjury, treachery, and injustice: and in his case the impolicy of his conduct was equal to his impiety, and made way for the punishment of it. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Josh.* ix. 19, 20. 2 *Sam.* xxi. 1—3. *Ez.* xvii. 12—21. xxi. 25—27.) 'His wickedness was so great, that God gave him up to

14 Moreover [x] all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much, [y] after all the abominations of the heathen; and [z] polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

15 And [a] the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by [*] his messengers, rising up [†] betimes, and sending; [b] because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place:

16 But they [c] mocked the messengers of God, and [d] despised his words, and [e] misused his prophets, until [f] the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, [g] till *there was* no [‡] remedy.

17 Therefore [h] he brought upon them [i] the king of the Chaldees, [k] who slew their young men with the sword, [l] in the house of their sanctuary, and had [m] no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave *them* all into his hand.

18 And [n] all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, [o] and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all *these* he brought to Babylon.

19 And [p] they burnt the house of God and [q] brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

20 And [§] them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where [r] they were servants to him and his sons, [s] until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:

21 To [t] fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, [u] until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate, she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

22 ¶ Now [x] in the first year of [y] Cyrus king of Persia, [z] that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, [a] the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made [b] a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, [c] All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and [d] he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. [e] Who *is there* among you of all his people? the LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

x 2 Kings xvi. 10—16. Ezra ix. 7. Jer. v. 5. xxxvii. 13—15. xxxviii. 4. Ez. xxii. 6. 26—28. Dan. ix. 6. 8. Mic. iii. 1—4. 9—11. vii. 3. Zeph. iii. 3, 4.
y xxviii. 3. xxxiii. 9.
z xxxiii. 4—7. Ez. viii. 5—16.
a xxiv. 18—21. xxxiii. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 13. Jer. xxv. 3, 4. xxvi. 5. xxxv. 15. xliv. 4, 5.
* Heb. *the hand of his.*
† That is, *continually and carefully.*
b Judg. x. 16. 2 Kings xiii. 23. Hos. xi. 8. Luke xix. 41—44.
c xxx. 10. Ps. xxxv. 16. Is. xxviii. 22. Jer. v. 12, 13. xx. 7. Luke xviii. 32. xxii. 63, 64. xxiii. 11. 36. Acts ii. 13. xvii. 32. Heb. xi. 36.
d Prov. i. 25—30. Luke xvi. 14. Acts xiii. 41. 1 Thes. iv. 8.
e Jer. xxxii. 3. xxxviii. 6. Matt. v. 12. xxi. 33—41. xxiii. 34—37. Acts vii. 52.
f Ps. lxxiv. 1. lxxix. 1—5.
g Prov. vi. 15. xxix. 1.
‡ Heb. *healing.*
B. C. 590.
h xxxiii. 11. Deut. xxviii. 49. 2 Kings xxiv. 2, 3. Jer. xv. 8. xxxii. 42. xl. 3. Dan. ix. 14.
i 2 Kings xxv. 1, &c. Jer. xxxix. 1, &c. lii. 1, &c. 18 xxxi. 16—18. xxxii. 15—28. Ps. lxxix. 2, 3. Jer. xv. 9. xviii. 21. Lam. ii. 21, 22. l xxiv. 21. Lam. ii. 20. Ez. ix. 5—7. Luke xiii. 1, 2. lxxiv. 20. n 7. 10. 2 Kings xxv. 13—17. Jer. xxvii. 18—22. lii. 17—23. Dan. v. 3.
k Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—28. xxx.
m Deut. xxviii. 50. Ps.
o 2 Kings xx. 13—17. Is. xxxix. 6. Zech. i. 6.
p 2 Kings xxv. 9. Ps. lxxiv. 4—8. lxxix. 1. 7. Is. lxiv. 10, 11. Jer. vii. 4. 14. lii. 13. Lam. iv. 1. Mic. iii. 12. Luke xxi. 6.
q 2 Kings xxv. 10, 11. Jer. lii. 14, 15.
§ Heb. *the remainder from the sword.*
r Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. Jer. xxvii. 7.
s 22. Ezra i. 1, &c.
t Jer. xxv. 9—11. xxvi. 6, 7. xxvii. 12, 13. Dan. ix. 2. Zech. i. 4—6.
u Lev. xxv. 4—6. xxvi. 34, 35. Zech. i. 12.
B. C. 536.
x Ezra i. 1—8.
y Dan. x. 1.
z 21. Jer. xxv. 12. 14. xxix. 10. xxxii. 42—44. xxxiii. 10—14. Heb. x. 23.
a xxi. 16. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 1 Kings xi. 14. 23. 1 Chr. v. 26. Ezra i. 5. Is. xiii. 3—5. 17. 18. xiv. 1—5. Hag. i. 14.
b xxiv. 9. xxx. 5.
c Ps. Dan. iv. 3
d Is. x
e 1 Chr. xxii. 16. xxix. 5. Ezra vii. 13. Zech. ii. 6, 7. Rom. viii. 31.

'commit this further crime of perjury to his own ruin.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxiv. 20. xxv. 6, 7.)

V. 14, 15. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Lord acted towards Judah, as a man would do, who had the welfare of his son much at heart, and would lose no time, but meet him with warnings as soon as he began to turn aside; missing no opportunity and sparing no pains: for God had compassion on the people; and proceeded, as if reluctantly, to execute vengeance, and to give up Jerusalem, and the temple, to the rage of heathen conquerors. (*Note, Jer.* xxv. 3.)

V. 16. *Notes, Jer.* ii. 26—30. xi. 18—23. xviii. 18—23. xx. 1—6. xxvi. 10—24. xxxii. 2, 3. xxxvi. 5. xxxvii. 11—21. xxxviii. 1—6. xliii. 3—7. *Lam.* iii. 52—57. *Matt.* v. 10—12. xxi. 33—39. xxiii. 29—39. *Acts* vii. 51—53. 1 *Thes.* ii. 13—16.—*No remedy,* &c.] It no longer consisted with the honour of God to protect so wicked a people, who professed to be his worshippers, and who encouraged themselves in sin by a presumptuous confidence in him. It was become necessary to display the glory of the divine holiness and justice, in bringing signal miseries upon them: and this he did, by giving them up to their own infatuated counsels, and the embittered resentment of their cruel invaders. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. It is probable that numbers of the Jews, when the city was taken, fled into the courts of the temple, as to a *sanctuary,* or sacred refuge; but they were slain there by the haughty victors. (*Notes, Ez.* ix. 5—11. *Luke* xiii. 1—3.)

V. 18—20. *Notes, 2 Kings* xxv. *Jer.* xxxix. lii.

V. 21. The law concerning the sabbatical year seems to have been almost entirely neglected, from the first entrance of Israel into Canaan: so that when the land had many sabbatical years together during the captivity, these bore a near proportion to those in which the law had been violated. Yet this intimated, that it was not to be given to another people, because the Israelites would be reinstated in it. (*Notes, Ex.* xxiii. 10—12. *Lev.* xxv. 1—7. xxvi. 31—35.)—The seventy years here mentioned may either be computed from the first captivity in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, to the first year of Cyrus the Persian; or from the later and more complete desolations of the land, to the finishing of the temple, in the sixth year of king Darius, as the land was gradually desolated, and gradually repeopled. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxiv. 1. 8—16. *Dan.* i. 1, 2.)

V. 22, 23. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Ezra.* i. 1—4.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

When the wickedness of nations provokes God to re-

move wise and pious princes, and to advance others of a contrary character; avowed impiety and desolating judgments may be expected to come in like a flood, and to bear down all before them. Indeed Providence often raises up such wicked rulers, one after another, to scourge a guilty land; and then every change proves a step towards more complete destruction.—Infatuated counsels and treacherous measures concur in bringing ruin upon those, who, in proud contempt of God, reject the warnings of his ministers from his word; and who thus "stiffen their "neck, and harden their heart from turning unto the "LORD."—Yet he would not punish whole kingdoms for the impiety of their rulers, did not the people also transgress very much: but when nations, favoured with his word and ordinances, become so corrupt, that nobles, priests, and people imitate, and even exceed, the abominations of the heathen; and add the shameless profanation of things most sacred, and the most obstinate contempt of his holy word, to all their other crimes; what can be expected but miseries as remarkable as their wickedness? And when the mockery and persecution of his ministers is added to all the rest, the "wrath of the LORD will arise "against such a people, till there be no remedy." He indeed delights in mercy, and is glorified by the repentance of sinners, and by pardoning and saving the penitent. The whole plan of redemption, the warnings, invitations, and intreaties of his word, and his long-suffering towards us, prove his rich compassion and love: but these endearing attributes are exercised in exact consistency with his justice, holiness, and truth, and according to the counsel of his infallible wisdom; and when no means, mercies, or warnings are effectual to bring sinners to repentance, there is no remedy, but he must vindicate the honour of his despised authority, patience, and mercy, in their condign punishment.—Nothing, except obstinate impenitent unbelief and iniquity, can ruin our souls; but nothing can save those, who persist in rejecting the salvation of the gospel: for the honour of the truths and ordinances of God demands the destruction of men, who disgrace them while they profess to glory in them. Yet the ministers of the gospel must not yield to despondency or resentment, however disappointed, mocked, or misused: they must copy the patience and forbearance of the Lord; and spare no pains, and leave no proper method untried, to bring sinners to repentance.

V. 17—23.

The instruments of divine vengeance against devoted nations are of themselves disposed for their bloody work; and the Lord arms them with power, and gives up the objects of his righteous indignation into their hands. Then, no age or sex, no sacredness of place or character, will move compassion; but all will be involved in one common calamity: and the abused privileges, in which hypocrites confide, will both add to their guilt, and enhance the poignancy of their sufferings. Yet all the miseries of this life are temporal; but the punishment of the wicked in another world is eternal.—Even the circumstances of severe calamities often forebode and make way for their removal. When the executioners of vengeance have cut off the more desperate transgressors, and the rest are humbled by means of their sufferings, and for their sins; the Lord "stirs up the spirit" of some instrument of his mercy, who patronizes the afflicted, and becomes their deliverer: and "the gates of hell shall never prevail "against his church."

THE BOOK

OF

EZRA.

IT is generally agreed that Ezra wrote this book, and also the preceding books of Chronicles. It is likewise recorded by the Jewish writers, that he revised all the preceding parts of Scripture, and published a correct copy of the whole: and indeed this account appears highly probable. He is not called a prophet, in the sacred Scripture: yet there can be no doubt, that he performed these services under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; as no distinction is made in the New Testament between one part and another of that volume, which was then called "The Oracles of God," and as such sanctioned by our Lord and his apostles. The prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah confirm the history contained in the former part of this book: and as Ezra alone records the rebuilding of the temple; whatever in the New Testament relates to the temple, as then standing, is in some sense a sanction to the authenticity of the narrative: though I do not recollect any express references to it except in the genealogies. Neither does the book appear to contain any direct prophecies: but it is written in so pious a strain, and so much in the manner of the other Scriptures, that it has strong internal evidences of divine inspiration. As express mention is made in it of Jeremiah's prophecies, and plain intimations are given of Isaiah's extraordinary prediction concerning Cyrus; (i. 1—4;) it is evident that the writings of these prophets were then extant: and the constant reference to the law of Moses and the preceding histories in this book, and that of Nehemiah, proves the same respecting them.—Ezra was peculiarly had in honour by the ancient Jews, and is so by the modern: and to this we must ascribe the forgery of several other books, under his name, especially the two apocryphal books of Esdras, or Ezra; for forgeries they undoubtedly are, and of a much later date than the authentick record of Ezra.—This history opens with the proclamation of Cyrus, the return of a company of Jews, and their attempts to rebuild the city and temple, and to re-inhabit the land: it proceeds to record the opposition with which they met, the delays this occasioned, and how, after a time, they in part succeeded. At length, about seventy-eight or seventy-nine years afterwards, (concerning the most of which nothing is recorded,) Ezra himself arrived with a commission, and large powers and grants, from Artaxerxes, and with many attendants: and the narrative closes with an account of the sin of the Jews in marrying heathen wives; Ezra's grief, humble confession, and prayers on that account; and his pious endeavours to separate his people from idolaters.—In this and the subsequent history, the Jews no longer appear as an independent prosperous nation, governed by kings of their own race: but a small remnant, returned from captivity, by the favour of the Persian kings, and under their protection and dominion; and struggling, often feebly, with many difficulties and enemies: yet, in this condition, they were enabled to re-establish the worship of God at the temple in Jerusalem, to which they outwardly adhered till the coming of Christ; being effectually cured of gross idolatry, though in other respects, exceedingly prone to disobedience.—During the captivity nothing is recorded of the history of Israel, except what may be collected from the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel: and exceedingly little is contained in the Scripture of their condition, during 536 years, till the birth of Christ, compared with the regular history given of the nation from the days of Moses to the captivity. The old dispensation was about to expire and make way for Christianity; the Spirit of prophecy was about to be withdrawn for a season; and the people had so often and so flagrantly violated their national covenant, that they were not honoured and noticed as they had been in former ages.

CHAP. I.

Cyrus issues a proclamation, allowing the Jews to go up to Jerusalem and build the temple; and exhorting those who stayed behind to assist them, 1—4. Many prepare to return, and others contribute to the expense, 5, 6. Cyrus restores the vessels of the temple to Sheshbazzar, 7—11.

a *See on* 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23.

NOW [a] in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD

b Jer. xxv. 12—14. xxix. 10. xxxiii. 7—13.

[b] by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit

c v. 13—15. vi. 22. vii. 27. Ps. cvi. 46. Prov. xxi. 1.

* Heb. *caused a voice to pass.* Matt. iii. 1—3. John i. 23.

of Cyrus king of Persia, [c] that he [*] made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The [d] LORD God of heaven [e] hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and [f] he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah.

d 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chr. ii. 12. Is. lxvi. 1. Jer. x. 11. Dan. ii. 28. v. 23.

e Jer. xxvii. 6, 7. Dan. ii. 37, 38. iv. 25. 32. v. 19—21.

f Is. xliv. 26—28. xlv. 1. 12, 13.

3 Who *is there* among you of all his people? [g] his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, ([h] he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem.

g Josh. i. 9. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20. Matt. xxviii. 20.

h Deut. xxxii. 31. Dan. ii. 47. vi. 26. Acts x. 36.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, [i] let the men of his place [†] help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside [k] the free-will-offering for the house of God, that *is* in Jerusalem.

i vii. 16—18. Acts xxiv. 17. 3 John 6—8.

† Heb. *lift him up.* Ec. iv. 9, 10. Gal. vi. 2.

k iii. 68—70. 1 Chr. xxix. 3. 9. 17.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. (2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 22, 23.) Nebuchadnezzar reigned, after the first captivity of the Jews in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, forty-five years. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxiv. 1.) His son Evil-merodach was slain by Neriglissar, his brother-in-law, after he had reigned two years; and probably Jehoiachin died before him. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xxv. 27—30.) After four years Neriglissar was slain in battle by Cyrus: after a few months Belshazzar, the son of Evil-merodach, mounted the throne; and at the end of seventeen years he was slain in Babylon by Cyrus. (*Dan.* v.) Then Cyaxares, or Darius the Mede, the uncle and father-in-law of Cyrus, succeeded to the throne of all these kingdoms; and after two years he died, and left the whole of them to Cyrus, who, in the first year after his predecessor's death, proclaimed liberty to the captive Jews. This is the first computation of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 21.)—As Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius the Mede, and of Cyrus the Persian, there can be little doubt, that he was instrumental in procuring this extraordinary proclamation in favour of the Jews: and probably he shewed that prince the prophecy of Isaiah, which was known to have been long extant, and in which he was predicted by name, and his successes were described; and by which he was appointed to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple: and also those of Jeremiah, which foretold the exact duration of the captivity. (*Notes*, *Is.* xiii. 17. xxi. 1—5. xli. 25. xliv. 25—28. xlv. 1—6. *Jer.* xxv. 10—13. xxvii. 4—9. xxix. 10. l. li. *Dan.* i. 17—20. vi. 25—28.) The prophecy of Isaiah was delivered about 120 years before the temple was destroyed; and about the same time before the birth of Cyrus. These predictions, set before Cyrus, by a person of Daniel's venerable age, and high reputation for wisdom, and eminent station, seem to have produced in the mind of this prudent and humane conqueror, a conviction that the God of Israel was the true God, and that the captive Jews were his chosen people, and Jerusalem the place where he was especially pleased to be worshipped. Thus "the LORD stirred up his spirit" to issue a proclamation, which was publickly made known in every place, by heralds appointed for that service, and also committed to writing; that the Jews were now set at liberty, and should be protected, in returning to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple.—In this proclamation Cyrus called the God of Israel, "JEHOVAH, the God of Heaven," and avowed that he was "THE God," in contradistinction to all others that were so called. He acknowledged, that he had received his dominions from JEHOVAH, whether acquired by inheritance or conquest. These, being far superior to any other empire then in the world, (as comprising the dominions of the Medes and Persians increased by those of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and others,) were called in the customary style, "all the kingdoms of the earth." And he declared that "the LORD had charged him, to build "him an house at Jerusalem." Some think that this was done in a vision vouchsafed to him; but probably it was his inference from Isaiah's prophecies. He also wished the Jews success in the name of the Lord, and in some sense prayed for his powerful and favourable presence with them. And he exhorted others, in every place, to help those who went upon this undertaking, with such things as were needful for their expenses, and for accomplishing their pious intentions. Some interpret this as an order to the rulers of the provinces, to supply them from the publick revenues: (*Notes*, vii. 16—28:) others suppose that Cyrus allowed the Jews to collect voluntary contributions from his subjects at large; and some confine it to the Jews, who did not go up to Jerusalem, who were exhorted to assist their brethren that did. Without such assistance, many, that "remained in any place," waiting an opportunity of going up to Jerusalem, would have been eventually hindered.—Besides affording assistance to the Jews for their journey; the people in general, were allowed, and even reminded, to send oblations for the temple, which was about to be built at Jerusalem.—By this decree the Jews, who had been held in bondage and captivity, were virtually released, provided they chose to engage in this enterprize. Any attempt of this kind would previously have been punishable as rebellion; but now, the government being favourable, their opposers would be restrained, and many would readily help them on that account alone.—As the kings of Persia still retained the

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all *them* whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the house of the LORD, which *is* in Jerusalem.

1 1. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22. Neh. ii. 12. Prov. xvi. 1. 2 Cor. viii. 16. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 16, 17.

6 And all they that *were* about them *strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all *that was* willingly offered.

* That is, *helped them.* vii. 15, 16. viii. 25—28. 33.

1 4. Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor. ix. 7.

7 ¶ Also m Cyrus the king brought

m v. 14. vi. 5.

sovereignty of the land, it could be no real impolicy to encourage the people to re-inhabit and cultivate a fertile territory, which had long lain desolate. But this measure was so contrary to the ancient prejudices and superstitions of these kings, that it was probably dictated by conscience, and a sense of duty to the God of heaven: though we find nothing in the subsequent history of this prince to favour a conclusion, that he finally renounced idolatry, and became a true worshipper of JEHOVAH. The proclamation, however, was honourable to God; and would encourage the Jews to adhere to their religion, and be more zealous for it; and perhaps induce many of the Gentiles to respect, and even to embrace it.

V. 5, 6. Some readers may perhaps wonder, that, on this proclamation of Cyrus, the Jews did not assemble in one body, and directly go and take possession of their ancient inheritances: but a little reflection shews the matter in another light.—The city and temple lay a heap of ruins, and it would cost immense labour and expense to rebuild them. The land was either wholly desolate, or occupied by encroaching neighbours; and in either case, it would require much time and labour to procure for themselves habitations and provisions. The journey was long, arduous, and perilous, to those who were attended with families and substance: (*Note*, *Gen.* xxxi. 23, 24:) and many enemies would endeavour to plunder them by the way, as far as they dared and were able. (*Notes*, viii. 21—23. *Neh.* ii. 7.) None of the Jews had seen Jerusalem or the temple, except such as were considerably above fifty years of age; at which period of life the spirit of enterprize commonly begins to decline: and those, who had merely seen it as children, would have little stimulating recollection of it. Few were attached to the temple by true piety: and most of them wanted even that attachment, which men naturally feel for the land of their nativity; having been born in the places, where they were then settled. Some persons of true and eminent piety were so situated, that they did not think it their duty to remove; as Daniel in the court of Cyrus: others would be hindered by the infirmities of old age, and the peculiar circumstances of their families and connexions. In short, the difficulties, hardship, and peril were manifest; the success of the attempt would be doubtful to all, but those who were "strong in faith:" its temporal advantages were remote and precarious, and not worth the venture; especially to such as had obtained comfortable settlements or occupations, in the land of their captivity. Even the spiritual advantages would appear to the pious mind, more intended for posterity than for that generation; and to engage in it, in this view, would require vigorous faith, lively hope, and an active zeal for the honour of God, and the benefit of his church, and establishment of his worship, in ages to come.—We may conclude, that in consequence of the captivities, many Israelites, and some of the Jews, were finally incorporated with the heathen, among whom they dwelt: yet these calamities seem to have had a very good effect on considerable numbers.—The chief fathers of Judah and Benjamin, who had the greatest influence in their tribes, first moved in this undertaking; and they were joined by the leading men among the priests and Levites, which doubtless rendered the design more honourable: and thus a considerable number were encouraged to attend them; whilst others both assisted them, and sent valuable oblations for the intended temple.—Many more returned, than we read of being carried away captive: (*Notes*, ii. 64—67. *Jer.* lii. 28—30:) but as the land had been utterly desolated, all the surviving inhabitants must have been driven into other countries, and most of them into those lands, which had been subject to the kings of Babylon, and which were now fallen under the dominion of the kings of Persia: and doubtless many of the ten tribes accompanied the Jews at this time. It is, however, evident that a great majority, even of the latter, chose to continue in the settlements which they had there gained: some of them afterwards returned, but very many never did; and immense numbers of Jews were from that time dispersed, in every city and country, over all that part of the world. So that the new settlement, in Judea and at Jerusalem, formed but a small part of that people, as they continued to be distinguished from other nations: for they still increased and multiplied very rapidly, according to the promise of God to their fathers.—It is worthy of observation, that no Jews, who chose to go, were excluded by Cyrus's proclamation: yet the language of the sacred historian implies, that none would actually have gone, if He, who "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus," had not also "raised the spirit of the people," to avail themselves of this permission: the original words are the same in both clauses. This transaction, (as Archbishop Usher has particularly observed,) furnishes a most striking *illustration*, or, as I would rather say, *representation*, of the way in which the gospel is proposed to sinners, and embraced by believers. It is in general set before the ruined descendants of Adam; with the Saviour's most solemn assurance, that "him who cometh ... he will in no wise cast out." Yet "no man can come unto him, except the Father draw "him." On one pretence or other, all who are left to themselves "neglect so great salvation," and are *justly* condemned. But God, by his preventing grace, "stirs "up the spirits" of some, who thus thankfully embrace the proffered blessing, and are *mercifully* saved.

V. 7—11. Some of the vessels of the temple had been cut in pieces by the victors: (*2 Kings* xxiv. 13:) but the most valuable had been providentially preserved through all the succeeding revolutions, and were now ordered by Cyrus to be restored to Sheshbazzar; and so were at last brought back to Jerusalem, and again employed in the service of the sanctuary.—It is generally agreed, that the ark was lost or destroyed, when the temple was burnt: and it is likely, that by the absence of it, and the visible

forth the vessels of the house of the
[h] 2 Kings xxiv. 13. xxv. 13—16. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 7. 10. 18. Jer. xxvii. 21, 22. xxviii. 3—6 Dan. i. 2. v. 8. 23. LORD, which [n] Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods;

8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered
[o] 11. v. 14. 16. Hag. i. 1. 14. ii. 2—4. Zech. iv. 6—10. them unto [o] Sheshbazzar the prince of
[p] Num. vii. 13. 19. 1 Kings vii. 50. 2 Chr. iv. 8. 11. 21, 22. xxiv. 14. Matt. xiv. 8. Judah.

9 And this *is* the number of them: thirty [p] chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, [q] nine and twenty knives,
[q] Matt. x. 29—31.

10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second *sort* four hundred and ten, *and* other vessels a thousand.

11 All [r] the vessels of gold and of silver *were* five thousand and four hundred. All *these* did Sheshbazzar bring up with *them of* the * captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.
[r] Rom. ix. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 19—21.
* Heb. *transportation*, Matt. i. 11, 12.

glory, 'God would signify, he was withdrawing his pre-
'sence from that house of stone, to dwell in the temple
'of Christ's body, who offered himself to God, and thereby
'put an end to these figurative sacrifices.' *Bp. Patrick.* —The knives were used for slaying and preparing the sacrifices, as the original word signifies; and the vessels, for receiving the blood, for the meat-offerings, and other similar purposes. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The sum total of the vessels here stated far exceeds the particular account given of them: but it is supposed, that many spoons, tongs, and other instruments of service, not before numbered, were included.—Sheshbazzar may signify *joy in tribulation;* and it is supposed that this name was given, by the kings of Babylon, to the same person whom the Jews called Zerubbabel, which signifies *a stranger at Babylon.* He was the grandson of Jehoiachin by Salathiel, and the heir of the house of David: as such he was regarded by the conquerors; he possessed authority over the captive Jews; and he was authorized, and willingly undertook, to lead those back, who now returned to rebuild the city and temple. (*Marg. Ref.* o.—ii. 2. iii. 2. 8. v. 14—16. *Note, Jer.* xxii. 28—30.)

Sheshbazzar. (8) שֵׁשְׁבַּצַּר. This name appears to be compounded of שֵׁשׁ, *fine linen,* and בְּצַר, *in affliction.*—The wearing of fine linen and white garments was an expression of rejoicing.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

As the architect progressively executes every part of the plan, which he had delineated for his intended structure, till the whole is completed; so God in his providence performs in due order all the prophecies of his word: a great proportion of his grand design has already been accomplished, and revolving ages will hasten the performance of all the rest, in the appointed periods.—Difficulties, which to us appear impossibilities, form no obstruction to Omnipotence. The Lord our God turneth the hearts of kings, as he does the rivers of waters, which way he pleases: (*Note, Prov.* xxi. 1:) he subverts the deep laid foundations of mighty empires, and establishes others in their room; he lays aside the executioners of his vengeance, when their work is done, to make way for the instruments of his mercy: he gives, as he sees good, abilities, success, and authority; and then secretly disposes men's mind to fulfil his word and do his will, and overrules every thing for the benefit of his church, and of those who trust in him.—When he has work to do, they, whom he has chosen to perform it, find their minds enlarged to entertain noble designs; and, forgetful of their former habits, maxims, and superstitions, they serve his cause with all the authority, which he has conferred on them. Even they, who live and die strangers to the power of true religion, have often received deep convictions of "his eternal power and Godhead," and of their obligations and accountableness to "the God of heaven:" and under these convictions, they have made publick and honourable confessions to him, have shewn for a time a regard for his authority, and have done many and great things for his cause and people; speaking the language of piety, and being very useful to his worshippers: and yet at last they have relapsed into their former idolatry or ungodliness! (*Notes,* vii. 11—28.)—If such things have heretofore been done in fulfilling former prophecies; the Lord is equally able and faithful to provide for the ruin of every antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, and the calling of all the Gentiles into his church.—In every useful undertaking, all should endeavour to be helpful; and it bodes well, when princes and ministers of religion take the lead, and give the example, in arduous and self-denying services. Some may be useful by their labours, some with their substance, and all by their prayers, to the common cause of truth and righteousness: and whatever is done *willingly,* and from love to God and his people, will be graciously accepted.

V. 5—11.

No time should be lost in setting about those duties which belong to us in our several stations: and in stirring up others to abound in love and good works, we should give them an example.—That which is devoted to the service of the Lord, is entrusted to his protection: and he will especially keep and preserve those, whom he has "purified unto himself to be a peculiar people, zealous of "good works." Even the very hairs of their head are all numbered; and whatever tribulations they may pass through, no true believer shall perish; but they shall all be forth-coming, at that day "when the LORD shall make "up his jewels."—Salvation is fully prepared in Jesus Christ; "all power in heaven and earth is given unto "him;" the proclamation of the gospel is general to every creature. But pride, worldly lusts, and unbelief, render us averse to the gracious proposal: and it would be made in vain, did not the Lord raise up the spirits of a remnant, "according to the election of grace," to renounce all for the sake of Christ and his salvation. Those who prefer carnal things, to the eternal blessings which he confers, will find, that their pride and love of sin aggravate, and

CHAP. II.

The principal persons who returned from Babylon, 1, 2. The number of the several families which accompanied them, 3—35. The priests, 36—39. The Levites, 40—42. The Nethinims, 43—54. The children of Solomon's servants, 55—60. The priests who could not shew their pedigree, 61—63. The sum total, with their retinue, 64—67. Their oblations towards the temple and its service, 68—70.

a v. 8. vi. 2. Neh. vii. 6. Esth. i. 1. iii. 8. 11. viii. 9. Acts xxiii. 34.

NOW these *are* [a] the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried

b 2 Kings xxiv. 14—16. xxv. 11. 2 Chr. xxxvi. Jer. xxxix. lii.

away, [b] whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city;

c i. 11. *Sheshbazzar.* Neh. vii. 7. Hag. i. 1. 12. 14. ii. 2. 4. 21. Zech. iv. 6—10. Matt. i. 12, 13. *Zorobabel.*

d iii. 8, 9. iv. 3. v. 2 Hag. i. 12. 14. ii. 4. Zech. iii. 1. 3. 8, 9. *Jeshua.*

2 Which came with [c] Zerubbabel: [d] Jeshua, Nehemiah, [e] Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

e Neh. vii. 7. *Azariah. Nahamani. Raamiah. Mispereth. Nehum.*

f viii. 3. *Pharosh.* x. 25. Neh. vii. 8.

3 The children of [f] Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

g viii. 8. Neh. vii. 9.

4 The children of [g] Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

h Neh. vi. 18. vii. 10. 652.

5 The children of [h] Arah, seven hundred seventy and five.

i viii. 4. x. 30. Neh. vii. 11. 2918. x. 14.

6 The children of [i] Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua *and* [k] Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve.

k viii. 9.

l viii. 7. x. 26. Neh. vii. 12.

7 The children of [l] Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

8 The children of [m] Zattu, nine hundred forty and five.

m x. 27. Neh. viii. 13. 845.

9 The children of [n] Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

n Neh. vii. 14.

10 The children of [o] Bani, six hundred forty and two.

o x. 34. Neh. viii. 15. *Binnui.* 648.

11 The children of [p] Bebai, six hundred twenty and three.

p viii. 11. x. 28. Neh. vii. 16. 628.

12 The children of [q] Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.

q viii. 12. Neh. vii. 17. 2322.

13 The children of [r] Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six.

r viii. 13. Neh. vii. 18. 667.

14 The children of [s] Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six.

s viii. 14. Neh. vii. 19. 2067.

15 The children of [t] Adin, four hundred fifty and four.

t viii. 6. Neh. vii. 20. 655.

16 The children of [u] Ater, of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

u Neh. vii. 21.

17 The children of [x] Bezai, three hundred twenty and three.

x Neh. vii. 23. 324.

18 The children of [y] Jorah, an hundred and twelve.

y Neh. vii. 24. *Hariph.*

19 The children of [z] Hashum, two hundred twenty and three.

z x. 33. Neh. viii. 22. 328.

20 The children of [a] Gibbar, ninety and five.

a Neh. vii. 25. *Gibeon.*

21 The [b] children of Beth-lehem, an hundred twenty and three.

b 1 Chr. ii. 50—52.

22 The men of [c] Netophah, fifty and six.

c 2 Sam. xxiii. 28. 1 Chr. ii. 54. Neh. vii. 26. 188. Jer. xl. 8.

23 The men of [d] Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.

d Josh. xxi. 18. Neh. vii. 27. Is. x. 30. Jer. i. 1. xi. 21.

24 The children of [e] Azmaveth, forty and two.

e Neh. vii. 28. *Beth-azmaveth.*

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do not excuse, the guilt of their unbelief. Those, who feel a willingness to accept of what they have heretofore neglected, may come with encouragement; for Jesus "will in "no wise cast them out." And if we by grace have been enabled to receive this salvation, and to bring forth the fruits of it; while we take the comfort of it, we shall give him the glory, and offer our fervent prayers, that others also may "be made willing in the day of his power."

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. *Province*, &c.] (*Marg. Ref.* a.) This term seems to denote Judea, as now become a province of the Persian empire.—Some of the same persons returned, who had been carried captive, and the children or descendants of the others.

V. 2. These were the chief fathers, who were next in authority to Zerubbabel, and assisted him in this expedition. Jeshua, or Joshua, was the high priest, the grandson of Seraiah, who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar. (2 *Kings* xxv. 18. 21. Comp. 1 *Chr.* vi. 14,15. with *Note, Hag.* i. 1.)—Nehemiah and Mordecai were not the same persons of whom we afterwards read, who bore these names; for they lived many years later. (*Neh.* i. 1. *Esth.* ii. 5.)—As these persons renounced many advantages, and encountered many hardships and dangers, in attempting to rebuild the temple and city, and resume possession of the promised land; it was proper that their names should be recorded, as a mark of honourable distinction to them and their descendants. 'Their land and their cities had been laid so desolate, ... and 'were infested also by such bad neighbours, that it was a 'great piece of generosity in these men to return thither: 'and their names are recorded to the eternal honour of 'them, and of their posterity; they being the first planters 'of this country, after it had been laid waste.' *Bp. Patrick.* *The people of Israel.*] 'They who were called "the '"children of the province" before, are now called "the '"people of Israel:" for from him they were derived, 'though most of them were of the tribe of Judah.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, i. 5, 6.)

V. 3—29. The Register, in the book of Nehemiah, answers to this here given in so many particulars, that there can be no doubt that the same is meant in both places. In general, the names and the numbers of each

25 The children of [f] Kirjath-arim, Chephirah and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three.

26 The children of [g] Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

27 The men of [h] Michmas, an hundred twenty and two.

28 The men of Beth-el and [i] Ai, two hundred twenty and three.

29 The children of [k] Nebo, fifty and two.

30 The children of Magbish, an hundred fifty and six.

31 The children of the other [l] Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

32 The children of [m] Harim, three hundred and twenty.

33 The children of [n] Lod, * Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and five.

34 The children of [o] Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

35 The children of [p] Senaah, three thousand and six hundred and thirty.

36 ¶ The priests: the children of [q] Jedaiah, of the house of [r] Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

37 The children of [s] Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

38 The children of [t] Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.

39 The children of [u] Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

40 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the children of [x] Hodaviah, seventy and four.

41 The singers: the children of [y] Asaph, an hundred twenty and eight.

42 The children of [z] the porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, *in* all an hundred thirty and nine.

43 ¶ The [a] Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of [b] Hasupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

44 The children of Keros, the children of [c] Siaha, the children of Padon,

45 The children of [d] Lebanah, the children of Hagabah, the children of Akkub,

46 The children of Hagab, the children of [†] Shalmai, the children of Hanan,

47 The children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah,

48 The children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the children of Gazzam,

49 The children of Uzza, the children of [e] Paseah, the children of Besai,

50 The children of Asnah, the chil-

f Josh. ix. 17. Neh. vii. 29. *Kirjath-jearim.*
g Josh. xviii. 24, 25. Neh. vii. 30.
h 1 Sam. xiii. 5, 23. Is. x. 28. *Michmash* Neh. vii. 31.
i Gen. xii. 8. *Hai.* Josh. vii. 2. viii. 9. 17. Neh. vii. 32. 123.
k Num. xxxii. 3. Deut. xxxii. 49. Neh. vii. 33. Is. xv. 2. Jer. xlviii. 1. 22.
l 7. Neh. vii. 34.
m x. 31. Neh. vii. 35.
n Neh. vi. 2. vii. 37. xi. 34, 35.
* Or, *Harid*, as in some copies.
o 1 Kings xvi. 34. Neh. vii. 36.
p Neh. vii. 38. 3930.
q 1 Chr. ix. 10. xxiv. 7.
r iii. 9. Neh vii. 39.
s x. 20. 1 Chr. xxiv. 14. Neh. vii. 40.
t x. 22. 1 Chr. ix. 2. Neh. vii. 41.
u x. 21. 1 Chr. xxiv. 8. Neh. vii. 42.
x iii. 9. *Judah.* Neh. vii. 43. *Hodevah.*
y 1 Chr. vi. 39. xv. 17. xxv. 1, 2. Neh. vii. 44. 148.
z 1 Chr. xxvi. 1, &c. Neh. vii. 45. 138.
a 1 Chr. ix. 2. Neh. vii. 46—56. x. 28.
b Neh. vii. 46. *Hashupha.*
c Neh. vii. 47. *Sia.*
d Neh. vii. 48. *Lebana. Hagaba.*
† Or, *Shamlai.*
e Neh. vii. 51. *Phaseah.*

family are nearly the same; and the sum total is computed in both exactly alike. Yet there are several considerable variations, in names and numbers, which cannot be readily and satisfactorily accounted for. The most material of these are marked in the margin.—It is probable, that Ezra, when he wrote his history, many years after the return of the Jews to Babylon, copied this register from the publick records without alteration.—Some think, that several who had their names inserted in the register, altered their minds, or died before the company arrived at Jerusalem; and that others came forward, so as to complete the same number in all. (*Notes, Neh.* vii. 5, 6. 73.)—The word *children* is sometimes used for the descendants from the several heads of families; at other times for those, whose ancestors belonged to the cities mentioned in connexion with them.

V. 30. The children of Magbish are not named in Nehemiah.

V. 35. It is uncertain, whether Senaah be the name of a person, or a place; but the greatest number of persons stated in the whole register are called the children of Senaah.

V. 36—39. Above four thousand priests went up to Jerusalem on this occasion; which was a very great number, in proportion to the rest of the company: yet only four, out of the twenty-four courses instituted by David, seem to have returned: at least only four of the persons, after whom the courses were first named, as here mentioned; namely, Jedaiah, Immer, Harim, and Pashur, who was the son of Malchijah: (1 *Chr.* ix. 12. xxiv. 7—9. 14:) and his name appears to have stood in the publick records, as head of his course, instead of his father's. The priests, however, were afterwards divided into twenty-four courses, under the ancient names, in order to preserve regularity in their ministrations.

V. 40—42. The very small number of Levites, compared with the multitude of priests, who returned from Babylon, is very remarkable. Perhaps during a course of years, having no employment in their appropriate services, they generally entered on other occupations; and felt little inducement or inclination to leave them, in order to be the assistants of the priests, in the present desolated condition of Judah and Jerusalem. But it may be supposed, that the priests, having a more sacred and honourable office, were reluctant to be deprived of it, and more ready to resume the exercise of their ministry.

V. 43—54. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, viii. 20. 1 *Chr.* ix. 2.)

f Neh. vii. 52. *Meunim. Nephishesim.* dren of f Mehunim, the children of Nephusim,

51 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

g Neh. vii. 54. *Bazluth.* 52 The children of g Bazluth, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

53 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of

h Neh. vii. 55. *Tamah.* h Thamah,

54 The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

i 1 Kings ix. 21. 55 ¶ The children of i Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of

k Neh. vii. 57. *Perida.* k Peruda,

l Neh. vii. 58. *Jaala.* 56 The children of l Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

57 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of

m Neh. vii. 59. *Pochereth.* m Pocherith of Zebaim, the children of

n Neh. vii. 59. *Amon.* n Ami.

o vii. 7. Josh. ix. 23. 27. 1 Chr. ix. 2. Neh. vii. 60. 58 All the o Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, *were* three hundred ninety and two.

p Neh. vii. 61. *Tel-haresha. Addon.* 59 And these *were* they which went up from Tel-melah, p Tel-harsa, Cherub, Addan, *and* Immer; but they could not shew their father's house, and their * seed, whether they *were* of Israel:

* Or, *pedigree.*

q Neh. vii. 62. 642. 60 The children q of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.

r Neh. vii. 63, 64. 61 ¶ And of r the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai: which took a wife of the daughters of s Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name:

s 2 Sam. xvii. 27. xix. 31—39. 1 Kings ii. 7.

62 These sought their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: t therefore † were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

t Lev. xxi. 21—23. Num. iii. 10. xvi. 40. xviii. 7.

† Heb. *they were polluted from the priesthood.* Ez. xliv. 10—14.

63 And the ‡ Tirshatha said unto them, that they u should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with x Urim and with Thummim.

‡ Or, *governor,* Neh. vii. 65. viii. 9. x. 1.

u Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 17. 29. vii. 6. x. 17, 18. xxii. 2. 10. 15, 16. Num. xviii. 9—11. 19. 32.

x Ex. xxviii. 30. Lev. viii. 8. Num. xxvii. 21. Deut. xxxiii. 8. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6.

64 The whole congregation together *was* y forty and two thousand three hundred *and* threescore,

y ix. 8. Neh. vii. 66—69. Is. x. 20—22. Jer. xxiii. 3.

65 Beside their z servants and their maids, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven:

z Is. xiv. 1, 2.

V. 55—58. These were persons descended from the remains of the devoted Canaanites, who had been brought into bondage by Solomon; (*Note,* 1 *Kings* ix. 20—22;) and so their posterity were employed in menial services, perhaps about the sanctuary, along with the Nethinims: and though both the Nethinims and "the children of "Solomon's servants," were of Gentile extraction, and not admitted to the privileges of Israelites; yet they seem to have been more ready to return to Jerusalem, than the Levites were.

V. 61—63. Either Habaiah, or Koz, being of the sacerdotal family, had married one of Barzillai's daughters; and his posterity perhaps thought their descent from him, more honourable than their priestly character, and so neglected to preserve their genealogy. Yet, on their return from captivity, they desired to be admitted to the service of the sanctuary: but, not being able to trace their genealogy, they were excluded by the Tirshatha, (that is, the governor, or Zerubbabel, *Neh.* viii. 9;) until a high priest should arise with Urim and Thummim, who might, by immediate revelation from God, decide upon their case. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex.* xxviii. 30.) But such a high priest was not vouchsafed under the second temple. 'The Jews 'generally acknowledge, that there was no Urim and 'Thummim under the second temple; and even they that 'say there was, (because it was necessary the high priest 'should have his garments complete,) yet say, there was 'no answer from God given by it.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 64. The number of the several families amounts only to twenty-nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen; and those in Nehemiah to thirty-one thousand and eighty-nine: yet the sum total is in both said to be forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, besides their servants. (*Neh.* vii. 66, 67.) The surplus are supposed to have been priests and Levites who could not produce their genealogy, and Israelites from the other tribes, who accompanied their brethren of Judah and Benjamin. 'It is remarkable 'that the two accounts' (of Ezra and Nehemiah) 'agree 'in the total amount; and the sum of the numbers, as 'separately detailed, will correspond, if to the 29,818, 'specified by Ezra, we add the 1765 persons reckoned by 'Nehemiah, which Ezra has omitted: and on the other 'hand, to the 31,089 enumerated by Nehemiah, add the '494, which is an overplus in Ezra, not noticed by Ne-'hemiah: both writers including in the sum total 10,777 'of the mixed multitude, not particularized in the indivi-'dual detail. ... Prideaux attributes the difference to 'alterations made by Nehemiah, in compliance with 'changes, that had happened since the departure from 'Babylon. ... The accounts unquestionably agreed, when 'they were received into the canon, except where there 'might be some cause for variation; and probably the dif-'ferences that now exist have originated in the carelessness 'of the copyists.' *Grey's Key.*

V. 65. Among the servants were "two hundred singing "men and singing women," (or two hundred and forty-

and *there were* among them [a] two hundred singing men and singing women.

66 Their horses *were* seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty and five;

67 Their camels, four hundred thirty and five; *their* asses, six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

68 ¶ And *some* of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which *is* at Jerusalem, [b] offered freely for the house of God to set it up [c] in his place:

69 They gave after their ability, unto [d] the treasure of the work, threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests' garments.

70 So [e] the priests, and the Levites, and *some* of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

[a] Ex. xv. 20, 21. 2 Sam. xix. 35. Neh. vii. 67. Ps. lxviii. 25. cxlviii. 12, 13. Ec. ii. 8. Jer. ix. 17, 18. Matt. ix. 23.

[b] Ex. xxxv. 5, &c. 29. xxxvi. 3. Num. vii. 3, &c. 1 Chr. xxix. 5—17. Neh. vii. 70. Ps. cx. 3. Luke xxi. 1—4. 2 Cor. viii. 3. 12. ix. 7.

[c] iii. 3. 1 Chr. xxi. 18. xxii. 1. 2 Chr. iii. 1.

[d] viii. 25—34. 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr. xxii. 14. xxvi. 20—28. Neh. xii. 71, 72.

[e] vi. 16, 17. 1 Chr. xi. 2. Neh. viii. 3. xi. 3, &c.

CHAP. III.

The Jews re-assemble at Jerusalem, build an altar, offer sacrifices, keep the feast of tabernacles, and prepare to re-build the temple, 1—7. Under the direction of Zerubbabel and Joshua the foundation is laid, amidst the rejoicing of some, and the weeping of others, 8—13

five, according to Nehemiah) who probably were employed in families, to assist their mournings, or their thanksgivings. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 66, 67. How exceedingly reduced and impoverished does Israel appear in this narrative, compared with the condition of the nation in the days of David and Solomon! —The number of asses, compared with that of the horses, shews in how general use asses were at that time: but horses as belonging to the patriarchs or their descendants, are not mentioned, till the time of David.

V. 68—70. Under the divine protection this company arrived safe at Jerusalem, without any memorable occurrence. They found the city and all around it in ruins, and it seems the neighbouring cities totally unoccupied. These they rebuilt as well as they could, and dwelt in them for the present. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 2. *Neh.* vii. 73.) But the house of God chiefly occupied their thoughts; and it seems that their oblations to it were made, before they separated to seek habitations or subsistence. The whole amounted to nearly eighty thousand pounds sterling, besides the priests' garments; which was a considerable sum for them to contribute in their present poverty: (*Note, Neh.* vii. 70—72:) but probably their brethren who staid behind, contributed part of it; as the sacrifices and the burning of incense at the temple, were for the benefit of those, who worshipped *at*, or *towards*, that typical residence of the God of Israel. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* viii. 28—30. *Dan.* vi. 10, 11.) 'By this it appears, that the Jews were not 'made such poor slaves in Babylon as wrought for their '...masters, but had liberty to trade, and get riches for 'themselves; some of them being advanced to considera-'ble offices in the king's court.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The whole history shews, that they were not reduced to personal slavery.—Every thing seems to have been conducted with much harmony and regularity. 'The foundation of this 'poor commonwealth was laid in a marvellous concord.... 'They had one heart and soul like the first Christians, 'without which unity no people can be preserved. And 'that it may be cherished, they must avoid those things 'that destroy it, which are (as Joseph Wolphius here ob-'serves,) principally... self-love, and meddling in other 'men's matters.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord will honour those, who renounce their own ease or interest for the sake of his service and glory: and all, who avail themselves of the proclamation of liberty and salvation sent in the gospel, have their names recorded in the book of life; whilst others shall be written in the dust of oblivion or disgrace. Those orders of men, which have on one occasion been most zealous in the cause of God, may at another time become most negligent; and the reverse is often exemplified; "for the first shall be "last, and the last first." (36—42. 2 *Chr.* xxix. 34.)—Those who are ashamed of religion, or undervalue their external relation to God, in times of reproach, persecution, or distress; will have no benefit from it, when it becomes honourable and profitable: and they who have no evidence, that they are, by regeneration and adoption, spiritual priests unto God through Jesus Christ, have no right to the peculiar comforts and privileges of Christians. But there are many cases, of which we cannot judge, but must leave them to be determined at the second coming of our High Priest, whose illuminations and perfections are unchangeable and eternal.—Those who "seek *first* "the kingdom of God," his favour, and his glory, will have all things else added to them: they will readily offer according to their ability for the house and service of God: and "where there is a willing mind it is accepted, accord-"ing to what a man hath, and not according to what he "hath not." (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* viii. 1—5. 10—15, *v.* 12.)—Sin always impoverishes and degrades both individuals and societies; but that poverty and degradation are often sanctified, and finally promote their true interest and honour. —Our gracious Lord will carry us through those undertakings, which are entered on according to his will, with an aim to his glory, and in dependence on his assistance; and then we shall be made superior to all difficulties, hardships, and dangers. Thus they, who at the call of the gospel, renounce sin, and return unto the Lord, shall be guarded and guided through all the perils of the way; and arrive safe at those mansions, which are prepared for them in the holy city of our God.

AND when [a] the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel *were* in the cities, the people gathered themselves together, [b] as one man to Jerusalem.

2 Then stood up [c] Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and [d] Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, [e] as *it is* written in the law of Moses the man of God.

3 And they set [f] the altar upon his bases; [g] for fear *was* upon them, because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD, *even* [h] burnt-offerings morning and evening.

4 They kept also [i] the feast of tabernacles, as *it is* written, and *offered* [k] the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the custom, [*] as the duty of every day required;

5 And afterward *offered* [l] the continual burnt-offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD *that were* consecrated, and of every one that [m] willingly offered a free-will-offering unto the LORD.

6 From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD. But [†] the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not *yet* laid.

7 They [n] gave money also unto the masons, and to the [‡] carpenters: and [o] meat, and drink, and oil unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the sea of [p] Joppa, [q] according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

8 ¶ Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began [r] Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the

a Ex. xxiii. 14—17. Lev. xvi. 29. xxiii. 24. 27, &c. Num. xxix. 1, &c. Neh. viii. 2. 14.
b Judg. xx. 1. Neh. viii. 1. Zeph. iii. 9. Acts ii. 46. iv. 32. 1 Cor. i. 10.
c Hag. i. 1. 12. 14. ii. 2—4. Zech. iii. 1, 8. vi. 11. *Joshua the son of Josedech.*
d ii. 2. 1 Chr. iii. 17. 19. Hag. ii. 21. 23. Zech. iv. 6—10. Matt. i. 12, 13. *Zorobabel. Salathiel.*
e Ex. xx. 24, 25. Deut. xii. 5—7 2 Chr. vi. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 68.
f 2 Chr. iv. 1.
g iv. 11—16. viii. 21, 22. Ps. xxvii. 3. lvi. 2—4.
h Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 2—8.
i Ex. xxiii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 34—36. Neh. viii. 14—17. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John vii. 2. 37.
k Num. xxix. 12—38.
* Heb. *the matter of the day in his day.* Ex. v. 13. Jer. lii. 34. *marg.*
l Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 3—10, 11. 19. 27. xxix. 2. 8. 13.
m Lev. i. 3. Deut. xii. 6. 17. 2 Chr. xxix. 31, 32.
† Heb. *the temple of the LORD was not yet founded.*
n 2 Kings xii. 11, 12. xxii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. xxiv. 12, 13.
‡ Or, *workmen.*
o 1 Kings v. 6. 9—11. 2 Chr. ii. 10—15. Ez. xxvii. 17. Acts xii. 20.
p 2 Chr. ii. 16. Jon. i. 3. Acts x. 5, 6.
q vi. 3—5.
r See on 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. It is probable, that the Jews began their journey in the beginning of the spring; and that they did not reach Jerusalem till three or four months after. (vii. 9.) They employed a short time in providing habitations and necessaries for their families; and then they all met together in the seventh month. This was the season of the first solemnities which occurred after their arrival. On the first day the feast of trumpets was kept: the great day of atonement followed on the tenth; and the feast of tabernacles began on the fifteenth. All these they seem to have observed with great devotion. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Lev.* xxiii. 24—43.)

V. 2, 3. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* i. 7—11. ii. 2.) The Jews built the altar upon the same foundation, and therefore of the same size, with that of Solomon. Probably it was formed of rough stones, with a large hearth of brass on the top. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 21—25, *vv.* 24, 25.) So large an altar, built all of brass, would have cost a sum far beyond their present circumstances. (*Note, 2 Chr.* iv. 1.)—The fear of the tribes or nations around them, whom the people knew to be their enemies, did not induce them to take arms, or to erect fortifications, but to prepare an altar and to offer sacrifices; by which they put themselves under the immediate protection of the Almighty God. (*Notes, Josh.* v. 2—10.) They began by offering the daily burnt-offerings morning and evening, which constituted the principal part of the stated worship required by the law. (*Note, Ex.* xxix. 38—41.)

V. 4. (*Notes, Num.* xxix. 12—37. *Neh.* viii. 14—18.) The sacrifices appointed on the several days of the feast of tabernacles, were numerous; and the observance of it seems to have been greatly neglected: yet the returned captives strictly complied with the requirements of the law, 'which put this poor people to great expenses: but 'their piety was now such, that they valued nothing so 'much as the service of God.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5, 6. Some of the people had come to Jerusalem and had prepared the altar, before the first day of the seventh month. And the rest being assembled as one man, they then began their solemn worship, with the daily sacrifices, those appointed for the new moons, and those for the feast of trumpets, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles. Besides those sacrifices which were expressly appointed, many "willingly offered free-will-offer-"ings unto the LORD." (*Marg. Ref.*)—Until the temple was completed, it is likely they had erected a tabernacle near the altar, in which the sacred vessels and treasures were deposited and guarded. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* ix. 19—21.)

V. 7. It seems, that the Jews were authorized by Cyrus to cut as much timber in Lebanon, as they wanted: but the Zidonians and Tyrians would expect to be paid for their labour; and they would prefer corn, wine, and oil, to money.—"According to the grant that they had of Cyrus;" 'who commanded, I suppose, those of Tyre and Zidon 'to assist them.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes,* iv. 4—6. vi. 4.)

V. 8—11. The people did all that they could, during the winter, in making preparations for building the temple; for immense labour must have been requisite, in clearing the ground for the foundation, as well as in providing materials. In the second month, however, of the second year, or in a little more than a year after they left Babylon, Zerubbabel and Jeshua, having appointed the priests and Levites to attend in their courses, laid the foundation of the temple, with songs of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. (*Notes, Num.* x. 2—10, *v.* 10. 1 *Chr.* xvi. 37—

remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from
[s] Num. iv. 3. 1 Chr. xxiii. 24—32. [s] twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the LORD.

9 Then stood Jeshua *with* his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his
[t] ii. 40. *Hodaviah.* Neh. vii. 43. *Hodevah.* [*] Heb. *as one.* sons, the sons of [t] Judah, [*] together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, *with* their sons and their brethren the Levites.

[u] Ex. xxviii. 40—42. 1 Sam. xxii. 18. 1 Chr. xv. 27. [x] Num. x. 1—10. 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi. 5, 6. [y] 1 Chr. vi. 39. xvi. 37. xxv. 1—7. 2 Chr. xxxv. 15. [z] 1 Chr. vi. 31. xvi. 4—7. xxiii. 5. 2 Chr. xxix. 25, 26. 10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they [u] set the priests in their apparel with [x] trumpets, and the Levites [y] the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, [z] after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

11 And [a] they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; [b] Because *he is* good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever toward Israel. And all the people [c] shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, [d] because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

[a] Ex. xv. 21. Neh. xii. 24. 40. Ps. xxiv. 7—10. Is. vi. 3. [b] 1 Chr. xvi. 34. 41. 2 Chr. vii. 3. Ps. ciii. 17. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxxxv. 3. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Luke i. 50. [c] Josh. vi. 5. 10. 16. Ps. xlvii. 1. 5. Is. xii. 6. xliv. 23. Zech. ix. 9. [d] Ps. cii. 13, 14.

12 But [e] many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, *who were* ancient men, that had seen the first house, [f] when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:

[e] Hag. ii. 3. [f] Job viii. 7. Is. xli. 14. lx. 22. Dan. ii. 34, 35. Zech. iv. 10. Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people [g] shouted with a loud shout, and [h] the noise was heard afar off.

[g] Neh. xii. 43. Ps. v. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Zech. iv. 7. Luke xix. 37—40. [h] Ex. xxxii. 17, 18. 1 Sam. iv. 5. 1 Kings i. 40. 45. Ps. c. 1, 2.

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43. xxiii. 2—6. 24—28. *2 Chr.* v. 11—13. xxxiv. 8—13, *v.* 12.)—Thus after their long afflictions, they were encouraged again to sing, "The LORD is good, for his mercy "endureth for ever towards Israel;" even as the prophet Jeremiah had foretold. (*Note, Jer.* xxxiii. 11.)

Jeshua, &c. (9) 'Not Jeshua the high priest before 'mentioned, but another Jeshua, who was a Levite, men-'tioned ii. 40.—"The sons of Judah," who is called there 'Hodaviah.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12, 13. The Jews, who had heard of the temple and its solemn worship, and the blessing and comfort which it had been to their fathers, but had never seen it, were elated with joy that they were once more to have a temple, as the symbol of the Lord's presence with them, and his favour to them, and expressed their joy and thankfulness, by loud acclamations. On the other hand, the old men, who remembered the splendour of the former temple, (which had now been destroyed about fifty-three years,) were led by the recollection of past prosperity, to give vent to their regret in copious tears and loud lamentations. By this they undervalued their present mercies: and it was the more reprehensible, as the priests and Levites, and chief persons, led the way in this unseasonable sorrow, so as to discourage their brethren, and interrupt their fervent praises. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Zech.* iv. 8—10.)—The temple itself is supposed to have been rebuilt of the same dimensions as before: but probably it was formed chiefly with the old stones dug out of the ruins, and with inferior workmanship; and it was not overlaid with gold, as Solomon's temple had been: neither was it, for a long time at least, surrounded with such magnificent out-buildings. Moreover, the ark of the covenant, the tables of the law, and the mercy-seat, were irrecoverably lost; and it is uncertain whether any thing was substituted in their stead: no visible glory, it is said, now appeared in the most holy place; there were no answers by Urim and Thummim; and no fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices, but common fire was used for that purpose. (*Marg. Ref.*) These and other circumstances *seemed* to indicate, that the Lord was not with them as in times past: but they *really* shewed, that the types were waxing old, and ready to vanish away, by the coming of the great Antitype, (*Notes, Jer.* iii. 16—18. *Heb.* viii. 7—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is true wisdom to prefer the service of God to our most urgent temporal concerns.—The greater difficulties, and the more formidable enemies, we are exposed to, the more evidently we need the friendship and assistance of God; and we should be proportionably earnest and constant in seeking and serving him, according to his word, through the great atonement of our heavenly Advocate.—These, who rule over others, should go before them in every good work: and we should worship the Lord in respect of outward things, according to what our circumstances will permit, though we cannot attain to all that is desirable. That, which is expended in obedience to his commandment, will never impoverish us or our families: we should therefore rather save in any thing, than grudge the expense of works of piety and charity, which is like sowing the seed of a future harvest. (*Notes, Prov.* xi. 24, 25. *Ec.* xi. 1, 2. *Luke* vi. 37, 38. *Acts* xi. 27—30. *P. O.* 19—30, *latter part.*—*Notes, 2 Cor.* ix. 6—15. *P. O.* 8—15.)—Every day brings its peculiar duties: these will not be grievous, but pleasant, to the true and consistent servant of the Lord; and when zeal and love prevail, he will be looking out for opportunities of usefulness, and cheerfully bringing his free-will-offerings.—Unanimity, activity, and promptitude, in contriving and executing good designs, will surmount many difficulties, and perform great things in a little time; especially if all orders in society concur in their proper places.—The trumpet of the gospel not only warns the sinner to flee from the wrath to come, but animates the believer to his "work of faith and labour of-

CHAP. IV.

The adversaries of the Jews offer to join in building the temple; and, being rejected, they endeavour to hinder the work, 1—6. They write to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, 7—10. A copy of their letter, 11—16. The answer of Artaxerxes, who decrees that the work shall be stopped, 17—22. The Jews are compelled to cease from building, 23, 24.

[a] 7—9. 1 Kings v. 4, 5. 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10. Neh. iv. 1—11. Dan. ix. 25. 1 Cor. xvi. 9.
[*] Heb. *sons of the transportation.* i. 11. *marg.* vi. 16. 19, 20. x. 7. 16. Dan. v. 13.
[b] i. 5. ii. 2. iii. 2. 12.
[c] Prov. xxvi. 23—26. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. Gal. ii. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

NOW when [a] the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the [*] children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel;

2 Then they came to [b] Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, [c] Let us build with you: for we seek your God as ye *do*; and [d] we do sacrifice unto him, since the days of [e] Esar-haddon king of [f] Assur, which brought us up hither.

[d] 2 Kings xvii. 24. 27—33. 41.
[e] 10. *Asnapper.* 2 Kings xix. 37.
[f] Gen. x. 11. Ps. lxxiii. 8. Is. xxxvii. 37. *Assyria.* Hos. xiv. 3. *Asshur.*

3 But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, [g] Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as [h] king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

[g] Neh. ii. 20. John iv. 22, 23. Acts viii. 21. Rom. ix. 4, 5.
[h] i. 1—3. vi. 3—5. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23. Is. xliv. 28. xlv. 1. 4. Matt. x. 16.

4 Then the people of the land [i] weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and [k] troubled them in building;

[i] iii. 3. Neh. vi. 9. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Jer. xxxviii. 4. B. C. 534.
[k] Neh. iv. 7, 8. 11. Ps. ii. 1, 2. Nah. i. 11. Acts xxiv. 1.

5 And [l] hired counsellors against

"love."—Every recent token of the loving-kindness of the Lord should remind us to celebrate his former goodness and mercy, and to anticipate future blessings: for, notwithstanding our chastisements and distrustful murmurs, "the LORD is good, and his mercy endureth for ever to-"wards Israel." The conviction of this truth, and the consideration of our own unworthiness, should enlarge our hearts with hope and gratitude, at every renewed token of his favour; and render us joyful at our work, and even amidst our trials. But we are too prone to bemoan lost comforts, disappointments, and scanty possessions; to give way to discontent, impatience, and distrust; and thus to mar our own enjoyment of present mercies, to interrupt the joy of others, and to refuse our God the praise and thanksgiving due unto his name. Against this propensity we should continually watch and pray. Even when we compare the present low state of true piety, and the small success of the gospel, with those primitive times when "great "grace was upon all" the company of believers, and "the Lord daily added to the church such as should be "saved;" or when we lament declensions in congregations, churches, or nations; we should be careful not to undervalue the present goodness of our God; to "de-"spise the day of small things;" or to weaken our own hands, and discourage the hearts of others, in seeking a more signal and effectual blessing.—In this world, however, joys and sorrows will be blended, for it is a mixed state: hereafter there will be a complete separation; in one place there will be "fulness of joy and pleasures for "evermore," in the other there will be eternal weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. May "Jesus deliver us "from the wrath to come," and prepare us for his glorious and eternal felicity; "that where he is, there we may "be also."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. (*Note*, 2. 10.) The Cutheans, or Samaritans, who had been planted in the land of Israel by Esar-haddon, had perhaps encroached upon the countries belonging to the Jews; and doubtless they were envious of the favour shewn them by the king of Persia: and thus they took occasion to become their determined enemies. But they were chiefly influenced by the enmity which "the seed of the serpent" bears to the true church of God; arising from contrariety of character, and hatred to the holiness of God, as displayed in his holy law, ordinances, truths, and people. And they might also fear, lest the establishment of the true worship of JEHOVAH should expose their spurious religion to disgrace. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xvii. 24—28. 41. *Neh.* xiii. 23—30.)

V. 2. 'This people, no doubt, were desirous to partake 'of the privileges, which were granted to the Jews by 'the king of Persia. ...Though they worshipped God, yet 'they joined other feigned gods with him, and therefore 'could not be admitted into communion with them at the 'temple.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The Samaritans professed to worship the God of Israel: yet they were not guided by his word, but by their own imaginations, devices, or traditions, in the service which they rendered to him; and they worshipped with him their tutelar deities: so that their religion was a mixture of idolatry, superstition, and ignorance; far worse at this time than it was when our Lord himself declared, that "they knew not what they wor-"shipped." (*Notes*, *John* iv. 19—27.)

V. 3. The Samaritans were neither Israelites by birth, nor yet true proselytes; so that the law of God forbad all coalition with them: neither were they included in the decree of Cyrus. Probably, the rulers of the Jews perceived, that they only meant to insinuate themselves, in order to obtain pre-eminence, foment dissensions, introduce their idolatries and superstitions, prejudice the minds of the people against their rulers; and in short to seize the temple, when built, for their own use; or to retard, injure, and put a stop to the work. It was, however, plain, that they did not mean to unite cordially with them, in the worship of the true God alone, according to his written word; and therefore nothing but mischief could have resulted from so unnatural an alliance, which they decidedly declined.

V. 4—6. This opposition of the Samaritans is supposed to have begun, soon after the foundation of the temple was laid. During the remainder of the reign of Cyrus for almost five years, however, they did not openly oppose a work which that prince had commanded: but they discouraged the people, and perhaps intercepted their materials for building; and by bribing counsellors to oppose

them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even
m 24. v. 5, &c. vi. 1, &c. until the reign of [m] Darius king of Persia.

* Heb. *Ahashverosh.* 6 And in the reign of [*] Ahasuerus,
n Matt. xxvii. 37. Acts xxiv. 5—9. 13. xxv. 7. Rev. xii. 10. in the beginning of his reign, [n] wrote they *unto him* an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

B. C. 522. 7 ¶ And in the days of Artaxerxes
† Or, *in peace.* wrote [†] Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel,
‡ Heb. *societies.* 9. 17. v. 6. and the rest of their [‡] companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter *was* written in
o 2 Kings xviii. 26. Is. xxxvi. 11. Dan. ii. 4. [o] the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue.

8 Rehum the chancellor, and Shim-
§ Or, *secretary.* 9. 2 Sam. viii. 17. xx. 25. 2 Kings xviii. 18. shai the [§] scribe, wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king, in this sort:

9 Then *wrote* Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the
‖ Chal. *societies.* rest of their [‖] companions; [p] the Di-
p 2 Kings xvii. 24. 30, 31. naites, the [q] Apharsathchites, the Tar-
q v. 6. vi. 6. *Apharsachites.* pelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, [r] the Susanchites, the Dehavites, *and* the [s] Elamites,

r Esth. i. 2. ii. 3. Dan. viii. 2.
s Gen. x. 22. Is. xxi. 2. Jer. xxv. 25. xlix. 34. Ez. xxxii. 24. Acts ii. 9.

10 And [t] the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest *that are* on this side the river, [u] and [*] at such a time.

t 1. 2 Kings xvii. 24, &c.
u 11. 17. vii. 12.
* Chal. *Cheeneth.*

11 ¶ This *is* the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, *even* unto Artaxerxes the king: Thy servants, the men on this side the river, and at such a time.

v 15. 19. 2 Kings xviii. 20. xxiv. 1. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13. Jer. lii. 3. Ez. xvii. 13—19. Luke xxiii. 2—5. Acts xxiv. 5. 1 Thes. v. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 13—15.
x Ps. xlviii. 1, 2. Is. i. 21—23. Luke xiii. 34.
† Or, *finished.* Neh. i. 3. Dan. ix. 25.
‡ Chal. *sowed together.*

12 Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us, are come unto Jerusalem, building [v] the rebellious and the [x] bad city, and have [†] set up the walls *thereof*, and [‡] joined the foundations.

y Neh. v. 4. Ps. lii. 2. cxix. 69.
§ Chal. *give.*
z vii. 24. Matt. ix. 9. xvii. 25. Rom. xiii. 6, 7.
‖ Or, *strength.*

13 Be it known now unto the king, that [y] if this city be builded, and the walls set up *again*, *then* will they not [§] pay [z] toll, tribute, and custom, and *so* thou shalt endamage the [‖] revenue of the kings.

* Chal. *are salted with the salt of the palace.*
1 Tim. vi. 10.

14 Now because we [*] have main-

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their application to the ministers of Cyrus, for supplies or protection, they greatly obstructed the design. This would be more easily done, as it is probable that Daniel, the powerful friend of the Jews, died about this time. (*Note*, *Dan.* vi. 25—28.)—Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, called here (as it is probably supposed,) Ahasuerus, reigned above seven years; and was a very impolitick and wicked prince: but regard to his father's memory, it may be supposed, prevented his attending to the accusations brought by the Samaritans against the Jews. *Darius.* (5) *Notes*, v. vi.

V. 7—9. Upon the death of Cambyses, Smerdis the Magian usurped the throne; and as no other king reigned in Persia, after Cambyses, and before Darius Hystaspis, under whom the temple was finished, he must be the Artaxerxes here mentioned: (*Note*, vi. 13—15:) unless, as some think, Artaxerxes is only another name for Ahasuerus. To him, however, the rulers of the Samaritans wrote a letter, which Ezra seems to have copied from the records of Persia. (*Marg. Ref.* o.) It was written at first in Syriack, or Chaldee: but perhaps it was entered into the records in Persian; so that Ezra, when he extracted it, again translated it into Syriack: and therefore it stands in the original scriptures in that language, as does all that follows to the end of the sixth chapter.—Bishlam, Mithredath, and Tabeel seem to have been the principal persons, who counselled the people to send this letter; and Rehum and Shimshai, it is probable, drew it up.—*The Dinaites*, &c. (9) 'These nine nations came out of Assyria, Persia, 'Media, Susiana, and other provinces of that vast empire; 'who with one consent joined in this letter, or petition.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.* p—s.)

V. 10. *Asnapper*, &c.] Probably Asnapper was the name by which Esar-haddon was known, in the eastern parts of the Assyrian empire; (2. 2 *Kings* xix. 37:) or as some think, he was a great captain, employed by Esar-haddon in this transaction.

At such a time.] The date of the letter seems to have followed in the records; but it was omitted by the transcriber, as it were with an *et cætera.*

V. 12. *The rebellious*, &c.] (*Marg. Ref.* v, x.) After God in his righteous judgments had reduced Judah to subjection under the kings of Babylon, the Jews certainly shewed a very obstinate and treacherous spirit of rebellion; they created their new masters a great deal of trouble, and they provoked them to their own destruction. But in so doing, they transgressed the commandments of their law, by violating their own solemn oaths and engagements. (*Notes*, 13—16. 2 *Kings* xxiv. 1. 20. xxv. 6, 7. 2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 13. *Ez.* xvii. 15—21.)—No attempt at this time had been made to rebuild *the walls* of Jerusalem; and the Samaritans were not in reality so much displeased at any thing, as at the building of the temple, though they artfully avoided the mention of it: and the letter also contained a most direct false accusation. 'When it is said, 'there was an order from the king, that this city should 'not be built, and accordingly the work was stopped, it is 'thus expressed, *ver.* 24, "then ceased the work of the '"house of God, which is at Jerusalem." ... Thus wicked 'men compass their ends by lies and fallacies, with which 'they prepossess men's minds against the truth.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13—16. David and Solomon had reigned over all the countries from the river Euphrates, to the river of

tenance from *the king's* palace, [a] and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we sent and certified the king;

15 That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know, that [b] this city *is* a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have [*] moved sedition [†] within the same of old time: [c] for which cause was this city destroyed.

16 We certify the king, that if this city be builded *again*, and the walls thereof set up, by this means [d] thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.

17 ¶ *Then* sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and *to* Shimshai the scribe, and *to* the rest of their [‡] companions that dwell in Samaria, and *unto* the rest beyond the river, [e] Peace, and [f] at such a time.

18 The letter which ye sent unto us [§] hath been plainly read before me.

19 And [§] I commanded, and [g] search hath been made, [h] and it is found that this city of old time hath [‖] made insurrection against kings, and *that* rebellion and sedition have been made therein.

20 There have been [i] mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all *countries* [k] beyond the river; [l] and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.

21 [*] Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until *another* commandment shall be given from me.

22 Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: [m] why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?

23 Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes's letter *was* read before [n] Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, [o] they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by [†] force and power.

24 Then ceased the work of the house of God, which *is* at Jerusalem. [p] So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of [q] Darius king of Persia. B. C. 520.

[a] Ez. xxxiii. 31. John xii. 5, 6. xix. 12—15.
[b] 12. Neh. ii. 19. vi. 6. Esth. iii. 8. Dan. vi. 4—13. Acts xvii. 6, 7.
[*] Chal. *made.*
[†] Chal. *in the midst thereof.*
[c] Jer. iii. 3, &c
[d] 20. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 24.
[‡] Chal. *societies.* 7. 9.
[e] v. 7. vii. 12. Luke x. 5. Acts xxiii. 26. Rom. i. 7.
[f] 10, 11.
[§] Chal. *by me a decree is set.*
[g] 15. v. 17. vi. 1, 2. Deut. xiii. 14. Prov. xxv. 2.
[h] 2 Kings xviii. 7. xxiv. 20. Ez. xvii. 13—19.
[‖] Chal. *lifted up itself.*
[i] 1 Kings iv. 24. 1 Chr. xviii. 3. Ps. lxxii. 8.
[k] 16. Gen. xv. 18. Josh. i. 4.
[l] 1 Chr. xviii. 6. 13. xix. 19. 2 Chr. ix. 14. 23, 24. xvii. 11. xxvi. 7, 8.
[*] Chal. *Make a decree.* 19.
[m] 13. Esth. iii. 8, 9. vii. 3, 4.
[n] 8, 9. 17.
[o] Prov. iv. 16. Mic. ii. 1. Rom. iii. 15.
[†] Chal. *arm and power.*
[p] Neh. vi. 3. 9. Job xx. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 18.
[q] v. 5. vi. 1. Hag. i. 15.

Egypt: but this was long before the commencement of the Babylonish, or Persian, monarchies. And after the death of Solomon, their successors had been confined within much narrower limits. The Samaritans, however, aimed to insinuate a jealousy into the mind of the king of Persia, that the Jews intended to claim and seize upon all those regions, and hold the whole, as independent on the kings of Persia; than which nothing could be more groundless and absurd. All their offence seems to have been, that they had prepared to defend themselves against their enemies, whilst acting under the authority of Cyrus. The Samaritans cloked their slander and enmity, under the fair pretence of fidelity and gratitude to the king of Persia: the ruling persons among them were maintained by revenues from the court of Persia; and it was not meet for them to see the king's dishonour, and the loss which would accrue to him, if the Jews were allowed to go on with their undertaking. (*Notes*, v. 3—17.)

We have maintenance, &c. (14) "We are salted with "the salt of the palace." *Marg.*—'It seems, they received 'their stipend in salt, from whence it was called *a salary*.' *Bp. Patrick.*

Fathers. (15) So they called the kings, who had reigned before Artaxerxes, over those countries.

V. 17—24. The king of Persia found by the records, that Jerusalem had been the seat of government for powerful princes, many ages before; and that afterwards rebellion and sedition had been made in it: and, as thus much was true in the letter of the Samaritans, full credit was given them for all that they advanced, concerning the progress and intentions of the Jews, and the consequences of their proceedings; though nothing could be more improbable, false, and malicious! A commission therefore was sent back, in which the temple was not mentioned; for though that created the jealousy in the minds of the Samaritans, it was little regarded by the king of Persia: (*Note*, 12:) but they were ordered "to cause them to "cease;" this was sufficient for their purpose; and without delay they forcibly put a stop to the work.—The usurpation of Smerdis did not continue a whole year; so that if he be intended, their commission was soon vacated: but the Jews, being greatly intimidated, and not so zealous as they had been, the work ceased till the second year of Darius, who, having assisted in killing the usurper, was advanced to the throne in his stead. (*Note*, v. 1, 2.) 'It 'is very observable, that in neither of their letters, nor in 'the king's answer, there is one word of the command 'which Cyrus gave; nor any thing said of the building of 'the temple, which was the great thing in which they 'were employed, and the building of which could be no 'damage to the king.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Every vigorous and successful attempt, to revive or promote true religion, will excite the opposition of Satan, and of "the children of disobedience" in whom he works. Indeed all ungodly men despise or hate holiness: yet they,

CHAP. V.

Zerubbabel and Jeshua, excited by Haggai and Zechariah, begin again to build the temple, 1, 2. Tatnai and Shethar-boznai are not able to hinder them, 3—5. A copy of their letter to Darius, 6—17.

who do not profess much regard to religion, commonly treat pious persons with mere neglect or ridicule; but hypocrites and hereticks have always been the most unwearied and cruel enemies of the true church of God. The labours and lives of his servants undermine their reputation, affront their pride, and expose their hypocrisy: and their enmity is thus embittered by envy and resentment. Sometimes indeed they seem desirous of being admitted to the fellowship of believers; and avow themselves to be of the same sentiments, and to be minding the same things. But they only want to insinuate themselves, that they may gain pre-eminence, and manage every thing for their own purposes. These "false brethren, unawares crept in, "bring in privily damnable heresies," form parties and excite contentions; introduce their own coalition between the world and religion; mislead and prejudice some and pervert others; lessen the influence of pious persons, and render the minds of the people disaffected towards them: and while their lives disgrace the cause, their insinuations "eat as doth a canker," till an internal decay corrodes the very vitals of piety, in every church where they obtain admission, and preserve their authority or influence. Let then all the friends of truth and holiness beware of such characters, and let them withdraw from them: "by their "fruits ye shall know them;" and let no plausible pretences, or hopes of support from their superior rank or wealth, bribe Christians to admit them "to build with "them," unless they mean to build a Babel, instead of a temple. It is true, if you will not have their friendship, you must expect their embittered resentment, which is more dreaded, but is far less dangerous. By insinuations, objections, and discouragements, they weaken the hands of the Lord's people, and induce them to suspect or dislike their faithful ministers, or their lawful rulers; and by slanders and reproaches, they attempt to prejudice others against them. But it is no wonder, that we cannot enumerate all their practices, when they have the old Serpent for their prompter, and spare neither trouble nor expense, nor crimes of any kind, to accomplish their designs. For the same part is acting over and over again, from age to age, with only circumstantial variations; and the less we are aware of it, the more we are in danger of being injured by it.

V. 7—24.

The gates of hell, in directly assaulting the church of Christ, often labour to excite rulers to suppress his truths and ordinances, by statutes and penal sanctions. To this end ungodly men bestow great pains to obtain the ear of princes. If they find them disposed to countenance pious Christians, they use deceitful methods to poison their minds with prejudices and suspicions. But when weak and wicked kings succeed to the thrones, which have been filled by wiser men; these slanderers venture to speak more plainly: and professing great loyalty and attachment, and even pleading the ties of gratitude and conscience, they pour in their false accusations, and petition for leave to persecute.—It is an old slander, that "Jerusalem is a rebel-"lious and bad city," and that the prosperity of the church would be injurious to kings and provinces: for "the Accuser of the brethren" knows how prevalent such considerations are with the princes of this world. Yet nothing can be more false: for true godliness teaches us to honour and obey the king; to "submit to every ordinance "of man for the Lord's sake;" to pay tribute, and "to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;" to be upright, peaceable, and blameless; and even to fulfil the oath or engagement which we have entered into to our own hurt: it admits of only a single exception; namely, where the command of God requires one thing, and the law of the land another, we must "obey God rather than man," and patiently submit to the consequences.—But it must be allowed, that ambitious and turbulent men have often disgraced the cause of God, by their usurpations, seditions, rebellions, treacheries, and perjuries: real Christians also have been seduced into inconsistent practices: and "op-"pression," which "maketh a wise man mad," has sometimes excited them to use unwarranted weapons. A few instances of this kind, *standing on record*, while the blameless lives and patient sufferings of thousands are unnoticed and forgotten, serve through revolving ages as a pretext, by which malignant enmity misleads worldly policy. All who love the gospel, should therefore walk circumspectly, avoiding all appearance of evil, especially in this particular, lest the church of God and posterity should suffer through their misconduct: for the whole body will be condemned without a hearing, if only a few individuals act improperly. (*Note, Rom.* xiii. 1, 2.)—Indeed we cannot behave so quietly, and endeavour to serve God and to promote religion so unexceptionably, but our endeavours will be ascribed to ambition or avarice, and we shall be suspected of harbouring the basest intentions. For kings and princes are seldom able to discover the truth, in such causes, even when disposed to enquire after it. Surrounded with flatterers and interested dependents, they must see with other men's eyes, and receive every information, concerning those whom their courtiers dislike, with a false colouring: and as they are too generally careless about religion, if not prejudiced against it, Satan and his emissaries seldom find much difficulty, in using them as the tools of their persecuting enmity. These considerations should teach us to count our cost; that we may be prepared for all events, and not be too easily discouraged or made remiss, as we are apt to be, upon every appearance of opposition: they should excite our gratitude for our peculiar privileges in this favoured land, and teach us to place our dependence on that God, who has all hearts in his hands, and not on the mutable decrees of princes and senates. We should also be in haste to seize on every opportunity of doing good; even as the adversaries of the church do in their mischievous devices: for, as we receive all from our wise, gracious, and righteous God; it is not meet that we should quietly witness his dishonour, or neglect any method by which we may glorify his name, and promote his cause in the world.

THEN the prophets, [a] Haggai the prophet, and [b] Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jerusalem, [c] in the name of the God of Israel, *even* unto them.

2 Then [d] rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and [e] Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem: and with them *were* [f] the prophets of God, helping them.

3 At the same time came to them [g] Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, [h] Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?

4 Then said we unto them after this manner, [i] What are the names of the men that * make this building?

5 But [k] the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and [l] then they returned answer by letter concerning this *matter*.

6 ¶ The [m] copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and his companions the [n] Apharsachites, which *were* on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king:

7 They sent a letter unto him, † wherein was written thus, Unto Darius the king, [o] all peace.

8 Be it known unto the king, that we went into [p] the province of Judea, to the house of [q] the great God, which is builded with ‡ great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.

9 Then asked we those elders, *and* said unto them thus, [r] Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls?

10 We [s] asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that *were* the chief of them.

11 And thus they returned us answer, saying, [t] We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, [u] which a great king of Israel builded and set up.

12 But [x] after that our fathers had

a Hag. i. 1, &c.
b Zech. i. 1, &c.
c Mic. v. 4. Hag. i. 2—8. Zech. i. 3, 4. iv. 6—10.
d Hag. i. 12—15.
e Zech. vi. 11. *Joshua—Josedech.*
f vi. 14. Hag. ii. 4—9. 20—23. Zech. iii. iv. 2 Cor. i. 24.
g 6. vi. 6. 13. vii. 21. Neh. ii. 7—9.
h 9. i. 3. Matt. xxi. 23. Acts iv. 7.
i 10.
* Chal. *build.*
k vii. 6. 28 viii. 22. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 18. xxxiv. 15. Phil. i. 29. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
l vi. 6—12.
m iv. 11. 23.
n iv. 9. *Apharsathchites.* vi. 6.
† Chal. *in the midst whereof.*
o iv. 17. Dan. iii. 9. iv. 1. vi. 21. John xiv. 27. 2 Thes. iii. 16.
p ii. 1. Neh. vii. 6. xi. 3. Esth. i. 1. 22.
q i. 2. 3. vi. 10. vii. 23. Deut. x. 17. xxxii. 31. Ps. cxlv. 3. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 26. iv. 2. 34—37. vi. 26.
‡ Chal. *stones of rolling.* Mark xiii. 1, 2.
r 3, 4.
s 4.
t Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. cxix. 46. Jon. i. 9. Matt. x. 32. Luke xii. 8. Acts xxvii. 23. Rom. i. 16. Gal. vi. 14.
u 1 Kings vi. vii. 2 Chr. iii. iv. v.
x 2 Kings xxi. 12—15. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 24, 25. xxxvi. 16, 17. Neh. ix. 26, 27. Is. lix. 1, 2. Jer. v. 29. Dan. ix. 5.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. A great part of the book of Haggai, and the former part of Zechariah, refer to the events here recorded, and the reader will find it worth while to compare them with the history.—The Jews resumed their work about fourteen years after the first opposition, given to them by the Samaritans; but within two or three years after they had been compelled to desist entirely from it. In the mean time they had rebuilt their own houses, without being in the least molested. It may be supposed that they had an altar and tabernacle, and kept up their stated worship; but they were persuaded, that it was not yet time to build the temple. For this neglect the Lord corrected them, and reproved them by the prophets, who came to "prophesy even *unto* them," or rather "*against* them." Their remonstrances excited the rulers and the people to resume the work; and their subsequent encouraging prophecies greatly helped them in accomplishing it. (*Notes, Hag.* i. *Zech.* iii. 1—7. iv. 4—10.)

V. 3. It is probable, that the governors of Samaria had been changed, on the accession of Darius, for men of greater temper and impartiality. The "companions," here mentioned with the governors, seem to have been some of the chief persons of the nation, who formed the council. Excited, however, by the envy and jealousy of the Samaritans, they interfered, as soon as the Jews resumed the building of the temple.—*This wall.*] The *wall* about the temple seems to be meant. (*Notes, Neh.* i. 3. ii. 12—16. iv. 1—3. *Dan.* ix. 25—27.)

V. 4. *Then,* &c.] It is uncertain whether these are the words of the governors of Samaria enquiring of the Jews the names of their rulers, who presided over the work (10); or those of the workmen referring the enquirers to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, for information.—Ezra may fairly be supposed to have inserted the words of the record without alteration: so that the first person plural neither proves that he was then at Jerusalem; nor yet that he was not the writer of the history, as some learned men have argued.

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Lord so watched over his people, that the Samaritans, though full of enmity, were restrained from using violence to obstruct the work: and he gave them so many encouragements, in his providence and by his word, that they were not terrified from proceeding; till at length the matter having been referred to Darius, a favourable answer was obtained. (*Notes, Hag.* ii. 3—19. *Zech.* i. 12—21.)

V. 6—17. It is probable, that this epistle likewise was copied from the publick records, and interpreted into the Chaldee language: but it forms an entire contrast to the malevolent, slanderous, and disingenuous letter of the foregoing chapter. (*Notes,* iv. 10—16.) It fairly stated

provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, [y] he gave them [z] into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon.

13 But [a] in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, *the same* king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God.

14 And [b] the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that *was* in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus [c] the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto *one*, whose name *was* [d] Sheshbazzar, [e] whom he had made governor;

15 And said unto him, Take these vessels; go, carry them into the temple that *is* in Jerusalem, and [f] let the house of God be builded in his place.

16 Then came the same [g] Sheshbazzar, *and* [h] laid the foundation of the house of God, which *is* in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now, hath it been in building, and *yet* [i] it is not finished.

17 Now therefore, if *it seem* good to the king, [k] let there be search made in the king's treasure-house, which *is* there at Babylon, whether it be *so*, that [l] a decree was made of Cyrus the king, to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

y Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 24—28. xxxi. 17. xxxii. 30. Judg. ii. 14. iv. 2. vi. 1. 1 Kings ix. 6—9. 2 Chr. vii. 19—22. Ps. cvi. 40.
z 2 Kings xxiv. 10, &c. xxv. 1, &c. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6, &c. Jer. xxxix. 1, &c. lii. 1, &c. Dan. i. 1, 2.
a i. 1—4. vi. 3—5. Is. xliv. 28. xlv. 1.
b i. 7—10. vi. 5. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 7. 18. Dan. v. 2, 3.
c vii. 27. Prov. xxi. 1.
d 16. i. 11.
e Hag. i. 1. 14. ii. 2. 21.
* Or, *deputy*. Acts xiii. 7, 8. 12.
f i. 2. iii. 8. vi. 3.
g 14.
h 2. iii. 8. 10. Hag. i. 12—14. ii. 18. Zech. iv. 9.
i vi. 15.
k iv. 15. 19. vi. 1, 2. Prov. xxv. 2.
l vi. 3—5.

CHAP. VI.

Darius finds the decree of Cyrus, confirms it, allows out of his revenues the expenses of building the temple, and denounces penalties on all opposers, 1—12. The temple is finished and dedicated, and the passover is celebrated with great joy, 13—22.

THEN Darius the king made a decree, [a] and search was made in the

a iv. 15. 19. v. 17. Job xxix. 16. Prov. xxv. 2.

facts to the king; and the writers merely desired to know his pleasure, after proper search had been made. The ingenuous account also, which the Jews gave of their nation, and the cause of the calamities that had befallen them, (which Tatnai and his associates faithfully stated to Darius,) is worthy of observation and of imitation.

Sheshbazzar, &c. (16) Hence it is evident, that Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar are only two names of the same person. (*Notes*, i. 7—11. *Zech.* iv. 4—10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The enemies of the church are active, powerful, and malicious, and alas, its friends too often dispirited and negligent: yet the Lord will not suffer his cause to be run down, but will raise up instruments to revive and carry on his work.—It especially belongs to the office of the ministers of God to warn, exhort, encourage, and direct all orders in society to attend to their several duties: when this is properly performed, it will be found the most effectual means of forwarding reformation, and the power of godliness: and humble and pious men, in the most exalted stations, will think themselves *helped*, by the faithful labours and animated remonstrances of those, who really declare to them the word of God.—While professed Christians are satisfied with forms, and attentive *mainly* to their secular interests and accommodations, opposition may seem to be slain: but when they bestir themselves to do the work and seek the glory of God, it will soon be found that it was not dead, but merely asleep. Nothing, however, can harm those whom the Lord protects, or cause the work of those to cease whom he employs. He finds other employment for some opposers, he restrains others by the moderation of their superiors: some are removed by death, or by revolutions in governments; and others are softened or changed; as it seems good to him, "who "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—There are men who have no true religion, yet are possessed of equity, candour, and generosity: and these qualities entitle them to our respect, though they will not justify them in the sight of God.—A fair statement of facts forms the honest man's best method of pleading a good cause.—The servants of the God of heaven need not, and must not, be ashamed of so great and good a Master; and it seems at first sight strange, that they should ever be tempted to so preposterous a crime.—Those religious peculiarities, which ignorant slanderers deem novel or singular, may boast an antiquity beyond all other sentiments or observances in the world; and have been maintained by the wisest, greatest, and most excellent men who ever lived upon earth.—While we continue in this world, we shall always have to confess, that our sins have provoked the God of heaven unto wrath; and that all our sufferings spring from this source, and all our comforts from his unmerited mercy.—We ought fully to acknowledge the favours which we have received from man; but should generally be silent as to the ill-treatment that we have met with. Even when we are exposed to censure, whilst the blame belongs to others; except the honour of God and the gospel requires it, it is seldom useful to vindicate ourselves.—The faithful worshippers of God are generally traduced, before they are persecuted: yet their cause demands nothing more than an impartial hearing to obtain a favourable decision; and many princes have persecuted more from misinformation and slanderous misrepresentation, than from malice.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The decree of Cyrus in favour of

house of the * rolls, where the treasures were † laid up in Babylon.

2 And there was found ‡ at Achmetha, in the palace that *is* in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein *was* a record thus written:

3 In [b] the first year of Cyrus the king, *the same* Cyrus the king made a decree *concerning* the house of God at Jerusalem; Let the house be builded, [c] the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; [d] the height thereof threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof threescore cubits;

4 *With* [e] three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let [f] the expenses be given out of the king's house:

5 And also let [g] the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, [h] which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and [§] brought again unto the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, *every one* to his place, and place *them* in the house of God.

6 Now *therefore*, [i] Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and [‖] your companions the Apharsachites, which *are* beyond the river, [k] be ye far from thence:

7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place.

8 Moreover * I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God; that of [l] the king's goods *even* of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not † hindered.

9 And that which they have need of, both [m] young bullocks, and rams, and [n] lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven, [o] wheat, [p] salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which *are* at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail:

10 That they may offer sacrifices of ‡ sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and [q] pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

11 Also I have made a decree, that [r] whosoever shall alter this word, let [s] timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be [§] hanged thereon; and let [t] his house be made a dunghill for this.

12 And the God, that hath [u] caused his name to dwell there, [x] destroy all kings and people that shall put to their hand, to alter *and* to destroy this house of God which *is* at Jerusalem. [y] I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with [z] speed.

* Chal. *books.* Ps. xl. 7. Jer. xxxvi. 2—4. 20—23. 29. 32. Ez. ii. 9. iii. 1. Rev. v. 1.
† Chal. *made to descend.*
‡ Or, *at Ecbatana.* or, *in a coffer.*
b i. 1—4. v. 13—15. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23.
c Deut. xii. 5, 6 11—14. 2 Chr. ii. 6.
d 1 Kings vi. 2, 3. 2 Chr. iii. 3, 4. Ez. xli. 13—15. Rev. xxi. 16.
e 1 Kings vi. 36.
f vii. 20—23. Ps. lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10. Is. xlix. 23. lx. 6—10. Rev. xii. 16.
g i. 7, 8. v. 14. Jer. xxvii 16, 18—22. Dan. i. 2. v. 2.
h 2 Kings xxiv. 13. xxv. 14, 15. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6, 7. 10. 18. Jer. lii. 19.
§ Chal. *go.*
i v. 3
‖ Chal. *their societies.* v. 6.
k Gen. xxxii. 28. xliii. 14. Neh. i. 11. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Prov. xxi. 1. 30. Is. xxvii. 8. Acts iv. 26—28. Rom. viii. 31.
* Chal. *by me a decree is made.*
l 4. iv. 16. 20. vii. 15—22. Ps. lxviii. 29—31. Hag. ii. 8.
† Chal. *made to cease.* iv. 21. 23. v. 5.
m Lev. i. 3—5. ix. 2. Ps. l. 9—13.
n Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. xxix.
o Lev. ii. 1, &c. Num. xv. 4, &c. 1 Chr. ix. 29.
p Lev. ii. 13. Mark ix. 49.
‡ Chal. *rest.* Gen. viii. 21. Lev. i. 9. 13. 17. Eph. v. 2.
q vii. 23. Jer. xxix. 7. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.
r vii. 26.
s Esth. v. 4. vii. 10.
§ Chal. *destroyed.*
t 2 Kings ix. 37. x. 27. Dan. ii. 5. iii. 29.
u Ex. xx. 24. Deut. xii. 5. 11. xvi. 2. 1 Kings ix. 3. 2 Chr. vii. 16. Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.
x Ps. v. 10. xxi. 8—10. Is. lx. 12. Zech. xii. 2—4. Acts v. 38, 39. ix. 5. Rev. xix. 14—21.
y Esth. iii. 14, 15. viii. 14.
z 13. Ec. ix. 10.

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the Jews had been a matter of great notoriety, and not more than sixteen years had elapsed since it had been granted: but in the changes which had taken place, and the multiplicity of affairs which occurred continually in the government of so vast an empire, it is probable that its purport had been forgotten. When, however, it could not be found at Babylon, Darius, unwilling to decide in this cause, without clear evidence, ordered it to be searched for at Achmetha, afterwards called Ecbatana, the chief city of Media; and there it was at length found, having probably been laid up in that city by Cyrus's orders.

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some suppose that Cyrus did not allow the Jews to build the porch of the temple more than sixty cubits high, lest they should fortify it as a citadel; and that the sixty cubits in *breadth* included the chambers on each side the temple. Perhaps he permitted them to build the temple itself sixty cubits high and sixty wide, as well as sixty long; but they chose to build it of the same dimensions as their former temple: for it is generally agreed, that thus it was at last builded; and it is clearly proved, that the porch was raised to the same height. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* vi. 3, 4. 2 *Chr.* iii. 3, 4.)

V. 4. *Expenses*, &c.] It is likely that the Jews had been deprived of this advantage, by the counsellors who were hired against them. (*Notes*, iii. 7. iv. 4—6.)

V. 5. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, i. 1—4. 7—11.

V. 6—12. Darius, in order to ingratiate himself with his subjects, shewed respect to the memory of Cyrus in every thing; and this might induce him to be more favourable to the Jews, when the decree of Cyrus was produced. But he seems to have been deeply convinced, that the God of the Jews was the God of heaven, who ought to be worshipped according to the law of Moses. His steady intention that sacrifices should be offered, at his expense, at Jerusalem, "of sweet savours to the God of heaven;" that the people of God "might pray for him and his sons;" and the expression, "the God, that hath caused his name "to dwell there" (12), shew, that he had been instructed in several important truths of genuine religion, and had a conviction of his dependence upon God, and entertained high and honourable thoughts of him, and that he regarded the prayers of his worshippers, as efficacious. (*Marg. Ref.*) The account indeed given of this transaction by the apocryphal Esdras is absurd, and inconsistent with

13 ¶ Then [a] Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that [b] which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily.

14 And [c] the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered [d] through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo: and they builded, and [e] finished *it*, [f] according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the *commandment of [g] Cyrus, and Darius, and [h] Artaxerxes king of Persia.

15 And this house was finished on the third day of the month [i] Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

16 And [k] the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the [†] children of the captivity, kept [l] the dedication of this house of God [m] with joy,

17 And [n] offered at the dedication of this house of God, an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a [o] sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, [p] according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 And they set [q] the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God which *is* at Jerusalem; [‡] as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 And [r] the children of the captivity [s] kept the passover, upon the fourteenth *day* of the first month.

20 For the priests and the Levites

a iv. 9. 23. v. 6.
b Esth. vi. 11. Job v. 12, 13. Prov. xxix. 26.
c iii. 8. iv. 3.
d v. 1, 2. Hag. i. 12—14. ii. 2, &c. Zech. ii. iii. iv. vi.
e Zech. iv. 9.
f Is. xliv. 28. Hag. i. 8.
* Chal. *decree.*
g 3. i. 1—4. iv. 24. v. 13.
h vii. 1.
B. C. 515.
i Esth. iii. 7. 13. viii. 12. ix. 1. 15. 17. 19. 21.
k 1 Chr. ix. 2. Neh. vii. 73.
† Chal. *sons of the transportation. See on* iv. 1.
l 1 Kings viii. 63. 2 Chr. vii. 9. John x. 22.
m iii. 11, 12. Deut. xii. 7. 1 Chr. xv. 28. 2 Chr. vii. 10. xxx. 23. 26. Phil. iv. 4.
n viii. 35. Num. vii. 2, &c. 1 Kings viii. 63, 64. 1 Chr. xvi. 1—3. 2 Chr. vii. 5. xxix. 31—35.
o Lev. iv. 3. 13, 14. 22, 23. 28. 2 Chr. xxix. 21—23.
p 1 Kings xviii. 31. Luke xxii. 30. Rev. vii. 4—8. xxi. 12.
q 1 Chr. xxiii.—xxvi. 2 Chr. xxxv. 4, 5,
‡ Chal. *according to the writing.* Num. iii. 6. viii. 9, &c.
r 16.
s Ex. xii. 6, &c. Josh. v. 10. 2 Chr. xxx. xxxv.

facts; for Zerubbabel had been long at Jerusalem, before Darius granted this decree. (1 *Esdras* iv. 13—63. v.) But probably some pious Jews had access to the king, who had so explained the matter, as to give him these favourable sentiments, and to dispose him to the service assigned him by Providence. He thought that the continuance of his life and the prosperity of his family, might be secured by the prayers of the Jews: but he seems not to have considered his future and unspeakably more important interests; and it does not appear, that his convictions had any abiding effect upon his own mind or conduct.—Knowing also the envy and malice of the adversaries of the Jews, Darius denounced a most dreadful punishment against those who should any more molest them: and he concluded his decree, with a most remarkable, and almost prophetical, execration against all kings and people, who should attempt to alter or destroy the temple, after it was built. (*Marg. Ref.* x.—*Note, Zech.* xiv. 1—3.) Thus the Samaritans, by opposing the Jews, most effectually served their interests; their governors, perceiving the king's inclinations, zealously concurred; and so the work was speedily completed.

V. 13—15. If we allow a year for the message of Tatnai to the court of Darius, the search made among the records, and all delays and obstructions: for the granting of the decree, and its publication in Judea; it will appear, that it was published just seventy years after the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans.—Zechariah, who prophesied at this time, mentions, that the people had kept annual fasts for the ruin of the city and temple, during seventy years; (*Notes, Zech.* vii. 1—7;) and this absolutely fixes these events to the time of Darius Hystaspes; for no other Darius reigned in Persia till many years afterwards.—The historian inserts the name of Artaxerxes with those of Cyrus and Darius, as concurring in this work (14): for though the temple was built before Artaxerxes came to the throne; yet probably it received great accessions of splendour and convenience, under the government of Ezra and Nehemiah, whom he patronized. (*Notes,* vii. 1—5. *Neh.* i. 1.)—The temple was finished in rather more than four years after the Jews returned to the work, when excited to it by Haggai and Zechariah; (*Note,* v. 1, 2;) in something more than two years after the decree of Darius had been published; and in about twenty years after the Jews returned from captivity. Cyrus reigned seven years; Cambyses, or Ahasuerus, seven; Artaxerxes, or Smerdis, one; and it was finished in the sixth of Darius. (*Notes,* iii. 8—11. iv. 4—6. 17—24.)

Through the prophesying, &c. (14) '"Haggai the pro-'"phet, and Zecharian"... directed and encouraged them 'in their work; representing to them, it is likely, the 'wonderful goodness of God, who had inclined the heart 'of the king of Persia to be so highly favourable to them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 16, 17. (*Notes, Num.* vii. 1—14. 1 *Kings* viii. 63—66.) The tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the priests and Levites, which had constituted the kingdom of Judah, formed also the bulk of the people after the captivity. But numbers from the other tribes had been incorporated with them in the reign of Rehoboam, and afterwards; and many returned with them from Babylon, probably some of all the other tribes. As the nation sprang from the twelve sons of Jacob, and some of the descendants of each remained; they were still considered as consisting of twelve tribes, and called "the children of Israel," and a sin-offering was offered up for each of them. Doubtless the same reference to the twelve tribes took place in respect of the shew-bread, and the writing of their names on the high priest's garments and breast-plate, as when they had been united under one government. (*Marg. Ref.* n, o.)

V. 18. Moses had given laws, concerning the ministry of the priests and Levites, with reference to the place which God would choose to place his name there; and subsequent events had proved Jerusalem to be that chosen place; but the courses of the priests and Levites were appointed by David. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* iii. 8—11.)

V. 19—21. It is probable, that the Jews who returned from their captivity had observed the passover, before the

were [t] purified together, all of them *were* pure, and [u] killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.

21 And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and [x] all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, [y] did eat,

22 And kept [z] the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy; for the LORD had made them joyful, and [a] turned the heart of [b] the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

t 2 Chr. xxix. 34. xxx. 15—17.
u Ex. xii. 21. 2 Chr. xxxv. 11. Heb. vii. 27.
x ix. 11. Num. ix. 6, 7. 10—14. Is. lii. 11. Ez. xxxvi. 25. 2 Cor. vi. 17. vii. 1.
y Ex xii. 47—49. Ps. xciii. 5.
z Ex. xii. 15—20. xiii. 6, 7. 2 Chr. xxx. 21. xxxv. 17. Matt. xxvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.
a vii. 27. Prov. xvi. 7. xxi. 1. John xix. 11.
b 2 Kings xxiii. 29. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11, Zech. x. 10, 11.

CHAP. VII.

Ezra's genealogy from Aaron, 1—5. He goes up to Jerusalem, 6—10. A copy of Artaxerxes's favourable commission to him, 11—26. He blesses God for putting this into the king's heart, 27, 28.

NOW after these things, in the reign of [a] Artaxerxes king of Persia, [b] Ezra the son of [c] Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of [d] Hilkiah,

a 12. 21. vi. 14. Neh. ii. 1.
b 10. viii. ix. x. Neh. viii. 2—9.
c 2 Kings xxv. 18. 1 Chr. vi. 4—14. ix. 11. Neh. xi. 11. Jer. lii. 24—27.
d 2 Kings xxii. 4. 8. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9. 15.

temple was finished: but not in so regular and solemn a manner, as at this time. (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxx. xxxv.)—*Separated.* (21) Including such as had been fully proselyted to their religion.

V. 22. *Of Assyria,* &c.] Darius, reigning over the country of Assyria, is here called "the king of Assyria;" though the Persian monarchy had succeeded to the monarchies both of Assyria and Babylon.—The pious acknowledgment of God in all these transactions, as influencing the king to be kind to the Jews, and as thus making them joyful, is highly rational; though it has now almost sunk into disuse, even among professed Christians! (*Notes,* vii. 27, 28. *2 Kings* v. 1. *Prov.* xxi. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Nothing but impartial and diligent investigation can give truth and innocence a decided advantage against lies, malice, and perjury: and much injustice may be committed merely through the indolence and inattention of magistrates.—Enmity or rapacity often intercepts the favours, which were intended for the people of God: but when his plan requires the interposition of princes, he can easily dispose them to use all diligence, to exert their authority, and to expend their treasures, in supporting his cause; and, for a time, these things have often been done by those, who would not give him their hearts, and never became his true worshippers! (*Note, 2 Cor.* viii. 1—5.)—Did kings know their true interests, even in this world, they would support the worship of God, and give liberty and protection to his people; that acceptable services might be rendered to his name throughout their dominions, and that many prayers, might be daily offered up for them. We ought indeed to "pray for kings, and all in authority," whatever be their character and conduct; yet we are very apt to be remiss and formal in this service, till encouragement enlivens our desires and expectations: but when princes decidedly favour the cause of truth and righteousness, the hearts of pious Christians are enlarged with hopes, and they pray for them with greater earnestness. Their lives are then looked upon as a publick advantage; and their persons, families, and undertakings, as well as their immortal souls, are daily recommended to the favour and blessing of the Almighty, by those "effectual fervent prayers of righteous men which avail much."—Such as interrupt and injure the worshippers of God, when protected by the civil government, are desperate rebels both against God and the king: and even tolerating laws will be insufficient for the protection of the harmless servants of God, if the executive power do not vigorously interpose, to punish such as *illegally* assault them. But the protection of God can alone be entirely depended on; and he will at length awfully destroy those persecutors who attempt to destroy his people, however powerful or numerous they may be.

V. 13—22.

When the Lord turns the hearts of princes, to strengthen the hands of his servants in their work; inveterate enemies will be overawed; indifferent persons will become helpers; the commandment of the king will be regulated by the commandment of God; and good designs, which had been long interrupted, will be speedily completed.—The revival of publick ordinances, where they had been obstructed, should excite our rejoicing, because honour is thus ascribed to the Lord, and benefit accrues to the souls of men. Nor can the consideration of former sorrow, or of present meanness and poverty, mar the believer's joy in communion with his gracious God and Father.—When sinners are redeemed from the bondage of Satan, and separate themselves from the filthiness of their wicked connexions and practices; when they humbly seek the Lord, depending by faith on the atonement of the great Redeemer, attending on his ordinances, and observing his commandments, according to the duty of their place; they are children of captivity, who are set at liberty: and they shall be made joyful by his salvation; they shall be feasted at his table, and enjoy the light of his countenance, and he will be glorified in them, and rejoice over them to do them good for ever.—As nothing contributes more to the conversion of sinners, and to the purity and prosperity of the church, than the holiness and faithfulness of ministers; let us all unite in daily prayers to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that all those who bear that sacred character may live and preach 'according to his holy word, and rightly and duly administer his holy sacraments.'

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—5. Artaxerxes, here mentioned, was

2 The son of Shallum, the son of
e 2 Sam. viii. 17. 1 Kings ii. 35. e Zadok, the son of Ahitub,
3 The son of Amariah, the son of
f Ex. vi. 25. Num. xxv. 7—13. xxxi. 6. Josh. xxii. 13. 31. Judg. xx. 28. 1 Chr. vi. 4. 50—52. Ps. cvi. 30, 31. Azariah, the son of Meraioth,
4 The son of Zerahiah, the son of
g Lev. x. 6. 12. 16. Num. iii. 32. xx. 25—28. xxvii. 2. xxxi. 31. 54. Josh. xiv. 1. xxiv. 33. 1 Chr. xxiv. 1—6. Uzzi, the son of Bukki,
5 The son of Abishua, the son of
f Phinehas, the son of g Eleazar, the son
of Aaron, the h chief priest:
h 2 Chr. xix. 11. xxvi. 20.
6 This Ezra went up from Babylon;
i 11, 12. 21. Ps. xlv. 1. Matt. xiii. 52. and he *was* i a ready k scribe in i the
k Neh. viii. 4 9. 13. xii. 26. 36. Jer. viii. 8. 1 Cor. i. 20. law of Moses, which the LORD God of
l Deut. iv. 5. xxviii. 1. Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 1. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2. Israel had given: and the king m grant-
m 11—26. ed him all his request, n according to
n 9. 28. vi. 22. viii. 18. 22. 31. Gen. xxxii. 28. Neh. i. 10, 11. ii. 8. 12: 18. iv. 15. Is. l. 2. lix. 1. the hand of the LORD his God upon
him.
7 And there went up *some* of o the
o viii. 1—14. p ii. 40, 41. viii. 15—20. children of Israel, and of the priests,
q 1 Chr. vi. 31, &c. xxv. 1—8. and p the Levites, and the q singers, and
r ii. 42. 1 Chr. ix. 17, &c. Neh. vii. 45. r the porters, and the s Nethinims, unto
s 24. ii. 43, &c. viii. 20. Neh. vii. 46, &c. x. 28. Jerusalem, in the seventh year of t Ar-
t 11, 12. vi. 14. viii. 1. Neh. ii. 1. taxerxes the king.
8 And he came to Jerusalem in the
fifth month, which *was* in the seventh
year of the king.

9 For upon the first *day* of the first
month * began he to go up from Ba- * Heb. was *the foundation of the going up.*
bylon, and on the first *day* of the fifth
month came he to Jerusalem, u ac- u 6. Neh. ii. 8. 18.
cording to the good hand of his God
upon him.
x 1 Sam. vii. 3. 1 Chr. xxix. 18. 2 Chr. xii. 14. xix. 3. Job xi. 13. Ps. x. 17. lvii. 7.
10 For Ezra had x prepared his heart
to seek y the law of the LORD, and z to
do *it*, a and to teach in Israel statutes
and judgments.
y 6. Ps. i. 2. xix. 7. cxix. 96—100.
z Matt. v. 19. vii. 24. John xiii. 17. Rev. xxii. 14.
11 ¶ Now this *is* b the copy of the
a Deut. xxxiii. 10. 2 Chr. xvii. 8, 9. xxx. 22. Neh. viii. 1—9. Mal. ii. 7. Acts i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 2. 2 Tim. iv. 2.
letter that the king Artaxerxes gave
unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, *even*
c a scribe of the words of the com-
mandments of the LORD, and of his
statutes to Israel.
b iv. 11. v. 6.
c 6. Matt. xxiii. 2. 13. Mark vii. 1—13.
12 Artaxerxes, d king of kings, unto
Ezra the priest, † a scribe of the law of
the God of heaven, perfect *peace*, e and
at such a time.
d 1 Kings iv. 24. xx. 1. Is. x. 8. Ez. xxvi. 7. Dan. ii. 37. 47. 1 Tim. vi. 15. Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 16.
† Or, *a perfect scribe of the law of the God of heaven*, peace, &c.
13 f I make a decree, that all they
e iv. 10, 11. 17.
of the people of Israel, and *of* his
priests and Levites, in my realm, which
are g minded of their own free-will to
go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.
f v. 13. vi. 1. 2 Chr. xxx. 5. Esth. iii. 15. ix. 14. Ps. cxlviii. 6.
g i. 3. Ps. cx. 3. Phil. ii. 13. Rev. xxii. 17.

evidently a different person from Darius. (vi. 14.) Xerxes, the son and successor of Darius, cannot be intended: for he reigned only twenty-one years; but Nehemiah, who was contemporary with Ezra, mentions the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes. (*Neh.* v. 14.) Artaxerxes Longimanus, the son and successor of Xerxes, must therefore be meant: and the seventh year of his reign was no less than seventy-nine years after the proclamation of Cyrus. The temple had been finished, and its worship restored within about twenty years: and nothing very memorable occurred during the subsequent fifty-nine or sixty years.—In all probability Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Haggai, and Zechariah were dead before this time: and the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews remained very unsettled, until this commission was granted to Ezra. (*Note, Dan.* ix. 25—27.) Ezra was *the son*, that is, *the descendant*, of Seraiah, who had been dead above one hundred and thirty years. (2 *Kings* xxv. 18. 21.) Many other persons are omitted in this abbreviated genealogy. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, 1 *Chr.* vi. 4—15.)

V. 6—10. Ezra had no doubt been educated to sacred learning, and had made great proficiency in it. Having, therefore, laid aside other employments and studies, and taking great delight in the scriptures; and having an ardent zeal for the honour of God, and an earnest desire of being useful to his people: he applied himself with great assiduity to obtain the suitable qualifications. He "gave himself wholly thereunto," and was careful to *do*, as well as to *teach* others, the statutes and judgments of God. (*Notes, Deut.* xxxiii. 10. 2 *Chr.* xvii. 7—9. xxx. 21. 22, *v.* 22. *Neh.* viii. 1—8. *Mal.* ii. 4—9.) Thus he became very eminent, and waited for an opportunity of rendering important service to his people; employing himself, probably, in the mean time, in instructing the Jews at Babylon, as circumstances allowed: and, being a man of learning, ingenuity, and reputation, the king became acquainted with him; so that Ezra requested and obtained from him a commission to go up to Jerusalem, that he might regulate all things which related to the worship of the God of heaven.—The language used on this subject is well deserving of our most serious attention. Every thing is ascribed to God, for his is "the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever:" yet the agency of instruments and second causes is properly noticed. 'God was so favourable to him, as to incline the king to give a gracious answer to his petition.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 27, 28.)—The word *scribe* here used, does not merely signify *one who wrote out copies of the law*, but rather *an interpreter of the law*. The scribes mentioned in the New Testament, professed to be interpreters of the law; but they in general "made it void by their traditions." (*Notes, Jer.* viii. 8, 9. *Matt.* xiii. 51, 52. xv. 1—14.)—Many learned men are of opinion, and indeed with good reason, that Artaxerxes was the Ahasuerus, who soon after this married Esther; and that this commission, as well as that of Nehemiah, was obtained through her influence. (*Note, Neh.* ii. 5, 6.)—*Of the priests*, &c. (7) *Notes*, viii. 1—20.—*He came to Jerusalem*, &c. (8) *Note*, viii. 21—23.

V. 11, 12. *Marg. Ref.—King of kings.* (12) The kings of Persia had many kings tributary to them; but this title seems to savour of ostentation, as if they had authority over *all* other kings. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xx. 1. *Is.* x. 8—11. *Dan.* ii. 37.)—The original letter is here inserted in the Chaldee language.

V. 13. The Jews, who had not taken the benefit of the proclamation of Cyrus, seem afterward to have been restrained from going to Jerusalem, till this decree of Artaxerxes again allowed them that liberty. (*Note*, i. 1—4.)

14 Forasmuch as thou art sent * of the king, and of his [h] seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, [i] according to the law of [k] thy God which *is* in thine hand;

15 And to carry [l] the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, [m] whose habitation *is* in Jerusalem,

16 And [n] all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will offering of the people, and of the priests, [o] offering willingly for the house of their God which *is* in Jerusalem:

17 That thou mayest [p] buy speedily with this money, bullocks, rams, lambs, with [q] their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings, and [r] offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which *is* in Jerusalem.

18 And [s] whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do [t] after the will of your God.

19 [u] The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, *those* deliver thou before [x] the God of Jerusalem.

20 And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, [y] bestow *it* out of the king's treasure-house.

21 And I, *even* [z] Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which *are* [a] beyond the river, that whatsoever [b] Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily.

22 Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred † measures of wheat, and to an hundred [c] baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and [d] salt without prescribing *how much.*

23 ‡ Whatsover is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for [e] why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

24 Also we certify you, that [f] touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.

25 And thou Ezra, after [g] the wisdom of thy God that *is* in thine hand, [h] set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that *are* [i] beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and [k] teach ye them that know *them* not.

26 And [l] whosoever will not do [m] the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, [n] whether *it be* unto death, or to [§] banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.

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* Chal. *from before* e.
h Esth. i. 14.
i 25, 26. Deut. xvii. 18, 19. Is. viii. 20.
k i 3. v. 8. vi. 12. Dan. ii. 47. vi. 20. 26. vi. 4. 8—10. Ps. lxviii. 29, 30. lxxii. 10. Is. lx. 6—9. Rev. xxi. 24—26.
l vi. 12. 2 Chr. ii. 6. vi. 2. 6. Ps. lxxvi. 2. cxxxv. 21.
n viii. 25—28.
o i. 4. 6. 1 Chr. xxix. 6. 9. 17. 2 Cor. viii. 12. ix. 7.
p *See on* vi. 9, 10. —Deut. xiv. 24—26. Matt. xxi. 12, 13. John ii. 14.
q Num. xv. 4—13.
r Deut. xii. 5—11.
s 2 Kings xii. 15. xxii. 7.
t 23.
u viii. 27—30. 33, 34.
x 2 Chr. xxxii. 19. Jer. lii. 17.
y vi. 4. 8, &c.
z 12, 13.
a iv. 16. 20. vi. 6.
b 6. 10, 11.
† Chal. *cors.* Luke xvi. 7. *marg.*
c Ez. xlv. 14. Luke xvi. 6. *marg.*
d Lev. ii. 13.
‡ Chal. *Whatsoever is of the decree.* 13.
e vi. 10—12. Zech. xii. 3.
f 7. ii. 36—55.
g 14. 1 Kings iii. 28. 1 Chr. xxii. 12. Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 98—100. Prov. ii. 6. vi. 23. Jam. i. 5. iii. 17, 18.
h Ex. xviii. 21—26. Deut. xvi. 18. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4. 2 Chr. xix. 8—10.
i vi. 6.
k 10. 2 Chr. xvii. 7—9. Neh. viii. 1—3. 7, 8. ix. 3. xiii. 1—3. Mal. ii. 7. Matt. xiii. 52. Mark vi. 34.
l vi. 11. Dan. iii. 28, 29. vi. 26.
m 2 Chr. xxx. 12.
n Ex. xxi. xxii. Lev. xx. Deut. xiii.
§ Chal. *rooting out.* Ps. lii. 5.

V. 14. *Seven*, &c.] Seven princes of Persia having conspired against and slain the usurper Smerdis, and thus made way for the family of Darius which afterwards filled the throne; the Persian kings ever after had seven chief princes as their counsellors, who possessed peculiar privileges, and joined with them in all publick transactions. (*Note, Esth.* i. 13, 14.) 'By this commission he gave him 'authority to make inquisition in Judea, whether every 'thing there was done conformably to the law of Moses. 'That is, he granted to the Jewish nation...a liberty to live 'by their own laws, and to judge all causes according to 'them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 15, 16. (*Marg. Ref.*) The king and his counsellors set the example to the people, of giving gold and silver on this occasion.—*Canst find*, &c. (16) That is, all the money, which Ezra could obtain by the voluntary contributions of the people, whether Jews or Babylonians. (i. 4—6.)

V. 17, 18. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is remarkable, that a heathen prince should lay no other restriction on Ezra and his brethren, in disposing of the treasures which they collected, except that they should be employed, "after the will of "their God." The whole commission implied a chartered right to the Jews of living according to their own laws.

V. 19—22. (*Note*, vi. 6—12.) 'This was a wonderful 'large concession, that he should have whatsoever he de- 'sired: and that they should not make him attend upon 'them, and wait long for it, but furnish him immediately.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*Salt.* (22) As salt was offered with every sacrifice, Artaxerxes did not limit the quantity to be supplied, lest any of the stated sacrifices should be omitted.

V. 23. 'Here Jacobus Capellus cries out in a kind of 'rapture, 'O! words to be written upon the palaces of '' kings in golden letters, and engraven on the minds '' of all the faithful with a pen of adamant! For they '' express an exceeding great sense of God, and of his '' supreme authority, and the regard that is due from the '' greatest kings and potentates, to his most sacred com- '' mands.' The like is not easy to be found any where.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 24—26. The king likewise exempted all employed

27 ¶ °Blessed *be* the LORD God of our fathers, which hath ᵖput *such a thing* as this ᵠin the king's heart, ʳto beautify the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem;

28 And hath ˢextended mercy unto me, before the king and ᵗhis counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened ᵘas the hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me; and I gathered together out of Israel, chief men to go up with me.

° vi. 22. 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c. Phil. iv. 10.
ᵖ vi. 22. Neh. ii. 12. vii. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 16. Heb. viii. 10. x. 16. Jam. i. 17. Rev. xvii. 17.
ᵠ Neh. ii. 8. Prov. xxi. 1.
ʳ Is. lx. 13.
ˢ ix. 9. Gen. xxxii. 28. xliii. 14. Neh. i. 11.
ᵗ 14. Jon iii. 7.
ᵘ 6. 9. v. 5. viii. 18. Neh. ii. 8. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.

about the worship of God, from paying any kind of tax; and as the Jews were far from affluent at that time, this was a very seasonable encouragement. He also authorized Ezra, as governor over the Jews who lived west of the Euphrates, to constitute magistrates under him, as he saw good. He allowed him to provide for the instruction of the people in the law of God, and even to proselyte the Gentiles; and he empowered him to punish all who proved refractory, according to their crimes.—David, Jehoshaphat, or Hezekiah could scarcely have done more for the Jews, than this heathen prince did: except as their examples, exhortations, and prayers would have concurred, to render these external helps and regulations effectual.

V. 27, 28. This pious scribe, instead of expatiating in the praises of his patron, or boasting of his own services, took occasion to bless God for "putting such a thing in "the king's heart:" (*Marg. Ref.* p, q:) and for all the assistance and favour shewn him, by the king and his counsellors! (*Note*, vi. 22.)—Whatever external decorations might be at this time added to the temple; the provision made for the orderly conducting of its sacred worship tended most effectually "to beautify it."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

When the Lord removes some useful instruments, he raises up others to fill their places.—Those, who desire to be "scribes well instructed for the kingdom of God," must lay aside all inconsistent pursuits and studies, and have their hearts purified from sinful passions, weaned from earthly affections, and filled with zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men. They must "prepare their "hearts" to seek the word of the Lord; that they may first understand it, then practise it, and afterwards teach it to others. In these sacred studies they should be diligent and unwearied; and meditation, prayer, and a spiritual mind will render them delightful. Thus they will become "able ministers of the New Testament," "men "of God, throughly furnished for every good work," ready scribes, apt to teach, bringing forth out of their treasures things new and old: and, beginning with faithfulness and diligence in a narrow circle, they may in due time expect, "according to the good hand of God upon "them," to be favoured with more extensive opportunities of usefulness.—But knowledge, even of the sacred scriptures, except it be reduced to practice, and communicated to others, will become useless and worthless.

V. 11—28.

The servants of God cannot vary from their rules at the instance of the greatest princes, or "teach for doctrines "the commandments of men:" but they may want the countenance and external assistance of rulers, in order that they may employ their gifts, and perform their duty, without molestation and to greater advantage. And when kings will grant them protection, entrust them with authority, and bear the expenses of their useful designs; and then leave them to conduct every thing by the rule of the word of God, and according to his will, as it appears to them and their brethren; they may without hesitation avail themselves of such assistance: nay, they may properly petition for it, when there appears a prospect of success. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxx. 12.) But in whatever way great and effectual doors are opened to them, they should regard men only as instruments; and ascribe it to the power and goodness of God, if princes grant their requests; bless his name for putting such a thing in their hearts; and receive a commission from man merely as an external opportunity of executing a higher commission from God, according to his instructions, and under his protection.—The liberality of heathen kings, in beautifying the house of God, and supporting the expense of his worship, reproached the conduct of many kings of Judah, and of all that reigned in Israel; and it will rise up in judgment, and condemn the avarice of many nominal Christians, who refuse to employ their superfluous treasures in supporting the worship of God, and propagating the gospel in the world.—Unconverted men may perceive, that "whatsoever is commanded "by the God of heaven," should be diligently done; and that the neglect of his worship will bring wrath upon kingdoms, and upon the persons and families of princes. But divine faith alone, as working by love and gratitude, is capable of producing unreserved, persevering, and delightful obedience.—The exorbitant and pernicious exemptions, which ambitious ecclesiasticks once *claimed*, have rendered magistrates reasonably jealous in this matter: but when ministers are poor and diligent, there would be a great propriety in *favouring* them with such exemptions, as consist with the welfare of society, and leave them to attend upon their work without embarrassing cares and distresses.—The wisdom, which God communicates through his word, is peculiarly useful in the choice of magistrates; that they may be indeed "a terror to evildoers, and a pro-"tection to those who do well." It belongs to civil governors to enact laws, and to proportion punishments to offences for the welfare of the community, the suppression of immorality, and the encouragement of those who endeavour to obey God and the king. And when wise and just laws are enacted, and impartially executed, it should animate us to proceed in our proper work with redoubled diligence and alacrity, in full confidence that "the good hand of "our God will be upon us," and prosper our attempts. But the weapons of our warfare, as Christian ministers, are not carnal: faithful preaching, holy lives, fervent prayers, and patient suffering, are the means we must use, to teach the ways of God to those who know them not, and to bring increasing numbers into subjection to the obedience of Jesus Christ. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* x. 1—6.)

CHAP. VIII.

The names of those who joined Ezra, when he was about to go up to Jerusalem, 1—14. Finding no Levites, he sends to Iddo, at Casiphia, and obtains some, 15—20. They observe a solemn fast, to seek of God a prosperous journey, 21—23. Ezra entrusts the sacred treasures to the priests, 24—30. They arrive in safety at Jerusalem, 31, 32. The treasures, by weight, are delivered up; and sacrifices offered, 33—35. The king's commission is produced, 36.

a i. 5. 1 Chr. ix. 34. xxiv. 31. xxvi. 32. 2 Chr. xxvi. 12. Neh. vii. 70, 71.
b ii. 62. 1 Chr. iv. 33. ix. 1.
c vii. 7. 13.

THESE *are* now [a] the chief of their fathers, and *this is* the [b] genealogy of [c] them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king.

d 1 Chr. vi. 3, 4, &c. xxiv. 1—6.
e 1 Chr. iii. 1. 22.

2 Of the sons of [d] Phinehas, Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the sons of [e] David, Hattush;

f ii. 3. Neh. vii. 8. x. 14. *Parosh.*

3 Of the sons of Shechaniah, of the sons of [f] Pharosh, Zechariah; and with him were reckoned by genealogy, of the males, an hundred and fifty.

g ii. 6. Neh. vii. 11. x. 14.

4 Of the sons of [g] Pahath-moab, Elihoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males.

5 Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males.

h ii. 15. Neh. vii. 20. x. 16.

6 Of the sons also of [h] Adin; Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males.

i ii. 7. 31. Neh. vii. 12. 34.

7 And of the sons of [i] Elam; Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males.

k ii. 4. Neh. vii. 9. xi. 4.

8 And of the sons of [k] Shephatiah; Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him fourscore males.

l ii. 6. Neh. vii. 11.

9 Of the sons of [l] Joab; Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males.

10 And of the sons of Shelomith; the sons of Josiphiah, and with him an hundred and threescore males.

m ii. 11. x. 28. Neh. vii. 16.

11 And of the sons of [m] Bebai; Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight males.

n ii. 12. Neh. vii. 17.
* Or, *the youngest son.*

12 And of the sons of [n] Azgad; Johanan * the son of Hakkatan, and with him an hundred and ten males.

o ii. 13. Neh. vii. 18.

13 And of the last sons of [o] Adonikam, whose names *are* these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them threescore males.

p ii. 14. Neh. vii. 19.
† Or, *Zaccur*, as some read. (Neh. x. 12.)

14 Of the sons also of [p] Bigvai; Uthai, and † Zabbud, and with them seventy males.

q Ps. cxxxvii. 1. Ez. i. 1. iii. 15. Acts xvi. 13.
r 21. 31.
‡ Or, *pitched.*
s 2. vii. 7. 24.

15 ¶ And I gathered them together to [q] the river that runneth to [r] Ahava; and there ‡ abode we in tents three days: and I viewed the people and the priests, [s] and found there none of the sons of Levi.

t 13. x. 21.
u x. 39.
x 11.
y 1.
z 16. 1 Kings iii. 11. 1 Chr. xii. 32. xxvi. 14. 2 Chr. ii. 12. Prov. ii. 6. Dan. ii. 21. 2 Tim. ii. 7. 1 John v. 20.

16 Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for [t] Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for [u] Nathan, and for [x] Zechariah, and for Meshullam, [y] chief men; also for Joiarib and for Elnathan, [z] men of understanding.

§ Heb. *I put words in their mouth.* Ex. iv. 15. Deut. xviii. 18. 2 Sam. xiv. 3. 19. Jer. i. 9. xv. 19.
a ii. 43. 58. vii. 7.
b Num. viii. 22—26. xviii. 6. 1 Chr. xxiii. 3—6. 26—32.

17 And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia, and [§] I told them what they should say unto Iddo, *and* to his brethren [a] the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring unto us [b] ministers for the house of our God.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—14. Doubtless Ezra took proper methods of making his commission known to his brethren, throughout their dispersions: but, though extraordinary favours were granted, and the city, temple, and land were now prepared for their reception, very few were willing to undertake the journey. Most of the Jews, who remained in those countries, were either settled to their minds, or were averse to labour and peril. They probably had synagogues, where they met for publick worship and instructions; and they were sinfully indifferent about the temple and its service. (*Note*, i. 5, 6.) But God, on this occasion also, raised up the spirits of a remnant to accompany his servant Ezra.—They are here numbered according to the chief of the fathers, to whose families they belonged. Some of the names of these families were mentioned before; as the descendants of those who stayed behind, seem to have taken this opportunity of following their brethren. (ii. 2—42.) Thus we read of "the last sons of Adonikam," as no more of that family remained in the land of their captivity. (*Marg. Ref.* o.) The males only are mentioned; so that the number including the women, was double, at least, what is here mentioned.

V. 15. Ahava seems to have been the name both of a town, and of a rivulet which ran into the Euphrates, near the town. The whole company must have lodged in tents, during the journey, as well as before they entered on it.—No Levites, who were not also priests, were found among them: for Ezra himself was a priest, and we read of two other priests who had joined them (2). A considerable treasure had been given to the temple at Jerusalem, by a Gentile king and his nobles; and yet no Levites offered themselves to take the charge of it! (vii. 14—19.)

V. 16, 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is uncertain where Casi-

18 And [c] by the good hand of our God upon us, they brought us [d] a man of understanding, of the sons of [e] Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and [f] Sherebiah, with his sons and his brethren, eighteen;

19 And [g] Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of [h] Merari, his brethren and their sons, twenty;

20 Also of the [i] Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name.

21 ¶ Then [k] I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might [l] afflict ourselves before our God, [m] to seek of him a right way for us, and [n] for our little ones, and for all our substance.

22 For [o] I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, [p] The hand of our God *is* upon all them for good that seek him; but [q] his power and his wrath *is* against all them that forsake him.

23 So [r] we fasted, and [s] besought our God for this: [t] and he was intreated of us.

24 ¶ Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, [u] Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them;

c 22. vii. 28. Neh. ii. 8. Prov. iii. 6.
d *See on* 16.—Prov. xxiv. 3. Jer. iii. 15. Dan. i. 20. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.
e Num. iii. 20. 1 Chr. vi. 19.
f 24. Neh. viii. 7. ix. 4, 5. x. 12. xii. 24.
g Neh. iii. 17. x. 11.
h 1 Chr. vi. 1. 16. 19.
i 17. ii. 43. vii. 7. 1 Chr. ix. 2.
k Judg. xx. 26. 1 Sam. vii. 6. 2 Chr. xx. 3. Joel i. 14. ii. 12—18, Jon. iii. 5—10.
l Lev. xvi. 29. 31. xxiii. 29. Is. lviii. 5. Jer. xxxi. 8, 9. l. 4, 5.
m Ps. v. 8. cvii. 2—8, cxliii. 8—10. Prov. iii. 6. Is. xxx. 21. xxxv. 8. xlii. 16. xlix. 10. Jer. x. 23.
n Num. xiv. 3. 31. Mark x. 13—16. Acts ii. 39.
o 1 Cor. ix. 15. 2 Cor. vii. 14.
p vii. 6. 9. 28. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 15. 22. Is. iii. 10, 11. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Pet iii. 12.
q Josh. xxiii. 16. 2 Chr. xv. 2. Ps. xxi. 8, 9. xc. 11. Zeph. i. 2—6. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
r Neh. ix. 1. Esth. iv. 16. Dan. ix. 3. Luke ii. 37. Acts x. 30.
s Jer. xxix. 12, 13. xxxiii. 3. l. 4, 5.
t 31. Deut. iv. 29. 1 Chr. v. 20. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. Matt. vii. 7, 8.
u 18, 19.

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phia lay, or who Iddo the chief was. The Nethinims are called his brethren: and, if he were one of that company, no doubt he had been advanced, on account of his extraordinary qualifications or services. Some, however, suppose the word rendered "his brethren" to be a proper name; and that, translated *Nethinims*, to signify *appointed*. They therefore render the passage thus; "I told them "what they should say to Iddo *and* Achio, who were con- "stituted in the place Casiphia."—It may be supposed there was at Casiphia a seminary, for the education of priests, Levites, and Nethinims, over which Iddo presided: where they had the free exercise of their religion, and had so comfortable a support, that they were not inclined to remove. 'It is very probable they had their synagogues '(as they had afterward in their dispersion,) or other 'places, where they met for religious worship. For we 'find the people resorting to Ezekiel in their captivity, 'and him preaching to them the word of God, in many 'places of his book. (*Ez.* xxxiii. 30, &c.) And Ezra in 'all likelihood was an instructor among them, as Joiarib 'and Elnathan also were, and Iddo to whom these were 'sent.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Iddo, by reason of his age, or his employment, was not desired to go, but to send proper persons for this service, which the men of understanding would duly explain to him (16). It seems, Ezra knew that subordinate ministers especially were wanted for the service of the house of God, and was therefore the more earnest in this matter.

V. 18. 'God inclined their hearts to comply with his 'desire.' *Bp. Patrick.* Sherebiah, no doubt, was "the "man of understanding" here meant; and the passage should be read, "A man of understanding ... even Shere- "biah." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20. The Gibeonites were appointed to the service of the Levites, in the time of Joshua: (*Note, Josh.* ix. 27:) and some think, that others, (perhaps a remnant of the devoted Canaanites, or of those who were vowed to the Lord, by themselves or their parents, *Note, Lev.* xxvii. 2—8,) were added to them, or placed in rather a superior station, by David and his princes, and afterwards by Solomon; and that these were, strictly speaking, *the Nethinim.*

V. 21—23. Ezra had collected his company at Ahava, in order to enter upon a journey of several hundred miles, which they were nearly four months in completing. (*Notes,* 31. vii. 6—10, *v.* 9.) It lay chiefly through the desert: and, as they were encumbered with families and possessions, they could make but slow progress, and a feeble defence in case of an assault. They carried large treasures with them, which would invite the attempts of the Arabian free-booters, and others who infested that neighbourhood. (*Note,* 26, 27.) In ordinary cases it would have been very proper, to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen for their defence, which no doubt would have been readily granted: but Ezra, in order to impress Artaxerxes with a proper sense of the power and perfections of JEHOVAH, had confidently declared to him, "that the hand of their "God was upon all them for good that seek him, and that "his power and wrath were against all them that forsook "him." Being therefore afraid lest the king should not at once understand the distinction between *using* means, and *confiding in* them; and lest he should be led to question the power, faithfulness, and goodness of Israel's God, or the sincerity of Ezra's dependence on him; he determined to travel without a guard, except that of the Almighty, being ashamed to ask any other, after his former avowed confidence in him. Yet, lest former sins should provoke God to leave them unprotected; and in order the more solemnly and publickly to put the whole company under his gracious protection; he proclaimed and observed a fast, that they might "afflict themselves before God," in deep repentance and self-abasement. Thus humbling themselves before the Lord, and seeking his merciful forgiveness, they besought him to be the Guide and Guard of them, their families, their substance, and also of the consecrated treasures. Accordingly he was intreated of them, their enemies were restrained or disabled, and they arrived unmolested at Jerusalem.

V. 24. Sherebiah and Hashabiah, beforementioned, (18, 19,) were descendants of Merari, the son of Levi, and not of Kohath, Aaron's progenitor; and consequently they were not priests. Either, therefore, the persons specified in this verse were priests who bore the same names;

x 33, 34. i. 8. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21. Phil. iv. 8. y vii. 15, 16.

25 And [x] weighed unto them [y] the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, *even* the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel *there* present, had offered:

26 I even weighed unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, *and* of gold an hundred talents;

27 Also twenty basons of gold, of a thousand drams; and two vessels of [*] fine copper, [†] precious as gold.

28 And I said unto them, [z] Ye *are* holy unto the LORD; [a] the vessels *are* holy also; and the silver and the gold *are* a free-will offering unto the LORD God of your fathers.

29 [b] Watch ye, and keep *them*, [c] until ye weigh *them* before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the LORD.

30 So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring *them* to Jerusalem unto [d] the house of our God.

31 ¶ Then we departed from [e] the river of Ahava, on the twelfth *day* of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and [f] the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.

32 And [g] we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days.

33 Now on the fourth day was the silver, and the gold, and the vessels [h] weighed in the house of our God, by the hand of [i] Meremoth the son of [k] Uriah the priest; and with him *was* Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them *was* [l] Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of [m] Binnui, Levites;

34 By number *and* by weight of every one: and all the weight was written at that time.

35 *Also* the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, [n] offered burnt-offerings unto the God of Israel, [o] twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he goats *for* a sin-offering: all *this was* a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

36 And they delivered [p] the king's commissions unto the king's [q] lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river: and [r] they furthered the people, and the house of God.

* Heb. *yellow*, or *shining brass.*
† Heb. *desirable.* Lam. iv. 2.
z Lev. xxi. 6—8. Deut. xxxiii. 8. Ps. lii. 11.
a i. 7—11. Num. iv. 4—15. 19, 20. vii. 13. 84—88. 1 Kings vii. 48—51. 1 Chr. xxiii. 28. 2 Chr. xxiv. 14
b 1 Chr. xxvi. 20—26. Mark xiii. 34, 35. Acts xx. 31. 2 Tim. iv. 5.
c 33, 34.
d 1 Chr. xxix. 2, 3. Ps. cxxii. 9. Is. lx. 13.
e 15. 21.
f 22. vii. 9. 28. Job v. 19—24. Ps. xci. 9—14. Is. xli. 10—14. Acts xxv. 3. xxvi. 22.
g vii. 8, 9. *Neh.* ii. 11.
h 26. 30. 1 Chr. xxviii. 14—18. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21.
i Neh. x. 5.
k Neh. iii. 4. *Uriah.*
l Neh. viii. 7.
m Neh. x. 9.
n Lev. i. &c. 2 Chr. xxix. 31, 32. Ps. lxvi. 10—15. cxvi. 12—19. Luke i. 74, 75.
o vi. 17. Num. vii. 27.
p vii. 21—24.
q iv. 7, &c. v. 6, &c.
r vi. 13. Is. lvi. 6, 7. Acts xviii 27. Rev. xii. 16.

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or they were the above-mentioned eminent Levites, who on this occasion were joined in trust with ten priests, in the care of the sacred treasures (30).

V. 26, 27. These treasures are computed to have been at least worth a hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides the sacred vessels, which were very valuable. The far greater part of this was offered by a pagan king, with his princes and nobles!

V. 28—30. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, i. 7—11. 1 *Chr.* ix. 27—29. *Is.* lii. 7—11. 2 *Cor.* viii. 16—24.

V. 31. As Ezra departed from Babylon, on the first day of the first month, (vii. 9;) and having sent to Casiphia to procure Levites and Nethinim, the company set off from Ahava on the twelfth day of the same month; it is evident that Casiphia was not far from Ahava.—It seems, Ezra was aware that there were enemies who lay in wait by the way, to assault, plunder, or destroy him and his company: yet he trusted in God to protect them, and they were accordingly delivered.

V. 32—36. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, ii. 68—70. vi. 6—12. *Jer.* xxxi. 8, 9. l. 4—6. *Zech.* ii. 6—9. *Acts* xi. 27—30.—*Eleazar the son of Phinehas.* (33) 'The names of Eleazar 'and Phinehas continued through many generations among 'the priests, because they were two very eminent persons 'in Aaron's family.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*The children*, &c. (35) The company that came up with Ezra from Babylon, offered these sacrifices, as expressing humiliation for sin, faith in the mercy of God through the typical atonement, and gratitude for his late mercies: this they did, not only for themselves, but for their brethren of all the twelve tribes of Israel.—*They furthered.* (36) The king's lieutenants, and the governors, having received the king's commission, (*Notes*, vii. 11—26,) furthered Ezra and the Jews in their undertakings; yielding prompt obedience to the orders of Artaxerxes.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—23.

While love of the world, and fear of the cross, induce most men to neglect the salvation of the gospel; they, who obey the gracious call, stand recorded in the book of life, and will be honoured by God himself.—When some of a family embrace the gospel, those who linger behind may probably follow; till sometimes, in answer to fervent prayers, and by means of zealous, affectionate, persevering endeavours, the very last are brought in.—Alas! that professed ministers of religion, who ought to take the lead in every good work, are generally so backward to labour, or

CHAP. IX.

Ezra, learning that many of the priests and people had married heathen wives, expresses great sorrow and consternation, 1—4. He prays, and makes confession of sin unto God, 5—15.

NOW when these things were done, [a] the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, [b] have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, [c] *doing* according to their abominations, *even* [d] of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, [e] the Ammonites, the [f] Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

2 For they have [g] taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that [h] the holy seed have [i] mingled themselves with the people of *those* lands: yea, [k] the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.

a x. 8. Jer. xxvi. 10. 16.
b vi. 22. x. 10, 11. Ex. xxxiii. 16. Num. xxiii. 9. Neh. ix. 2. xiii. 3. Is. lii. 11. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18.
c Lev. xviii. 3. 24—30. Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 9. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. Ps. cvi. 35.
d Gen. xv. 16. 19—21. Ex. xxiii. 23. Deut. xx. 17, 18.
e Deut. xxiii. 3—5. 1 Kings xi. 1. 5—7. Neh. iv. 3. xiii. 1—3.
f Num. xxv. 1—3.
g x. 18—44. Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 1—4. Neh. xiii. 23, 24. Mal. ii. 11.
h Ex. xix. 6. xxii. 31. Deut. vii. 6. xiv. 2. Is. vi. 13. Mal. ii. 15. 1 Cor. vii. 14.
i Gen. vi. 2. Neh. xiii. 4. 17. 28.
k x. 18—44.

venture, or suffer in the cause of God; and need to be stirred up by the example and exhortations even of their lay-brethren! But such as address them on these occasions should be chief men, or men of understanding and established character; lest they should be irritated, instead of being persuaded. They must not, however, be left to their negligence: and their superior brethren, having given them a good example, may send or speak to them, with more authority and effect than others can; and often those, who were before inattentive, will profit by meek and faithful admonitions.—When ministers for "the work of the "house of our God" are raised up, who are men of piety and understanding, we should acknowledge "the good "hand of our God upon us," and give him the praise; as we ought at all times to lift up our prayers for this blessing to his church.—It is an invariable rule, that "the hand of "our God is upon all them for good, that seek him; but "his power and wrath is against all them that forsake "him:" and we ought to live in the habitual firm belief of this, and should not be ashamed, if called to it, to avow our confidence before the greatest monarchs upon earth: but we should be ashamed to act inconsistently with these professions, or even to appear distrustful of the Lord in the path of duty. On some occasions we ought to omit those precautions for personal safety, and refuse to make that provision for our families, which in other circumstances are very lawful; lest our weaker brethren, or enquirers, should be stumbled, and so our God should be dishonoured. We have therefore great need to ask wisdom from him, that we may know how to use, or to refuse, lawful things, as expedient, or otherwise: and we shall be no losers by venturing, renouncing, or suffering for his sake; as "it is better to trust in the LORD, than to put "confidence in princes," or in armed hosts.—We should "acknowledge him in all our ways;" but we may especially confide ourselves and our works into his hands, when we are simply endeavouring to serve the cause of true religion. Instead of anxiously seeking help from an arm of flesh, (to which we are all shamefully prone,) when unexpected difficulties or dangers obstruct our path, we should more earnestly and explicitly commit our way unto the Lord. In such circumstances, seasons appropriated to secret or social fasting and prayer, form the most effectual method that we can take: because they best prepare our own souls properly to receive the blessing, and most immediately lead us to seek the forgiveness and mortification of our sins; which are more formidable hindrances to our success, than mountains, rivers, seas, or armies of hostile invaders or assailants. Indeed few enterprizes, *good in themselves*, finally fail of success, which are begun and conducted in this way. And when we thus humbly beseech the Lord, he will be intreated of us; and by his good hand upon us, we shall bring all our undertakings in due season to a happy termination.

V. 24—36.

They should be holy persons, who have the charge of holy things. Ministers are stewards of the most precious mysteries of God; and watch for the souls of men, every one of which is more valuable than all the world: and if any are wanting through their default, they will be required at their hands. The meanest of them, therefore, needs *at least* as much wisdom, vigilance, integrity, fidelity, and zeal, as the chief of those who carried the vessels of the Lord. And if any of us are entrusted with the gold and silver of the free-will offerings of our brethren; or of the princes and affluent persons of this world, for pious or charitable uses; we should "provide for things honest, not "only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men:" that we may be able, when required, to give a punctual account of the whole to those, by whom, or for whom, we have been employed. A clear conscience, and an evidently upright conduct, are both comfortable and reputable: yet our whole dependence for the acceptance of our persons and of all our services, must be rested on the merits and sacrifice of our great Surety: through him we must devote ourselves, and consecrate our services, to our reconciled God, and then walk before him in his commandments and ordinances, as we have opportunity and ability.—"When "our ways please the LORD, he maketh even our enemies "to be at peace with us:" and if he disposes a few of the great ones of the earth to favour his cause; numbers will afford their external assistance, not to please God, but the prince.—If preservation in peace and safety during our journeys on earth demand our tribute of grateful praise: what acclamations of gratitude shall we raise, when the Lord has conducted us safe through the perilous and wearisome pilgrimage of life, and through the gloomy vale of death, out of the reach of all our enemies, into the regions of eternal felicity!

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. After it was known that Ezra was come to Jerusalem, commissioned by the king of Persia,

3 And when I heard this thing, I [l] rent my garment and my mantle, and [m] plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and [n] sat down astonied.

4 Then were assembled unto me every one that [o] trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonied [p] until the evening-sacrifice.

5 ¶ And at the evening-sacrifice I arose up from my [*] heaviness; and, having rent my garment and my mantle, [q] I fell upon my knees, and [r] spread out my hands unto the LORD my God,

6 And said, O my God, [s] I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for [t] our iniquities are increased over *our* head, and our [†] trespass is [u] grown up unto the heavens.

l Josh. vii. 6. 2 Kings xviii. 37. xix. 1. Job i. 20. Jer. xxxvi. 24.
m Lev. xxi. 5. Neh. xiii. 25. Is. xv. 2. Jer. vii. 29. xlviii. 37, 38. Ez. vii. 18. Mic. i. 16.
n Neh. i. 4. Job ii. 12, 13. Ps. cxliii. 4. Ez. iii. 15. Dan. iv. 19. viii. 27.
o x. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 27. Is. lxvi. 2. Ez. ix. 4.
p Ex. xxix. 39. Dan. ix. 21. Acts iii. 1.

* Or, *affliction.*
q 2 Chr. vi. 13. Ps. xcv. 6. Luke xxii. 41. Acts xxi. 5. Eph. iii. 14.
r Ex. ix. 29. 33. 1 Kings viii. 22. 38. 54. Ps. cxli. 2. cxliii. 6. Is. i. 15.
s Job xl. 4. xlii. 6. Jer. iii. 3. 24, 25. vi. 15. viii. 12. xxxi. 19. Ez. xvi. 63. Dan. ix. 7, 8. Rom. vi. 21.
t Gen. xiii. 13. Ps. xxxviii. 4. Is. i. 18. lix. 12.
† Or, *guiltiness.*
u 2 Chr. xxviii. 9. Rev. xviii. 5.

to be ruler over those countries, and especially to reform the state of religion among the Jews; some of the princes informed him concerning the gross misconduct of their brethren, which they had not been able to prevent. It seems there was still a remnant of the old inhabitants dwelling in the borders of the land: (*Marg. Ref.*) and the Jews, being poor and exposed, opened an intercourse with them, and with other neighbouring nations; and intermarried with them, in violation of the law. This had always proved an introduction to idolatry: and their sin was the more aggravated, and threatened the worse consequences, because the priests, whose marriages had been carefully regulated by the law, (*Notes, Lev.* xxi. 7—15,) and the princes, to whom it belonged to enforce obedience to it, were ring-leaders in the transgression; and thus, both encouraged others by their example, and deterred such as wished to enforce the law against the criminals. (*Notes*, x. 18—44. *Ex.* xxxiv. 11—17. *Neh.* xiii. 1—4. 23—31. *Mal.* ii. 10—12. 2 *Cor.* vi. 14—18.) They had not indeed yet proceeded to direct idolatry; but they were in the direct way to it, and already chargeable with doing in some respects "according to the abomination of the Gentiles."

Holy seed, &c. (2) *Notes, Ex.* xix. 6. *Is.* vi. 13. *Mal.* ii. 13—16. 1 *Cor.* vii. 10—14.—'They are called an "holy '"seed," because of the covenant of God with them, 'which made them a peculiar people, separated from all 'other nations. It is likely those princes, who informed 'Ezra of this enormous practice had endeavoured to re-'form them, but could not, because they were opposed by 'as great men as themselves. But we must not cast away 'all hope, though we cannot presently reform men's lives: 'the time may come, when it may be done.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3, 4. When Ezra first arrived at Jerusalem, and was received with professed cordiality; when he saw the temple prepared, and the worship regularly conducted, with apparent piety; we may suppose, that he was joyful and thankful. But having been informed of these forbidden marriages, which threatened a speedy repetition of former crimes and judgments, he was affected with deep consternation and sorrow; and he expressed his concern for the honour of God and the interests of Israel, by the customary tokens, and even by such as were used to denote the greatest indignation, terror, or distress. (*Marg. Ref.*—*2 Kings* xxii. 19. *Note, Josh.* vii. 6—9. This seems to have been done publickly in some place of resort; and the matter being reported, many others became suitably affected, and trembled at the words of God, because of the transgression of Israel; (*Note, Is.* lxvi. 1, 2;) and were prepared to join in humiliation before him, and in effecting a reformation.—The Jews are here called, "Those that "had been carried away;" which might remind them of the captivity from which they were lately returned, and which had been brought upon them by similar transgressions.—It is probable, that Ezra observed a profound silence for some time, which indicated that the confusion and distress of his mind were too big for utterance. (*Notes, Neh.* i. 4. *Job* ii. 11—13.)

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.* q, r.) It is probable that Ezra chose the time of the evening-sacrifice, to go from the place where he first shewed his alarm and sorrow; and that he went up to the house of God, (x. 1;) because the priests at that hour, whilst the sacrifice was offering, burned incense in the temple, and the people met together in the courts of it to pray. (*Note, Luke* i. 8—10.)

V. 6. Ezra was not personally guilty in this matter: but he spake and acted, as the representative and the mouth of the whole people; being a member, and in some respects the head, of that body which had thus violated the covenant of God. (*Notes, Dan.* ix. 3—20.) He came to establish the civil and ecclesiastical state of the nation, "according to the good hand of his God upon him;" and he was ashamed and blushed, when he considered the rebellious and ungrateful conduct of that people, whose cause he had to plead continually before the Lord. Indeed the former crimes of Israel were like an inundation, which, being swelled by their present transgressions, would flow even over their heads, and entirely overwhelm them: or they formed an enormous pile, which, increasing by continual accessions of presumptuous rebellion, reached even to the heavens, to call down the vengeance of God upon them. The people, it may be supposed, persuaded themselves, that as they were free from idolatry, and adhered to the worship at the temple, all was very well and commendable among them; that their deviations as to these marriages were excusable, if not justifiable by necessity or policy; and that on the whole they might expect the favour and protection of God. (*Note, Rom.* vii. 9—12.) But the vehement language of this eminent man was well suited to give them a very different view of the case; and to convince them that they were abominable in the sight of God, and in danger of his severest vengeance: and it loudly called on them all, especially the criminals, to humble themselves before God in deep repentance.—*Grown up unto the heavens.*] 'This signifies ... the high 'presumption and insolence of their wickedness.' *Bp. Patrick.*

7 [x] Since the days of our fathers *have* we *been* in a great trespass unto this day; and [y] for our iniquities have we, our kings, *and* our priests, been delivered [z] into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and [a] to confusion of face, [b] as *it is* this day.

8 And now for a [*] little space [c] grace hath been *shewed* from the LORD our God, to leave us [d] a remnant to escape, and to give us [†] a nail [e] in his holy place, that our God may [f] lighten our eyes, and give us a little [g] reviving in our bondage.

9 For [h] we *were* bondmen; [i] yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us [k] in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, [l] to set up the house of our God, and to [‡] repair the desolations thereof, and to give us [m] a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

10 And now, O our God, [n] what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,

11 Which thou hast commanded [§] by thy servants the prophets, saying, [o] The land unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with [p] the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from [‖] one end to another with their uncleanness.

12 Now therefore [q] give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, [r] nor seek their peace, or their wealth for ever; [s] that ye may be strong, [t] and eat the good of the land, [u] and leave *it* for an inheritance to your children for ever.

13 And [x] after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God [*] hast punished us [y] less than our iniquities *deserve*, and [z] hast given us *such* deliverance as this;

14 Should [a] we again break thy commandments, and [b] join in affinity with the people of these abominations? [c] wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed *us*, so that *there should be* [d] no remnant nor escaping?

x Num. xxxii. 14. 2 Chr. xxix. 6. xxx. 7. Neh. ix. 32—34. Ps. cvi. 6. 7. Lam. v. 7. Dan. ix. 5—8. Zech i. 4, 5. Matt. xxiii. 30—33. Acts vii. 51, 52.
y Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. iv. 25—28. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 22—28. xxx. 17—19. xxxi. 20—22. xxxii. 15—28. 1 Sam. xii. 15. 1 Kings ix. 6—9. Neh. ix. 30.
z 2 Kings xvii. 5—8. xviii. 9—12 xxiv. 1—4. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16—19. Neh. ix. 26, 37. Dan. ix. 11—14.
a Dan. ix. 7, 8.
b Neh. ix. 32. Jer. xxv. 18. xliv. 22.
* Heb. *moment.*
c 9. Neh. i. 11. ix. 31. Hab. iii. 2.
d 14. 2 Kings xix. 4. 30, 31. Is. i. 9. Jer. xlii. 2. xliv. 14. Ez. vi. 8, 9. xiv. 22. Zech. viii. 6. 12. Rom. ix. 27. xi. 5, 6.
† Or, *a pin*, i. e. *a constant and sure abode.* Ec. xii. 11. Is. xxii. 23—25. Zech. x. 4.
e Is. lvi. 5. Rev. iii 12.
f 1 Sam. xiv. 27. 29. Job xxxiii. 30. Ps. xiii. 3. xxxiv. 5.
g Ps. lxxxv. 6. cxxxviii. 7. Is. lvii. 15. Ez. xxxvii. 11—14. Hos. vi. 2.
h Neh. ix. 36, 37.
i Ps. cvi, 45, 46. cxxxvi. 23, 24.
k i. 1—4. 7—11. vi. 1—12. vii. 6. 11—28.
l vi. 14, 15. Hag. i. 9. Zech. iv. 6—10.
‡ Heb. *set up.* Josh. vii. 8. Lam. iii. 22.
m Is. v. 5. Dan. ix. 25. Dan. ix. 4—16. Rom. iii. 19.
n Gen. xliv. 16.
§ Heb. *by the hand of.*
o I. Lev. xviii. 24—30. Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 12. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2.
p vi. 21. Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. 2 Cor. vii. 1.
‖ Heb. *mouth to mouth.* 2 Kings xxi. 16. *marg.*
q Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3. Josh. xxiii. 12, 13.
r Deut. xxiii. 6. 2 Chr. xix. 2. 2 John 10, 11.
s Deut vi. 1, 2. Josh. i. 6—9.
t Is. i. 19.
u Gen. xviii. 18, 19. Ps. cxii. 1, 2. Prov. xiii. 22. xx. 7.
x Neh. ix. 32. Ez. xxiv. 13, 14. Gal. iii. 4.
* Heb. *hast withheld beneath our iniquities.*
y Ps. ciii. 10. Lam. iii. 22 39, 40. Hab. iii. 2.
z Ps. cvi. 45, 46.
a John v. 14. Rom. vi. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.
b Ex. xxiii. 32, 33. Judg. ii. 2. Neh. xiii. 23—27.
c Ex. xxxii. 10. Num. xvi. 21. 45. Deut. ix. 8. 14
d 8. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. Is. i. 9. Jer. xlvi. 28. Ez. vi. 8.

V. 7. (*Marg. Ref.*) *As it is*, &c.] Jerusalem and the temple had been rebuilt, and a remnant were returned from captivity: but the nation in general was in a dependent, impoverished, and abject state; in comparison with that prosperity which their fathers had enjoyed in the times of David and Solomon, and which they had forfeited by their sins: (*Note, Neh.* ix. 36, 37:) and the bulk of it yet remained in a state of captivity and dispersion.

V. 8. A remnant of the Jews had now occupied Jerusalem and Judea for nearly eighty years; having thus had a *revival*, for a comparatively little space, from the state of national *death*, as it were, which had continued during the captivity: (*Notes, Ez.* xxxvii. 11—14:) and it might have been supposed, that the miseries of their ancestors would have effectually deterred them from imitating their crimes: yet in so short a time, they had made considerable progress in the very same path; and in case they proceeded in that way, a speedy period would be put to this reviving of their prosperity. (*Notes, Ps.* lxxxv. 1—8.)—"A nail "given them in the LORD's holy place," seems to signify, that the rebuilding of the temple formed a sure ground of confidence in the Lord, whilst they adhered to his service, and rested all their hopes and dependence on him. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Is.* xxii. 20—25.)

V. 9. *Notes*, vii. 11—28.—*A wall*, &c.] The temple, being the pledge of God's presence among them, was as a wall, by which the Jews were effectually secured from their enemies; unless they provoked him to desert them. Jerusalem was not at this time surrounded with a wall. (*Notes, Neh.* i. 3. ii. 12—16. iii. iv. 1—3. *Dan.* ix. 24—27.) 'The Hebrew word (גדר) ... doth not properly signify a *wall*, but a *hedge* or *fence*, such as were made for 'the folds of sheep. Whereby Ezra expresses (as Huetius 'well notes,) the singular care of God of them; who 'being "the Shepherd of Israel," had ... brought them 'back into their ancient folds, wherein he preserved them 'safe, even when they had no wall to defend them, under the 'powerful protection of the king of Persia.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 10—12. (*Marg. Ref.*)—'What shall any one say 'for such a wretched people as this, ... who had no regard 'to their prophets, nor to Moses himself, who had charged 'them to have nothing to do with the people of Canaan? ... 'Can we expect less than utter destruction of this small 'remnant, when, after all the punishments he hath inflicted 'upon us for our sins, and his ceasing to punish us, and 'rescuing us in this manner from our captivity, we return 'to those sins which are so odious to him, because so ex-'pressly against his commandments?' *Bp. Patrick.—Nor seek their peace*, &c. (12) The Israelites might seek the conversion of the heathen, or do them acts of common humanity: but they must not unite interests with them, nor seek their peace or prosperity in the land of Canaan, whilst they continued idolaters. (*Note, Josh.* xxiii. 11—13, *v.* 13.)

V. 13, 14. Both the judgments and mercies, experienced by the people, aggravated the guilt of their trans-

[e] Neh. ix. 33, 34. Dan. ix. 7—11. Rom. x. 3.

15 O LORD God of Israel, [e] thou *art* righteous; for we remain yet escaped, as *it is* this day: behold, we *are* before thee [f] in our trespasses; for [g] we cannot stand before thee because of this.

[f] Is. lxiv. 6, 7. Ez. xxxiii. 10. Zech. iii. 3, 4. 1 Cor. xv. 17.

[g] Job ix. 2, 3. Ps. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 19—22.

gressions; which would now speedily fill up their measure of iniquity, and bring final and total ruin upon them, except they took warning in time. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. Though the Jews had endured many and heavy sufferings, yet they had been punished less than they deserved; for they had broken their covenant, and merited utter ruin. (13. *Note, Lam.* iii. 21—23.) Whatever therefore should hereafter befall them, the Lord would be *righteous* in his dealing with them: and if they were yet spared, it would be entirely the effect of his *mercy*.—Thus Ezra closed his address, without adding one petition to his humble confessions. He knew not what to say, to ask, or to do. He could say nothing to excuse his people; he was sure they could not stand in judgment before God. He dreaded the consequences; yet he had not given up all hopes. His own mind was affected, and his manner could scarcely fail to affect others: and by this abrupt conclusion, as one who was assured that the righteous Lord would do what was right, he referred the whole matter to him, to do what was good in his sight. (*Notes*, x. 1, 2. *Josh.* vii. 6—9. 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 12—14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

Where a profession of godliness is made by great numbers, in a way which appears satisfactory to those who behold it as at a distance; the eye of God often perceives, and careful investigation may frequently detect, very shameful practices: and those useful designs, which are undertaken with great pleasure and sanguine hopes, will seldom be completed without many anxious and painful sensations.—Those who deal in frivolous, slanderous, and malicious informations, are justly the objects of publick execration: but when a pious regard to the honour of God, and a disinterested concern for the benefit of the community, induce men to give information of gross and flagrant abuses, to those who are authorized to repress them; they perform a most useful and honourable service: and even princes may glory in such an employment, though the criminals will generally hate and revile them for it. (*Note, Gen.* xxxvii. 2.) Men, who pride themselves in being free from gross iniquities, often venture into the very path which leads to the commission of them: and even the miseries of sinners in the ways of vice fail to deter the spectators from copying their examples.—If we would, as the servants of God, "a holy seed," devoted to him by solemn covenant, be preserved from the abominations of the wicked, we must separate from their society, and break off all connexions with them: and intermarriages, between his people and ungodly persons, have in all ages been a successful device of Satan, to prevail against the cause of truth and righteousness, and to produce apostasies, superstitions, idolatry, or impiety.—Too often, through the artifice of the enemy, they, who should warn or restrain others, sanction transgression by their own example, and by protecting the criminals from censure or punishment. Indeed formalists of every description make light of alliances or intimacies with those who are ungodly, and explain away the exhortation to "come out from among "them and be separate:" but those who are best acquainted with the word of God, with the human heart, and with the history of the church, and who have the most affectionate regard for the souls of men, view the subject in another manner. They mourn over such transactions, and forebode the worst of consequences from them; and are constrained most solemnly to express their concern and consternation. But alas! the evils, which are allowed and pleaded for, by many who profess to be "the holy "seed," may well excite our astonishment as well as deep regret: and we ought to shew our abhorrence of their abominations in the most earnest and decided manner. When this is done by those who are had in reputation for piety or wisdom, it will excite the attention of others, and cause them to tremble at the words of God, because of the transgression of the people: and this will produce greater watchfulness, lead to self-examination and humiliation, and subserve the purposes of reformation.—Silent grief and astonishment sometimes form the most expressive protestation against enormous crimes: and when men speak on such occasions, it may be more effectual to address themselves to God, than to the offenders.

V. 6—15.

Whatever may afflict our hearts, we must not yield to inactive despondency, but arise from our heaviness, to spread our sorrows before the Lord, with humble and reverent devotion.—In confessing the sins of churches, or nations, all who form a part of them should bear a share: for every individual has, one way or other, added his transgressions to the aggregate of guilt: and all are interested in the event, and stand related to such as have committed those crimes, from which they have been preserved.—We should endeavour to affect ourselves and others with the greatness and heinousness of our sins: for often, when we think little of our transgressions, they have grown up even to the heavens, and are ready to overwhelm us with the vengeance of the Almighty.—National guilt accumulates from age to age, whilst children copy the iniquities of their fathers. Hence spring all our miseries: yet the Lord "punishes us less than our iniquities de-"serve;" and no past or present sufferings will exempt us from greater in future, unless "we repent and turn to "God, and do works meet for repentance."—Every respite, and every degree of former mercies and privileges, should be thankfully received: but they all say to us, "Sin "no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Even the gospel and the ordinances of God, which are "a nail "in his holy place," on which to suspend all our hopes and interests; and which are given us to lighten our eyes, and to deliver us from our bondage, and to be a reviving to our souls, will only aggravate the doom of those who rest in them, and go on in their sins.—In this world God afflicts sinners, yet spares them, that his goodness may lead them to repentance: he corrects, but he does not utterly forsake, his people: he extends mercy to them, by disposing others to be kind to them: yet his favour forms their

CHAP. X.

The people weep with Ezra, 1. Shechaniah proposes that the people should divorce their heathen wives, and encourages Ezra to attempt this; who requires the priests, and others, to engage by oath so to do, 2—5. By proclamation he assembles the people, who promise to comply, 6—14. The measure is regularly carried into execution, 15—17. The names of those who put away their strange wives, 18—44.

NOW [a] when Ezra had prayed, and [b] when he had confessed, [c] weeping and casting himself down [d] before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel [e] a very great congregation of men, and women, and children: for the people wept [*] very sore.

2 And [f] Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, *one* of the sons of [g] Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, [h] We have trespassed against our God, and have [i] taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.

3 Now therefore [k] let us make a covenant with our God to [†] put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, [l] according to the counsel of my lord, and [m] of those that trembled [n] at the commandment of our God; and [o] let it be done according to the law.

a Dan. ix. 3, 4. 20. Acts x. 30.
b Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Ps. xxxii. 5. Hos. xiv. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.
c Ps. cxix. 136. Jer. ix. 1. xiii. 17. Zech. xii. 10. Luke xix. 41. Rom. ix. 2.
d 1 Kings viii. 30. ix. & 2 Chr. xx. 9.
e Deut. xxxi. 12. 2 Chr. xx. 13. Neh. x. 28. Joel ii. 16—18. Acts xxi. 5.

[*] Heb. *a great weeping.* Judg. ii. 4, 5. Neh. viii. 9.
f 26. Neh. iii. 29.
g ii. 7. 31. Neh. vii. 12. 34.
h Ex. xxxiv. 12. Neh. xiii. 27.
i Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. iii. 12, 13. 1John i. 7—9.
k 2 Kings xi. 17. 2 Chr. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31, 32. Neh. ix. 38. x. 29, &c.
[†] Heb. *bring forth.*
l 2 Chr. xxx. 12.
m ix. 4. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21. 27. Ps. cxix. 59. 120. Is. lxvi. 2. Ez. ix. 4.
n Deut. vii. 2, 3. Josh. xxiii. 12, 13.
o Neh. viii. 14. xiii. 1—3. Is. viii. 20.

best security and comfort. But "what shall we say," when judgments, mercies, warnings, and respites leave sinners hardened in impenitence? The case is dreadful, and it may be expected that the Lord will be angry with them, until they are consumed without remnant or escaping.—Indeed every penitent, reflecting upon his own conduct, and comparing it with his mercies, will be "ashamed "and blush before God;" his mouth will be stopped, and he will not know what to say. The law is holy, just, and good; obedience would have been reasonable and profitable; his guilt is undeniable and inexcusable; the wrath of God is dreaded and deserved; he feels himself in the Lord's hands, without plea, or power to escape. "It is of "his mercies that he is not consumed," and if he perish the Lord will be righteous: his only hope arises from a belief of abounding grace, and he casts himself before the Lord with this only plea, "God be merciful to me a "sinner."—Even the believer, though he habitually "walks "in newness of life," often breaks God's commandments, exposes himself to rebukes and chastisements; and must come ashamed, and confounded, and blushing before God, on account of his foolish and ungrateful conduct, and again adopting the publican's prayer. Indeed every individual in the whole church, has cause to wonder, that his ingratitude, perverseness, and folly have not wearied out the patience of God, and brought utter destruction upon him. What then must be the case of the ungodly world around us? However, though the true penitent has nothing to plead in his own behalf, the heavenly Advocate pleads most powerfully for him; and prevails in behalf of all those who unfeignedly condemn themselves, and cast themselves wholly upon the mercy of God, through his atoning blood.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. The exceedingly deep sorrow and consternation of so eminent a person as Ezra, who had come to Jerusalem, with so ample and favourable a commission from the king of Persia, and with such pious and beneficent purposes; with his prayer, and most humble confession of deep criminality, were no doubt speedily reported all over the city; and the high esteem generally entertained of his piety and wisdom, induced the people seriously to reflect upon their conduct, and its consequences: so that numbers, of their own accord, gathered around the governor, and united with him in lamentations and humiliation before God. And, the alarm becoming general, even the women and children joined the assembly in the court of the temple; probably fearing lest the wrath of God should immediately be poured out upon them.

V. 2. Shechaniah is not mentioned among those who were guilty: but his father and several of his relations are. (*Note*, 20—43. *v.* 26.) He spoke, however, as one of the offending community, though not personally criminal; and he would not be deterred from decisive measures by regard to his nearest relatives.—Probably he observed that Ezra was too desponding, and ready to conclude that reformation would be impracticable, where so many of the chief persons were concerned. (*Notes*, *Num.* xxv. 4—15.) But he perceived very favourable symptoms in the case. The people were generally convinced of their guilt and danger; and the most daring criminals would not venture to oppose the general opinion of the governor and the congregation. There "was therefore hope in Israel concerning this "thing:" an effectual reform might be made; and then the Lord would turn from his fierce wrath against them, as "he delighted in mercy."

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*To put away*, &c.] This is not any where expressly commanded in the law; yet the spirit of the precept seemed to require it. (*Notes*, ix. 1—4. *Ex.* xxxiv. 11—17. *Josh.* xxiii. 11—13, *v.* 13. *Neh.* xiii. 23—30.) The prohibition of marriages with idolaters was given to prevent temptations to idolatry: and retaining an idolatrous wife formed a continual temptation. Divorces were permitted to the Israelites, *by the judicial law*, to prevent worse consequences: but the seducing of a man to idolatry was the worst consequence imaginable. This measure would also tend to prevent the contracting of such marriages in future. 'That which was done contrary to the 'law of God, was looked upon as null, and therefore these 'were accounted no marriages; and their children ...were 'not to be a part of the family, but to be put away with 'their mothers. ...Being educated in superstition, they 'might corrupt other children.' *Bp. Patrick.* It is probable, however, that none were put away, but such as continued idolaters; and that they were provided for out of

4 [p] Arise; [q] for *this* matter *belongeth* unto thee: [r] we also *will be* with thee: [s] be of good courage, and do *it*.

5 Then [t] arose Ezra, and [u] made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they sware.

6 ¶ Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into [x] the chamber of [y] Johanan the son of Eliashib: and *when* he came thither, [z] he did eat no bread, nor drink water; for [a] he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.

7 And [b] they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;

8 And [c] that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be * forfeited, and [d] himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away.

9 ¶ Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It *was* [e] the ninth month, and the twentieth *day* of the month: and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, [f] trembling because of *this* matter, and for the † great rain.

10 And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have [‡] taken strange wives, [g] to increase the trespass of Israel.

11 Now therefore [h] make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and [i] do his pleasure; and [k] separate yourselves from the people of the land, [l] and from the strange wives.

12 Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, [m] so must we do.

13 But [n] the people are many, and *it is* a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither *is*

p Josh. vii. 10, &c. 1 Chr. xxii. 16. 19. Ec. ix. 10.
q Mark xiii. 34.
r Josh. i. 16—18. 1 Chr. xxviii. 10. 21.
s Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Heb. x. 24. xii. 12, 13.
t Prov. i. 5. ix. 9. xv. 23. xxv. 11, 12. xxvii. 9.
u 3. Neh. v. 12. x. 29. xiii. 25. Matt. xxvi. 63.
x Neh. xiii. 5.
y Neh. iii. 1. 20. xii. 10. 22. xiii. 28.
z Deut. ix. 18. Job xxiii. 12. John iv. 31—34.
a ix. 4. Is. xxii. 12. Dan. ix. 3.
b i. 1. 2 Chr. xxx. 5.
c vii. 26. Judg. xxi. 5. 1 Sam. xi. 7.
* Heb. *devoted.* Lev. xxvii. 28. Josh. vi. 19.
d Neh. xiii. 3. Matt. xviii. 17. John ix. 22. 34. xvi. 2. 1 Cor. v. 13.
e vii. 8, 9. Esth. ii. 16.
f 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18. Jer. x. 10. 13.
† Heb. *showers.*
‡ Heb. *caused to dwell,* or *brought back.*
g ix. 6. Num. xxxii. 14. Josh. xxii. 17, 18. 2 Chr. xxviii. 13. Matt. xxiii. 32.
h Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Josh. vii. 19. Ps. xxxii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. iii. 13. 1 John i. 7—9.
i Is. i. 16—18. lvi. 4. Rom. xii. 2. Col. i. 10. Heb. xiii. 21.
k ix. 1. Neh. xiii. 3. 2 Cor. vi. 17.
l Deut. vii. 3, 4. 1 Cor. ii. 12—14.
m 3, 4. Neh. xiii. 23. Ps. lxxviii. 37. 57.
n 18—44. Matt. vii. 13, 14.

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the estates of those who divorced them. It does not appear, whether the children were generally *sent away* with their mothers, or not: but doubtless such were provided for, as were not admitted into the congregation of the Lord. (*Note*, 10, 11.) Under the New Testament, the marriages of believers with ungodly persons are evidently sinful, and of very bad consequence: yet when contracted they must not be dissolved. The partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles is broken down; such matters are determined by the municipal laws of every country; and divorces, except for adultery, are expressly disallowed. (*Notes, Matt.* v. 31, 32. xix. 3—9. *Mark* x. 2—12. 1 *Cor.* vii. 10—16.)

V. 4, 5. Shechaniah's mind, being more composed than Ezra's, perceived that it was a favourable crisis for action: so that he exhorted him, instead of indulging grief and yielding to heartless dejection, to arise and exercise his authority, according to the commission of Artaxerxes; and assured him of the hearty assistance of himself and others in the arduous attempt. (*Note, Josh.* vii. 10—12.) Thus encouraged, Ezra entertained hopes of remedying the evil, and immediately engaged all present, by a solemn oath, to concur in this design.—'The commission given to Ezra, 'supposing a full leave to the people to live according to 'the law, enabled him to govern them by it, yea, to swear 'them to observe it; for he might do whatsoever he found 'necessary to keep them in obedience.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 6. *He did eat*, &c.] Some render the words "Until "he came thither, he had neither eaten bread, nor drunk "water." He had no heart to take food, till the prospect of reformation opened to him; but spent his time in fasting, weeping, and prayer.

V. 7, 8. *Marg. Ref.—All his substance*, &c. (8) That is, his estate should be confiscated, and put among the sacred treasures, and he should be treated as a heathen, and denied the privileges of a Jew. (*Marg.—Notes, Lev.* xxvii. 28, 29. *Josh.* vi. 17—19.) 'In the Hebrew *devoted;* 'which signifies, that his goods were to be so forfeited, as 'to become sacred to God; and so incapable to be restored 'to the former owner, being put into the treasury of God's 'house.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Doubtless, reasonable excuses would be admitted: and the punishment was only inflicted on the refractory, and those who shewed a determination to oppose the measure. Ezra was authorized to punish such persons more severely; (vii. 26:) but he was not disposed to put any one to death, if it could be avoided.

V. 9. *For the great rain.*] The periodical rains, common at that season, seem to have been more abundant than usual: and as no building could be large enough to contain the whole multitude; this providential circumstance added to their distress, and seemed an indication of the divine displeasure. (*Note, Jer.* iii. 2, 3.)

V. 10, 11. (*Marg. Ref.*) As Ezra mentions only the strange wives, and not their children, some think that the children were retained, and brought up in the Jewish religion.—'Though Shecaniah propounded the putting away 'the children also (3); yet it may be thought that Ezra, 'to whom the matter was referred, mitigated the severity 'of it; because we do not read any thing of them, but 'only of the wives, when he came to order what should be 'done.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12—14. The congregation at once declared their readiness to divorce their heathen wives, in all cases where it was determined to be their duty: but the difficulties of

this a work of one day or two: for * we are many that have transgressed in this thing.

14 Let now ° our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until ᵖ the fierce wrath of our God † for this matter be turned from us.

15 Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah ‡ were employed about this *matter:* and ᵍ Meshullam and ʳ Shabbethai the Levite helped them.

16 And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, *with* certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by *their* names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month ˢ to examine the matter.

17 And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives, by the first day of the first month.

18 ¶ And among ᵗ the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives; *namely,* of the sons of ᵘ Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brethren; ˣ Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah.

19 And they ʸ gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and *being* guilty, *they offered* ᶻ a ram of the flock for their trespass.

20 And of the sons of ᵇ Immer; Hanani, and Zebadiah.

21 And of the sons of ᶜ Harim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah.

22 And of the sons of ᵈ Pashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nathaneel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

23 Also of the Levites; ᵉ Jozabad and Shemei, and Kelaiah, (the same *is* ᶠ Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

25 Moreover of Israel: of the sons of ᵍ Parosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah.

26 And of the sons of ʰ Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and ⁱ Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliah.

27 And of the sons of ᵏ Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza.

28 Of the sons also of ˡ Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, *and* Athlai.

29 And of the sons of ᵐ Bani; Meshullam, ⁿ Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth.

30 And of the sons of ° Pahath-moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah,

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* Or, *we have greatly offended.*

° Deut. xvii 9. 18, 19. 2 Chr. xix. 5—7.

ᵖ Num. xxv. 4. Deut xiii. 17. Josh. vii. 26. 2 Chr. xxix. 10. Ps. lxxviii. 38. Is. xii. 1.

† Or, *be turned from us, till this matter* be dispatched.

‡ Heb. *stood.*

ᵍ Neh. iii. 6. x. 20. xii. 33.

ʳ Neh. xi. 16.

ˢ Deut. xiii. 14. Job xxix. 16.

B. C. 456. ix. 1. Lev. xxi 7. 13—15. 1 Sam. ii. 22—24. Neh. xiii. 28. Jer. xxiii. 11. 14. Ez. xliv. 22. Mal. ii. 8. 9. 1 Tim. iii. 11.

ᵗ *See on* ii 2. iii. 2.—v. 2. 1 Chr. vi. 14, 15. Neh. xii. 10. Hag. i. 1. Zech. iii. 1. *Joshua.*

ᵘ Neh. viii: 4. 7.

ˣ 2 Kings x. 15. 1 Chr. xxix. 24. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. *Marg.* Lam. v. 6. Gal. ii. 9.

ʸ Ezra ii. 37. 1 Chr. xxiv. 14. Neh. vii. 40.

ᶻ Lev. v. 16. vi. 6.

ᵇ ii. 37. 1 Chr. xxiv. 14. Neh. vii. 40.

ᶜ ii. 39. 1 Chr. xxiv. 8. Neh. vii. 42.

ᵈ ii. 38. 1 Chr. ix. 12. Neh. vii. 41.

ᵉ viii. 33. Neh. xi. 16.

ᶠ Neh. x. 10.

ᵍ ii. 3. Neh. vii. 8

ʰ 2. ii. 7. 31. viii. 7. Neh. vii. 12. 34.

ⁱ 2.

ᵏ ii. 8. Neh. vii. 13

ˡ ii. 11. viii. 1. Neh. vii. 16.

ᵐ ii. 10. Neh. vii. 15. *Binnui.*

ⁿ Neh. x. 4.

° ii. 6. viii. 4. Neh. vii. 11.

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the business would require more consideration, than could be given them, in their present situation, and by a popular assembly. They therefore proposed, that the principal council or senate should convene at Jerusalem, who might summon before them the parties concerned, from every city, together with the judges and elders of their cities; and so deliberately investigate and decide upon every case; that the business might be settled effectually, and in an unexceptionable manner.—It would be needful to determine, whether the women had been proselyted, either before or after marriage; whether they had relapsed into idolatry, or shewn a propensity to do so; or whether they had given satisfactory evidences, that they had sincerely embraced the Jewish religion. These and many other similar questions must be resolved, before sentence was denounced; and this would take up much time. The proposal was therefore very reasonable: Ezra readily acceded to it, and thus the business was peaceably and happily terminated.

V. 15. Ezra and the chief persons in the nation, as forming a council, decided on the several cases brought before them: and on this ground some think, that the four persons here mentioned, and no more, opposed the measure. The words indeed may bear that sense: yet the more general opinion is, that these four men were appointed by the council, to bring the business before them in due form.

V. 16, 17. The cases, brought before the council, were either so many, or so complicated; that, though they separated themselves from other employments, to attend on this exclusively, they were three months in finishing it. This took place just a year after Ezra left Babylon.

V. 18, 19. No doubt Jeshua died many years before this transaction: (*Note,* vii. 1—5:) but his descendants had set a very pernicious example to the people. They, however, were the first to confess and forsake their sin, and also to present a trespass-offering on that account; 'which some think, all the rest made, after their example.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20—43. *Marg. Ref.—Jehiel.* (26) *Note,* 2. 'This 'was Shechaniah's father; though his father and kindred 'were guilty of this crime, which Ezra bewailed, he did 'not stick to speak his mind, how it ought to be punished. 'An admirable example of zealous integrity.' *Bp. Patrick.*

Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh.

31 And *of* the sons of [p] Harim; Eliezer, Ishijah, [q] Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

32 Benjamin, Malluch, *and* Shemariah.

33 Of the sons of [r] Hashum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, *and* Shimei.

34 Of the sons of [s] Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel,

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau,

38 And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei,

39 And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah,

40 [*] Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

41 Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah, *and* Joseph.

43 Of the sons of [t] Nebo; Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah.

44 All these had taken [u] strange wives: and *some* of them had wives by whom they had children.

p ii. 32. Neh. vii. 35.
q Neh. iii. 11. *Malchijah.*
r ii. 19. Neh. vii. 22.
s 29.
* Or, *Mabnadebai*, according to some copies.
t ii. 29. Neh. vii. 33.
u Prov. ii. 16. v. 3. 20.

V. 44. Providence had so ordered it, that not many of the people had children by their heathen wives. Thus the separation was more easily effected: and at the same time, it was a token of the divine disapprobation of such marriages.—Perhaps these were the principal persons, who were criminal; for all circumstances combine to induce an opinion, that a far greater number were concerned, than those here expressed by name.—Ezra continued nearly twelve years after this in authority at Jerusalem, no doubt zealously labouring to promote a revival of true religion. And in many ways, he established the *ecclesiastical* state of the Jews: though he seems not to have been so well qualified, as his successor Nehemiah, to attend to the *civil* government, to defend the city and state against enemies and invaders, and to effect outward reformation by the authority of the magistrate. Accordingly he is introduced in the ensuing book, as well employed in his proper line, though superseded by Nehemiah in his civil authority. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xii. 23. *Neh.* viii. 1—8.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Genuine humiliation before God, and sorrow for sin, always produce "works meet for repentance." Yet they who are greatly affected with the view of the evil and aggravation of their own sins, or those of the community to which they belong, are in danger of being "swallowed up "by over-much sorrow," and so discouraged from present duty. In this case the grounds of hope should be pointed out to them; and so rich is the mercy of God through the great Redeemer, that there is always encouragement for those who are willing to accept of his salvation: and when the most atrocious criminals humbly mourn on account of their sins, and tremble at his word, there is good reason to expect that they will obey his commands.—In order to affect others with godly sorrow and hatred of sin, or holy love and gratitude, we must ourselves be greatly affected: for evident earnestness in these important concerns is far more impressive upon the mind, by a kind of holy *sympathy*, than the most laboured eloquence or reasoning. Indeed the effect of such earnestness frequently bears a proportion to the rank, reputation, piety, or wisdom of him who is thus affected: so that the silent grief and consternation, or the humble prayers and confessions, of one eminent person, may, by the blessing of God, excite serious alarms and enquiries among great multitudes. These are critical seasons, and call for decision in proposing and executing measures of extensive and durable usefulness. Yet vehement passions, in those to whom great concerns belong, are attended by considerable disadvantages; and far inferior persons may give seasonable advice, suggest suitable encouragement, or propose adequate assistance.—We cannot too solemnly engage ourselves and each other, to renounce all interests, connexions, or indulgences, *which are contrary to the law of God.* And when leading men set the example, and then propose the same things to others, many may be prevailed on by conviction, fear, or shame: and thus opposition will be prevented, or rendered ineffectual.—Excessive sorrow, terror, and self-abasement; and a great engagement of heart about the things of God and the eternal world, indispose us to animal recreation: so that fasting then becomes a natural expression of our feelings, as well as a suitable concomitant of our prayers and supplications.—Fervent affections should not be allowed to subside, till our most beloved sins have been renounced; and we should "know no man after the "flesh," when a revival of pure religion is attempted. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* v. 16.)

V. 9—44.

That which *must* be done, should be set about without delay: they are not worthy of the privileges of God's people, who will not concur in promoting obedience to his commandments: and those deserve severe punishment from the civil magistrate, who oppose his authority, especially when he is doing his duty according to the oracles of God.—When the frowns of Providence unite with the terrors of an awakened conscience, to distress the trembling sinner, he becomes an object of deep compassion; and though no favour must be shewn to his sins, much tenderness should be exercised to his person.—The most effectual divorce from lucrative or beloved sins, is generally preceded by examination and deliberation: for that which is hastily resolved, seldom proves durable.—Cases, at first sight similar, upon mature investigation appear very different: and in correcting abuses, caution and compassion should unite with impartiality and decision; that there may be no subsequent cause for reasonable complaint.—When sin is repented of and forsaken, God will mercifully forgive: but the blood of Christ, our Sin-offering, is the only atonement which takes away the guilt of it.—No *apparent* re-

pentance, amendment, or restitution, will benefit those who reject this propitiation; for their self-dependence proves them still unhumbled.—It is peculiarly afflicting to a pious mind, (though, alas! exceedingly common,) to see those who fill up the most important stations in society, or the most sacred offices in the church, and who are related to the most excellent persons, leading the way, and setting the example, in the most evident violation of the divine law! But when they confess and forsake their sins, avowing publickly their dependence on the atoning blood of the Saviour; their pattern in these respects may in some measure counterbalance the effects of their former misconduct: and all the names, which are written in the book of life, are those of penitent believing sinners; not of the self-righteous who think that they have no need of repentance.

THE BOOK

OF

NEHEMIAH.

THIS book resumes the history of the Jews, about twelve years after the close of the book of Ezra; and contains the latest canonical records of the nation till the days of Christ; reaching down to about a hundred and ten years after the captivity. It was evidently written by Nehemiah himself, who throughout speaks in the first person: and probably it was received among the canonical scriptures by Ezra and his assistants or successors.—Nehemiah, a Jew, the cup-bearer to Artaxerxes king of Persia, hearing of the distressed state of his countrymen; in great affliction petitions him for leave to go up to Jerusalem, as governor, with a commission to rebuild the walls, and to provide for the security and the prosperity of his people. Having obtained his request, he executes his commission for twelve years with great success. After which he returns to Artaxerxes, but at length comes back to Jerusalem; and employs various measures to promote the prosperity of the Jews, and the reformation of abuses.—The frequent devout ejaculations, with which the narrative is interrupted, are peculiar to this pious writer: and his zeal, activity, and disinterestedness are well worthy of imitation; especially by those employed in arduous undertakings, for the good of the church or the community.—This Book has many internal proofs of divine inspiration, and always has been considered by the Jews as a part of their sacred scriptures, and indeed as a continuation of the book of Ezra: it does not, however, seem to contain any prophecies, nor is it explicitly referred to in the New Testament.

B. C. 446.

CHAP. I.

Nehemiah, being informed of the afflicted state of the Jews, mourns, fasts, and prays, 1—4. His prayer, 5—11.

a x. 1. THE words of [a] Nehemiah the son of
b Ezra x. 9. Zech. vii. 1. Hachaliah. And it came to pass [b] in
c Ezra vii. 7. the month Chisleu, [c] in the twentieth
d Esth. i. 2. iii. 15. Dan. viii. 2. year, as I was [d] in Shushan the palace,
e vii. 2. 2 That [e] Hanani, one of my brethren,
came, he and *certain* men of Judah; and [f] I asked them concerning the
g Ezra ix. 8, 9. 14. Jer. xliv. 14. Ez. vi. 9. vii. 16. xxiv. 26, 27. Jews [g] that had escaped, which were
h vii. 6. xi. 3. Ezra ii. 1. v. 8. Esth. i. 1. left of the captivity, and concerning
i ix. 36, 37. Ps. xliv. 11—14. Is. xxxii. 9—14. Jerusalem.
k 1 Kings ix. 7. Ps. lxxix. 4. Is. xliii. 28. Jer. xxiv. 9. xxix. 18. xlii. 18. xliv. 8—12. 3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity, there [k] in [h] the province, *are* [i] in great affliction and [k] reproach: [l] the wall of Jeru-
l ii. 17. 2 Kings xxv. 10. Is. v. 5. Jer. v. 10. xxxix. 8. lii. 14. salem also *is* broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

B. C. 446.
f Ps. cxxii. 6—9. cxxxvii. 5, 6.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. This book is here called, "The *words*," (or, as it may be rendered, "The *actions*,") of "Nehemiah," that is, the history of the services which he performed to the Jewish church and state.—It is uncertain to what tribe or family Nehemiah belonged, though tradition records that he was of the tribe of Judah.—His father Hachaliah seems to have obtained a settlement in the city of Shushan, or Susa, the capital of Persia, where the kings had a royal palace; and thus his son Nehemiah became cup-bearer to Artaxerxes. This was a place of great trust, honour, and emolument: and it was peculiarly desired by those who sought preferment, because it gave access to the king at those seasons of hilarity, when men are most disposed to grant favours.—Nehemiah was cup-bearer to the same Artaxerxes, who before commissioned Ezra. (*Note, Ezra* vii. 1—5.)—The month Chisleu coincides with part of our November and part of December.—*Twentieth year.*] ii. 1. *Ezra* vii. 8.

V. 2. It is supposed, that Hanani, the brother of Nehemiah, and some other Jews, came to Shushan, in order to solicit help from the king against their enemies. (*Note*, vii. 2, 3.)—Nehemiah's station in the Persian court had hitherto prevented his going to Jerusalem: but he was an eminently godly man, and deeply concerned about the city and temple of God, and the condition of his brethren in Judea.

V. 3. Ezra's commission, and his attention, had chiefly respected the state of religion, and the re-establishment

4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that [m] I sat down and wept, and mourned *certain* days, and fasted, and prayed before [n] the God of heaven,

5 And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, [o] the great and terrible God, that [p] keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments;

6 Let [q] thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, [r] day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and [s] confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: [t] both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have [u] dealt very [x] corruptly against thee, and have not kept [y] the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which [z] thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 [a] Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, [b] *If* ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

9 But [c] *if* ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, *yet* [d] will I gather them from thence, and [e] will bring them unto [f] the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now [g] these *are* thy servants and thy people, [h] whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy [i] strong hand.

11 O Lord, I beseech thee, [k] let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, [l] who desire to fear thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and [m] grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For [n] I was the king's cup-bearer.

[m] 1 Sam. iv. 17—22. Ezra x. 1. Ps. lxix. 9, 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxxvii. 1. Dan. ix. 3. Zeph. iii. 18. Rom. xii. 15.
[n] ii. 4. Ezra v. 11, 12. Dan. ii. 18. Jon. i. 9.
[y] iv. 14. Deut. vii. 21. 1 Chr. xvii. 21. Ps. xlvii. 2. Dan. ix. 4.
[p] Ex. xx. 6. Deut. vii. 9. 1 Kings viii. 23. Heb. vi. 13—18.
[q] 1 Kings viii. 28, 29. 2 Chr. vi. 40. Ps. xxxiv. 15. cxxx. 2. Dan. ix. 17, 18.
[r] 1 Sam. xv. 11. Ps. lv. 17. lxxxviii. 1. Luke ii. 37. xviii. 7. 1 Tim. v. 5. 2 Tim. i. 3.
[s] Ezra ix. 6, 7. x. 11. Is. lxiv. 6, 7. Lam. iii. 39—42. Dan. ix. 4. 20.
[t] 2 Chr. xxviii. 10. xxix. 6. Ps. cvi. 6. Is. vi. 5. Lam. v. 7. Eph. ii. 3.
[u] lx. 29—35. Dan. ix. 5, 6.
[x] 2 Chr. xxvii. 2. Hos. ix. 9. Zeph. iii. 7. Rev. xix. 2.
[y] Lev. xxvii. 34. Deut. iv. 1. v. 1. vi. 1. 1 Kings ii. 3. Ps. xix. 8, 9. cxix. 5—8.
[z] Deut. iv. 5. 2 Chr. xxv. 4. Ezra vii. 6. Dan. ix. 11. 13. Mal. iv. 4.

[a] Ps. cxix. 49. Luke i. 72.
[b] Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. iv. 25—27. xxviii. 64. xxxii. 26—28. Kings ix. 6, 7.
[c] Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 2—5. Jer. xxix. 11—14.
[d] 1 Chr. xvi. 35. Ps. cvi. 47. Jer. xxxi. 10. xxxii. 37. Matt. xxiv. 31.
[e] Jer. iii. 14. Ez. xxxvi. 24.
[f] Deut. xii. 5. 21. 1 Kings ix. 3. Ezra vi. 12.
[g] Ex. xxxii. 11. Deut. ix. 29. Is. lxiii. 16—19. lxiv. 9.
[h] Ex. xv. 13. Deut. xv. 15. Ps. lxxiv. 2.
[i] Ex. vi. 1. xiii. 9. Ps. cxxxvi. 12. Dan. ix. 15.
[k] *See on* 6.—Ps. cxxx. 2.
[l] Prov. i. 29. Is. xxvi. 8, 9. Heb. xiii. 18.
[m] ii. 8. Gen. xxxii. 11. 28. xliii. 14. Ezra i. 1. vii. 6. 27, 28. Prov. xxi. 1.
[n] ii. 1. Gen. xl. 2. 9—13. 21. 23. xli. 9.

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of the affairs of the Jewish church: and he was not empowered or enabled to fortify the city, or to repel the hostile attempts of the enemies of his people. It is supposed, that the Samaritans, and other adversaries, not only hated the true religion, but were provoked at being dispossessed, by the return of the Jews, from the lands which they had seized upon: and as these returned Jews were but a remnant, compared with the whole nation, and in an unsettled situation, they were unable to defend themselves. The seat of government was very distant; the king's lieutenants were in general unfavourable; and probably the king never heard a full account of the injuries done them.—Either the walls had not been at all built after the captivity; or their enemies had thrown them down again, and burnt the gates with fire: and being thus defenceless and exposed, they were also insulted and reproached for their confidence in God.—'Jerusalem lay 'without any walls or gates to defend it from injuries. ... 'It was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar, and the walls beaten 'down; therefore their meaning is, that the walls and 'gates lay as the Chaldeans left them, after that devasta-'tion, and were not repaired, though the temple was built 'again.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 4. Nehemiah seems, immediately on hearing the afflicted state of his brethren, to have conceived the design of going to their relief, if he could obtain permission and assistance from the king his patron. But his first application was to that God, in whose hand are the hearts of kings. He therefore spent some days in mourning over the affliction of his people, and in humbling himself before God by fasting and prayer; in order to find mercy from him, and success in his undertaking. (*Notes, Ezra* ix. 3, 4. *Dan.* ix. 2, 3.)

V. 5—11. In the prayer here recorded, which probably formed the substance of Nehemiah's constant supplications day and night, he adored the greatness and terribleness of God, and his covenanted mercy to his people; (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* viii. 23, 24. *Dan.* ix. 4. *Luke* i. 67—75. *Heb.* vi. 13—15;) thus acknowledging that if *they* had not provoked him to anger, by their numerous and heinous crimes; their enemies, instead of triumphing over them, would have experienced his terrible power fighting for them. But alas! Nehemiah was constrained to confess, that both the people in general, and he himself, and his father's house, were deeply guilty, and by dealing very *corruptly*, (that is, perversely, ungratefully, and deceitfully,) had given the Lord just cause to leave them in the hands of their adversaries. Yet, while he justified God in the miseries of his people, he expressed a confidence in his mercies. The nation of Israel alone professed to worship and serve the God of heaven: he had forewarned them, that if they transgressed, he would scatter them abroad among the nations; but he had also repeatedly and expressly promised, that if they returned to him, and obeyed his commandments, he would gather them again to their own land, and to his chosen city. (*Notes, Lev.* xxvi. 31—45. *Deut.* iv. 25—31. *Dan.* ix. 5—16.) Now many of those, who had gone up to Jerusalem, were turned to the Lord, and "de-"sired to fear his name:" and it might be hoped that numbers even of those, who remained in other countries, were truly penitent and uprightly obedient; among whom Nehemiah was conscious he was one. And as God had already done great things, both in former ages, and lately, in redeeming and delivering his people from their enemies; he trusted that he would compassionately hear his prayer, and the prayers of all those who were pleading with him

CHAP. II.

Artaxerxes, oberving Nehemiah sad before him, asks the cause, 1, 2. Nehemiah is afraid, assigns the reason, prays, petitions the king, and obtains authority to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, 3—8. He delivers the king's letters to the governors beyond the river; the enemies of the Jews are much grieved; and he arrives at Jerusalem, 9—11. He examines the state of the walls secretly by night, 12—16. He encourages the Jews to build, 17, 18. The scorn and menaces of their enemies, and his answer, 19, 20.

AND it came to pass, in the month [a] Nisan, and in [b] the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that* wine *was* be-

[a] Esth. iii. 7.
[b] i. 1. Ezra vii. 7.

in that behalf. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xvi. 34—36. *Ezra* ix. 5—15. *Ps.* lxxiv. 20. lxxix. 6—13. *Is.* lxiii. 15—19. lxiv. 6—12. *Dan.* ix. 17—19.)—The particular request which he made on this occasion, is remarkable: he prayed that God "would grant him mercy in the sight of this man." The mighty monarch of the Persian empire would be addressed by his flatterers, as if he were more than man; yet Nehemiah knew, that in the sight of God, he was upon a level with his meanest subjects. (*Note*, ii. 4.)—'A deep 'sense of our own unworthiness is a good qualification for 'the mercy we beg of God. This Nehemiah expresses 'very sensibly.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

Eminent men of God may sometimes be found in situations, where they might be least expected: his grace will be sufficient for them, wherever his providence has cast their lot: and it is seldom adviseable to leave the place, where he has blessed us, without an evident call, or a substantial reason; even though we might remove into situations, apparently more favourable to our growth in grace.—The church militant is like the bush, which burned, but was not consumed, because the Lord was there: (*Note*, *Ex.* iii. 2. *P. O.* 7—12:) afflictions and reproaches are its portion in this evil world: its enemies often presumptuously expect finally to prevail; and its friends through unbelief are sometimes ready to fear that they will. But in the crisis, some unexpected help is afforded, and again it revives and flourishes.—No prosperity can render the real believer inattentive to the cause and people of God. (*Note*, *Ps.* cxxxvii. 1—6, *v.* 6.) The prevalence of iniquity, the decay of piety, and the ravages of persecution, whilst infidels or idolaters insult and reproach, are like "a sword in his "bones." (*Ps.* xlii. 10.) As a member of the suffering body of Christ, he will sympathize in its affliction: but this must not suffice. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xii. 12—26.) He will be enquiring, what service he can render to the common cause, by improving his talents and the advantages of his situation. If he have no more in his power, he may lift up his prayer without ceasing for the remnant that is left: and fasting joined with supplication may well express the believer's penitent sorrow for sin, sympathy with his afflicted brethren, distress to see the cause of God run down, and earnestness in seeking help from him; so that he has no relish for common comforts and enjoyments. Such fervent, humble prayers have always been honoured with signal prevalence and success. And these seasons of humiliation are peculiarly suitable, when we are entering upon arduous or perilous undertakings for the benefit of the church.—As the people of God all over the earth form one body; it is good to enquire how our brethren fare in the most remote regions, that we may at least know in what manner we may direct our prayers and praises in their behalf, in the most appropriate manner.

V. 5—11.

In all our addresses to the God of heaven we must remember his greatness and terrible majesty; that we may worship "with reverence and godly fear," and in deep humiliation before him. His infinite holiness, justice, truth, and power are terrible to all the workers of iniquity: and they would be so to us all as fallen creatures, were he not also infinitely merciful; and did he not deal with such as repent and believe the gospel, according to a new and gracious covenant. For all have broken his perfect law, in numberless instances: and indeed all are disposed to reject, oppose, or pervert his gospel. And if, by his grace, we are now true believers; we have, even since we became so, "dealt very corruptly, in not keeping the commandments "of God." He therefore is righteous in our sufferings, and merciful in all our comforts. We must still come before him as sinners, pleading his gracious promises, and craving to be gathered into his church, and finally into heaven, the place where he displays those glories, which here by faith we feebly apprehend, love, and adore. In this humble, supplicating manner, we may expect all desirable success. May he then grant unto us a spirit of simple dependence on his mercy and grace, united with zeal for his glory, and affection to his people. May we endeavour to improve every talent, as those who are waiting for his coming; and never tarnish or defeat the success of our endeavours, by pride and self-confidence. And may our gracious God stir up those, to whom he has committed many talents, thus humbly and zealously to serve his cause, with faith and prayer; with self-denial, promptitude, and diligence; and with simple dependence on him and devotedness to him!—When worldly men would solicit any favours from kings or nobles, they spare no pains, to obtain the interposition of those distinguished persons who have influence with them: but the children of God must seek to their Father, who could at once secure to them the assistance of all the kings upon earth, if good for them; and though other means may be used, yet "the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth" most of all: and, "Grant me mercy in the sight of this "man," offered in faith to that God, in whose hand are the hearts of all men, will do more to ensure success, in any good cause, than all our applications to nobles and princes, to support our petitions. (*Notes*, ii. 4. *Gen.* xxxii. 28, 29. *Ezra* vii. 27, 28. *Prov.* xxi. 1.)

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. About four months passed from the time when Nehemiah made his enquiry, before he presented his petition to the king: for Nisan answers to part

fore him: and [c] I took up the wine, and gave *it* unto the king. Now I had not been *beforetime* sad in his presence.

2 Wherefore the king said unto me, [d] Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this *is* nothing *else* but [e] sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

3 And said unto the king, [f] Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when [g] the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

4 Then the king said unto me, [h] For what dost thou make request? [i] So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 And I said unto the king, [k] If it please the king, and [l] if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my father's sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 And the king said unto me, (the [*] queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? [m] So it pleased the king to send me; and [n] I set him a time.

7 Moreover I said unto the king, If

c i. 11. Gen. xl. 11. 21.
d Gen. xl. 7.
Prov. xv. 13.
e
f 1 Kings i. 31. Dan. ii. 4. iii. 9. v. 10. vi. 21.
g i. 3. Ps. cii. 14. cxxxvii. 6. Lam. ii. 9.
h 1 Kings iii. 5. Esth. v. 3. 6. vii. 2. Mark x. 51.
i i. 4. 11. 2 Sam. xv. 31. Prov. iii. 6.
k Ezra v. 17. Esth. i. 19. v. 8. vii. 3. viii. 5.
l Ruth ii. 13. 2 Sam. xiv. 22. Prov. iii. 4.
* Heb. *wife.*
m 4. i. 11. Is. lviii 12. lxi. 4. lxv. 24.
n v. 14. xiii. 6.

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of March and part of April. (*Note*, i. 1.) It is probable, that his turn of waiting on the king did not arrive before this: and he could not come into his presence uncalled, except at the hazard of his life; (*Note, Esth.* iv. 11:) but he could approach the King of heaven at any time, and doubtless all the while continued instant in prayer. Yet, when at length he attended on his office, his inward concern was visible in his countenance, which no doubt had always before been very open and cheerful: so that the king observed it; and, not perceiving that he was ill, seemed ready to impute his melancholy to discontent or disaffection. Indeed the words rendered "sad," and "sorrow of heart," might be rendered *evil*, and *wickedness of heart*. This excited great alarm in Nehemiah: and in fact these arbitrary monarchs were generally suspicious, in proportion to their tyranny. Lest poison should be mixed with their wine, they required the cup-bearers to drink before them out of the same cup: and some conjecture that Nehemiah, being oppressed with grief, had forgotten to observe this custom. Had the least suspicion, however, been excited of criminal designs, the immediate torture or execution of Nehemiah might have been the consequence: for the Persian monarchs frequently, with little ceremony, thus treated those who had before been their chief favourites. He might also fear that he should fail of his purpose, as the king seemed displeased, and no favourable opportunity for his request was yet afforded.

V. 3. Nehemiah in answering the king, testified his cordial and loyal affection, by wishing the long continuance of his life and prosperity, in the customary manner. He perhaps meant the words likewise as a prayer for his salvation: but they were not generally understood in that sense. Thus, 'God save the king,' as generally used, means no more than, 'Let the king live and prosper:' but the words, when duly attended to, contain a solemn prayer to God, for his temporal preservation, and his eternal salvation. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Nehemiah said nothing to Artaxerxes concerning the *religion* of the Jews: perhaps, he saw that he was more regardless in that respect than formerly; (*Notes, Ezra* vii. 6—28;) or he might suppose that the king would not attend to that subject so candidly, from a young courtier, as he had done from an aged priest and learned scribe of the law of God: and some think that he was induced to wave it, because the company present were unfavourable. He therefore represented the afflicted, defenceless state of that city, where his ancestors lay interred; and how could he but be grieved that their sepulchres should be so disgraced, or how avoid sympathizing with his distressed countrymen?—Arguments of this kind the men of the world well understand: but alas! they little feel the force of those which are infinitely more important. Some infer from the expression "my fathers' "sepulchres," that Nehemiah was of the tribe of Judah; but his ancestors might have been buried in Jerusalem, if he were of the tribe of Benjamin, or of Simeon.

V. 4. Nehemiah could not, in this emergency, retire for prayer; but he lifted up his heart in a silent ejaculation to "the God of heaven," to prosper him, according to the tenour of those prayers which he had for a long time been presenting before him; and perhaps the concluding part of the prayer contained in the preceding chapter, was secretly offered at this time.—"Prosper, I pray thee, thy "servant *this day*, and grant him mercy in the sight of this "man." 'In his mind he silently beseeched God to guide 'his tongue, and to bow the king's heart to grant his re-'quest.' *Bp. Patrick.* "The God of heaven" seems to have become the usual style, so to speak, in addressing the Lord, among the returned captives; perhaps as contrasting him with the idols of the regions, in which they had sojourned. (20. i. 4, 5. *Ezra* v. 11, 12. *Note, Jer.* x. 11.)

V. 5, 6. It is probable, that Esther was the queen who was present at this time, and that she seconded Nehemiah's request. Perhaps he had been preferred through her interest, and that of Mordecai: and her presence seems to be mentioned, as a favourable and not a common circumstance, and as an answer to his prayers.—For Mordecai's advancement preceded the commission granted to Nehemiah several years. (i. 1. *Esth.* i. 3. x. 3.)—The king was not willing to be long deprived of the service of one, who possessed his confidence and affection: and we may suppose, that Nehemiah obtained leave of absence for a shorter time than he actually continued at Jerusalem: but he either returned to obtain a new commission, or had it renewed in his absence by the special favour of the king.

V. 7. (*Note, Ezra* viii. 21—23.) Ezra went as a priest and a scribe, though armed with civil authority; and in consistency with his character and professions, he would

it please the king, [o] let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, [p] that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber, to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* to the house, and [q] for the wall of the city, and [r] for the house that I shall enter into. And [s] the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 ¶ Then I came [t] to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now [u] the king had sent captains of the army, and horsemen with me.

10 When [x] Sanballat the [y] Horonite, and Tobiah [z] the servant [a] the Ammonite, heard *of it*, [b] it grieved them exceedingly, that [c] there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

11 So [d] I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

12 ¶ And [e] I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; [f] neither told I *any* man what [g] my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither *was there any* beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

13 And I went out by night, by [h] the gate of the valley, even before the dragon-well, and to [i] the dung-port, and viewed [k] the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

14 Then I went on to [l] the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but *there was* no place for the beast *that was* under me to pass.

15 Then went I up in the night by [m] the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by [n] the gate of the valley, and *so* returned.

16 And [o] the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told *it* to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

o 9. Ezra vi. 8. vii. 21.
p Ezra viii. 22.
q 17. iii. 1, &c
r iii. 7. vii. 2.
s 18. Gen. xxxii. 29. Ezra v. 5. vi. 22. vii. 6. 9. 27, 28. Prov. xxi. 1. Is. lxvi. 14. Dan. i. 9. Acts vii. 10. xxvi. 22. 2 Cor. viii. 16.
t 7.
u Ezra viii. 22.
x 19. iv. 1—3. 7. vi. 1.
y Is. xv. 5. Jer. xlviii. 5. 34.
z Prov. xxx. 22. Ec. x. 7.
a xiii. 1.
b Num. xxii. 3, 4. Ps. cxii. 10. cxxii. 6—9. Prov. xxvii. 4. Ez. xxv. 6—8. Mic. vii. 9, 10. 16, 17. Acts iv. 2. v. 24. xix. 26, 27.
c Ezra iv. 4, &c.
d Ezra viii. 32.
e Gen. xxxii. 22—24. Josh. x. 9. Judg. vi. 27. ix. 32. Matt. ii. 14.
f Ec. iii. 7. Am. v. 13. Mic. vii. 5. Matt. x. 16.
g Ezra vii. 27. Jer. xxxi. 33. xxxii. 40. 2 Cor. viii. 16. Jam. i. 16, 17. Rev. xvii. 17.
h 15. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxvi. 9.
i iii. 13, 14. xii. 31.
k 3. 17. i. 3. Jer. v. 10.
l iii. 15. 2 Kings xviii. 17. xx. 20. 2 Chr. xxxii. 30.
m 2 Sam. xv. 23. Jer. xxxi. 40. John xviii. 1.
n 13.
o 12.

not require a guard. But Nehemiah went to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and to defend the Jews against their enemies: and it was very consistent with his avowed design, to petition the king, that the governors should be ordered to escort him with proper military attendants, which would afford him protection, and add dignity to his undertaking.—The king likewise ordered him a guard, till he had crossed the Euphrates (9): for Susa was beyond that river, further to the east than Babylon.

V. 8. 'I suppose he means the forest of Lebanon, from 'whence he might be furnished with materials for his 'building.' *Bp. Patrick.* The word (פַּרְדֵּס) is used only in two other places, (*Ec.* ii. 5. *Cant.* iv. 13,) where it is rendered *orchard*, and the word παραδεισος, or *paradise*, seems to have been derived from it, yet here it must signify a forest of timber trees. The palace here mentioned seems to mean the temple, or some of those buildings which surrounded it, or 'the gates of the temple;' for though the temple was rebuilt, much might be wanting in respect of the surrounding walls and gates. Nehemiah proposed to build a house also for the governor, and to do all other things, which might place his people in a more secure and respectable situation. (*Marg. Ref.*) *The good hand of my God.* (8) *Marg. Ref.* s. *Note, Ezra* vii. 6—10, *v.* 9.

V. 10. (*Marg. Ref.*) Sanballat is supposed to have been a Moabite, of Horonaim, a city of Moab. (*Is.* xv. 5.) Tobiah was an Ammonite, and had been a slave. Moab and Ammon were subjugated and carried captive by the kings of Babylon: but it appears that they had been restored, according to the predictions of Jeremiah. (*Notes, Jer.* xlviii. 47. xlix. 6.) And it is likely that Sanballat and Tobiah, (as well as Geshem the Arabian afterwards mentioned,) were placed by the king of Persia in authority over their own people, and over the Samaritans, or other tribes in that neighbourhood, who were generally enemies to the Jews.—Sanballat and Tobiah, however, were full of malice against them; and exceedingly grieved and displeased to find that one was come from the king of Persia, to protect them from further injuries; 'with such au-'thority from the king, and in such favour with him; as 'appeared by the letters brought with him, and the guard 'that attended him, and the diligence of the several go-'vernors, through whose provinces he passed, to serve 'him.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, 19, 20. iv. 1—3. vi. *Ezra* iv.)

V. 11. It would doubtless soon be known, that Nehemiah was come with a commission from Artaxerxes: but he did not disclose the nature of his business, till he had made previous observations, and consulted with a few select friends, in whom he could place the most entire confidence.

V. 12—16. Nehemiah seems to have used every precaution to conceal his intentions, till he had obtained the unanimous consent of the people, and they were actually employed in the work; knowing that their enemies would attempt to divide or discourage them.—We may suppose that the moon shone, when he made his observations, and that he had provided skilful guides to accompany him in this survey. Yet even they, who afterwards presided and did the work, were not at this time consulted.—The account here given, is well suited to shew us the ruinous and defenceless state of the city, nearly a hundred years after the return of the Jews from captivity: and Nehemiah's

p Lam. iii. 51.

17 Then said I unto them, [p] Ye see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: [q] come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more [r] a reproach.

q Ezra v. 1, 2. x. 2—4. Is. xxxv. 3, 4

r i. 3. s Sam. xi. 2. Ps. xliv. 13. lxxix. 4. lxxxix. 50, 51. Lam. iii. 45, 46. Ez. v. 14, 15. xxii. 4, 5.

18 Then I told them of [s] the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. [t] So they strengthened their hands for this good *work*.

s See on 8.

t 2 Sam. ii. 7. 1 Chr. xi. 10. xix. 13. 2 Chr. xxxii. 5. Hag. i. 13, 14. Eph. vi. 10. Phil. ii. 13.

19 But when [u] Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant the Ammonite, and [x] Geshem the Arabian, heard *it*, [y] they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What *is* this thing that ye do? [z] will ye rebel against the king?

u 10. vi. 1, 2.

x vi. 6. *Gashmu.*

y Job xxx. 1. Ps. xliv. 13, 14. Jer. xx. 8. Mark v. 40. Heb. xi. 36.

z vi. 6. Ezra iv. 15, 16. Luke xxiii. 2. John xix. 12. Acts xxiv. 5.

20 Then answered I them, and said unto them, [a] The God of heaven he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but [b] ye have no portion, nor right, nor [c] memorial, in Jerusalem.

a 4. 2 Chr. xxvi. 5. Ps. xx. 5. xxxv. 27. cxxii. 6.

b Ezra iv. 3. Acts viii. 21.

c Ex. xxviii. 29. Lev. ii. 2. xxiv. 7. Num. x. 10. Zech. vi. 14. Acts x. 4. 31.

personal survey formed a suitable preparation to his address to the people, and would enable him to obviate any objections, and prevent any misrepresentations, which might be made.—Nothing more is known of the several places mentioned, than what may be collected from the marginal references.—*My God had put*, &c. (12) *Marg. Ref.* g.—*Note, Ezra* vii. 27, 28.

V. 17, 18. The reader will note the piety of the language, used by Nehemiah on this as well as on every other occasion, which resembled that of Ezra. (*Marg. Ref.* s. in *v.* 8.) When he exhorted the Jews to arise and exert themselves in rebuilding the wall of the city: he shewed them that the kindness of the Persian king to him, was the effect of the powerful interposition of God in their behalf. Thus they were animated and emboldened to undertake the work.

V. 19, 20. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, as determined enemies to the Jewish nation, soon got intelligence of Nehemiah's designs, notwithstanding his precautions; (*Note*, vi. 17—19;) and they derided the efforts of the Jews, as if the work were impracticable: nay, they represented the undertaking, as an act of rebellion against the king; though they could not but know that Nehemiah acted by his commission! They intended, if possible, to frighten, to disunite, and to dishearten the people, that they might abandon the undertaking. But Nehemiah only answered, that the God of heaven would prosper his servants: but as to their adversaries, they had no *portion* in him, no *right* to interfere; nor any *memorial* in Jerusalem, to prove, that either by birth, or by being proselyted, they were Israelites, as the Samaritans pretended to be. He therefore, very prudently, avoided all further communication. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 10. *Ezra* iv. 3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Unavoidable delays, when employed in fervent persevering prayer, often forward the success of pious undertakings.—Cheerfulness is in general an ornament to religion; but there are seasons for mourning when grief cannot be concealed.—"The children of this world" understand the propriety of our grieving, when we are sick and in pain; when impoverished, bereaved, or disappointed in our temporal pursuits: but they cannot conceive, why the heart should be heavy, or the countenance sad, if no outward calamity has befallen us. Yet conscious guilt, the fear or sense of the divine displeasure, the afflictions of God's people, the prevalence of impiety, and the decays of religion, are far more reasonable and important causes of grief; under which no confluence of earthly delights can afford comfort. We must, however, expect that worldly men will ascribe such sorrows to melancholy, discontent, moroseness, or even some more criminal cause: and those, who are strangers to the believer's consolations, are apt to infer from his complaints, that religion is uncomfortable, and unfits men for social life. We should therefore in general conceal our grief, or disclose it only to the Lord and to his people.—The very persons, from whose favour many advantages may be expected, are also greatly to be dreaded. Inconstancy is connected with all the partialities and affections of absolute princes; and suspicions are multiplied in proportion as power is abused. They cannot confide in those, who do not, as they think, serve them from affection: but so many causes may induce courtiers to feign attachment, that they cannot but distrust at times even their favourites. Hence often arises the speedy ruin or disgrace of those, on whom honours and emoluments have been most lavished; without any cause, but caprice or groundless jealousy. "It is therefore better "to trust in the LORD, than to put any confidence in "princes." (*Note, Ps.* cxviii. 8, 9.)—A meek and modest explanation best tends to banish groundless suspicions. Yet we should study consistency with our character, professions, and relative situations, and consider those of the person we speak to; if we would behave "with wisdom "towards them that are without," avoid giving any needless disgust, and do important good to the church of God by their means.—We must not speak falsehood: but we are not bound always to speak all that we think, when a part of it will best answer every useful purpose.—Ejaculatory petitions may be presented to the Lord in any place or company, and should be intermixed with every transaction in which a Christian is engaged. They neither supersede, nor are rendered unnecessary by our more stated devotions: and the habit of thus keeping up an intercourse with Heaven, is of peculiar importance and advantage. Indeed we ought never to engage in any pursuit, in which it would be improper thus to expect and seek the divine direction, assistance, and blessing.—The Lord so orders every circumstance, as may best answer the prayers of his people. He turns their most distressing fears into grateful praises; he exceeds their largest hopes; and even those, who know him not, will be inclined to favour his servants, "according to the good hand of their God upon them."

CHAP. III.

The names and order of those who built the walls of Jerusalem, 1—32.

1 THEN [a] Eliashib the high priest rose up, with his brethren the priests, and they builded [b] the sheep-gate; they [c] sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the [d] tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.

2 And [*] next unto him builded [e] the men of Jericho. And next to them builded [f] Zaccur the son of Imri.

3 But [g] the fish-gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who *also* laid [h] the beams thereof, and set up [i] the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

4 And next unto them repaired [k] Meremoth the son of [l] Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired [m] Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel. And next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana.

5 And next unto them [n] the Tekoites repaired; but [o] their nobles [p] put not their necks to the work of their lord.

6 Moreover [q] the old gate repaired Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

a xii. 10. xiii. 28.
b xii. 39. John v. 2.
c xii. 30. Deut. xx. 5. Ps. xxx. *title*. Prov. iii. 6. 9.
d xii. 39. Jer. xxxi. 38. Zech. xiv. 10.
* Heb. *at his hand.*
e vii. 36. Ezra ii. 34.
f x. 12.
g xii. 39. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 14. Zeph. i. 10.
h 6. ii. 8.
i vi. 1. vii. 1.
k 21. x. 5.
l Ezra viii. 33. *Uriah.*
m x. 7.
n 27. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. Am. i. 1.
o Judg. v. 23. Jer. v. 5. 1 Cor. i. 26.
p Jer. xxvii. 2. 8. 12. xxx. 8, 9. Matt. xi. 29. Acts xv. 10.
q xii. 39.

V. 9—20.

The enemies of the Lord must grieve, in proportion as his servants rejoice, when those in authority, and endowed with suitable qualifications, are raised up to promote the cause of truth and holiness, and the welfare of his church: for the enmity of the serpent's seed against the cause of Christ is confined to no age or nation; it springs from hatred of God himself, and is irritated in proportion as he is glorified. But we ought steadily to proceed with our proper work, possessing our souls in patience, and uniting in our conduct, wisdom, and zeal, vigilance and courage, self-denial and activity. If we even *attempt* any thing good, in a proper manner, "God hath put it into our "hearts." But we should first carefully consider what is most necessary to be done, both in the concerns of our own souls, and in those of the church: and investigation will generally discover a great deal which needs to be rectified.—When matters are fairly proposed, and men in authority or reputation take the lead, and animate others also, the most timid and indolent may be rouzed and encouraged to action. But favourable opportunities should be seized: and those who would accomplish any useful design, to rescue the church of God from just occasion of reproach, must be strengthened to endure contempt, reviling, and menaces, as well as labour and hardship. "The God of heaven" will prosper his people, and clear their characters from aspersions, as well as deliver them from affliction: but wretched are they, who have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in the new Jerusalem, the city of our God! However, we should always be ready to give a meek and reasonable answer to objectors: and, blessed be God, even despisers and revilers, while they are warned of their danger, may be invited to cease from their opposition, and to be reconciled to God: that, after all, they may have their lot among his people, and not among his enemies.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. It is supposed that "the sheep-gate" immediately communicated with the temple: and that the cattle for sacrifices were usually brought in that way, and the priests undertook this part, as most properly belonging to them. (*Note, John* v. 2—4.) Eliashib, the grandson of Jeshua, (xii. 10,) was the high priest at this time, and he, with his brethren, either his near relations or the chief priests the heads of their several courses, rebuilt this part of the wall at their own expense; and perhaps some of them on this emergency laboured at it with their own hands. Along with the gate, they builded a part of the wall on each side. (*Marg. Ref.* d.) This was the case, it may be supposed, in other instances where the gates alone are mentioned.—Of this part alone it is said, that "they "sanctified it;" which may mean, that they began the work with prayer and concluded it with praise, and thus consecrated their service to the Lord, for the security of his temple and worshippers. (*Notes*, xii. 27—43.)

V. 2—4. (*Marg. Ref.*) After all the pains, which some learned men have bestowed on the subject, which is indeed not very interesting to us, little satisfactory information can be obtained on the situation of the places mentioned in this chapter, beyond what may be collected from the marginal references.

V. 5. *Their nobles*, &c.] It seems the chief persons of Tekoah refused to give any assistance, either by their labour, their substance, or their servants. Disregarding the authority of God himself, whose work it was, no wonder that they would not submit to the commands of Nehemiah, their governor, who seems to be meant by the expression "their lord:" and for this they are branded with disgrace in the word of God. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* viii. 6—9.)—But the inferior citizens, instead of following their example, undertook a second part, when they had completed that which was first allotted them (27).—The expression "put not "their necks," renders it probable, that those who were earnest in the cause, of whatever rank, assisted by their personal labours. 'Well-disposed persons, though ever 'so great, "put their necks," that is, laboured hard, not 'refusing to carry burdens, &c.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 6, 7. *Marg. Ref.—The throne*, &c. (7) This seems to have been some judgment-hall, to which the governors of the kings of Persia, over the country west of the Euphrates, came, from time to time, to administer justice. Probably, Nehemiah now occupied it; for his particular commission superseded their more general authority.

7 And next unto them repaired Melatiah [r] the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of [s] Mizpah, unto [t] the throne of the governor on this side the river.

8 Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of [u] the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah, the son of *one* [x] *of* the apothecaries, and they [*] fortified Jerusalem unto the [y] broad wall.

9 And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, [z] the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem.

10 And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even [a] over against his house. And next unto him repaired [b] Hattush the son of Hashabniah.

11 Malchijah the son of [c] Harim, and Hashub the son of [d] Pahath-moab, repaired the [†] other piece, and [e] the tower of the furnaces.

12 And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, [f] the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, [g] he and his daughters.

13 [h] The valley-gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of [i] Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung-gate.

14 But [k] the dung-gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, [l] the ruler of part of [m] Beth-haccerem; he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

15 But [n] the gate of the fountain repaired Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, [o] the ruler of part of [p] Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of [q] Siloah by the king's garden, and unto [r] the stairs that go down from the city of David.

16 After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, [s] the ruler of the half part of [t] Beth-zur, unto *the place* over against [u] the sepulchres of David, and to [x] the pool that was made, and unto [y] the house of the mighty.

17 After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired Hashabiah, [z] the ruler of the half part of [a] Keilah, in his part.

18 After him repaired their brethren, Bavai the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half part of Keilah.

19 And next to him repaired Ezer the son of [b] Jeshua, the ruler of [c] Mizpah, another piece over against the going up to the armoury, at [d] the turning *of the wall.*

20 After him Baruch the son of [‡] Zabbai [e] earnestly repaired the other piece from the turning *of the wall* unto the door of the house of [f] Eliashib the high priest.

21 After him repaired [g] Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of [h] Koz, another piece, from the door of the house of Eliashib, even to the end of the house of Eliashib.

22 And after him repaired the priests, [i] the men of the plain.

23 After him repaired Benjamin and

V. 8—10. (*Marg. Ref.*) Several persons are mentioned who built, or repaired, the wall which was over against their own houses, or chambers. (*Marg. Ref.* a.) —They lived near the wall; so that this arrangement was most convenient for them: and thus at the same time they provided for their own security, and the common benefit of the city. Perhaps, where any part of the old wall remained, the persons mentioned "repaired;" where none, they "built."

V. 11. It is not known what the expression "the other "piece," or, *the second measure*, (*marg.*) refers to.

V. 12. Several rulers of half parts of cities are mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.* f.) It is probable that two superior magistrates were placed over the principal cities, with equal authority, to reside in different parts of them.—Shallum seems to have had no sons; and his daughters, as heiresses, contributed with him to the expense of the work. Perhaps they were widows.

V. 13—15. *Marg. Ref.—Stairs.* (15) It is probable, these *stairs* formed a communication between the city of David, and the other parts of Jerusalem. (*2 Sam.* v. 6, 7.)

V. 16. (*Marg. Ref.*) "The house of the mighty" is thought to have been a guard-chamber, where the most valiant soldiers kept guard, to defend the palace of the kings of Judah.

V. 17—20. *Marg. Ref.—Earnestly,* &c. (20) Baruch, being more assiduous than others, probably stirred them up to greater diligence.

V. 21—25. (*Marg. Ref.*) "The king's high house" (25) was, perhaps, some lofty building, from which the watchmen might make their observations.

Hashub [k] over against their house. After him repaired [l] Azariah the son of [m] Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, by his house.

24 After him repaired [n] Binnui the son of Henadad [o] another piece, from the house of Azariah unto [p] the turning *of the wall*, even unto the corner.

25 Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning *of the wall*, and the tower which lieth out from [q] the king's high house, that *was* [r] by the court of the prison. After him [s] Pedaiah the son of [t] Parosh.

26 Moreover the [u] Nethinims * dwelt in [†] Ophel, unto *the place* over against [x] the water-gate toward the east, and the tower that lieth out.

27 After them [y] the Tekoites repaired another piece, over against the great tower that lieth out, even unto [z] the wall of Ophel.

28 From above [a] the horse-gate repaired the priests, [b] every one over against his house.

29 After them repaired Zadok [c] the son of Immer over against his house. After him repaired also Shemaiah the son of [d] Shechaniah the keeper of [e] the east gate.

30 After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, [f] another piece. After him repaired [g] Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber.

31 After him repaired Malchiah, [h] the goldsmith's son, unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the [‡] going up of the corner.

32 And between the going up of the corner unto [i] the sheep-gate repaired [k] the goldsmiths and the merchants.

k 10. 29, 30.
l x. 2.
m viii. 4. 7.
n x. 9.
o 11. 19. 27.
p 20.
q Jer. xxii. 14. xxxix. 8.
r xii. 39. Jer. xxxii. 2. xxxiii. 1. xxxvii. 21. xxxix. 15.
s viii. 4.
t vii. 8. Ezra ii. 3.
u vii. 46—56. x. 28. 1 Chr. ix. 2. Ezra ii. 43—58.
* Or, which *dwelt in Ophel*, repaired *unto*.
† Or, *the tower*. 27. xi. 21. 2 Chr. xxvii. 3. xxxiii. 14.
x viii. 1. 3. xii. 37.
y 5.
z 26.
a 2 Kings xi. 16. 2 Chr. xxiii. 15. Jer. xxxi. 40.
b 10. 23.
c vii. 40. Ezra ii. 37.
d Ezra x. 2.
e Jer. xix. 2.
f 21.
g 4.
h 8. 32.
‡ Or, *corner-chamber*.
i 1. xii. 39. John v. 2.
k 8. 31.

V. 26—31. *Marg. Ref.—The Nethinims*, &c. (26) "The Nethinim, *which* dwelt in Ophel, *repaired* unto the "place over against the water-gate, &c." *Marg.* 'The 'water-gate, it is likely, was that at which these lower 'ministers brought in water for the use of the temple.' *Bp. Patrick.—The Tekoites.* (27) *Note*, 5.—*Miphkad* (31) signifies *judgment, visitation*, or *correction*; and it is thought a prison was situated near this gate.

V. 32. *Sheep-gate.*] Thus the whole city was surrounded with a wall: for Eliashib began at the sheep-gate (1).

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The ministers of God should always be ready to labour and venture for the good of their brethren; and those, who have the precedency in rank, ought to take the lead, in setting that good example which gives energy to their instructions: but especially they should teach the people, how to sanctify their secular employments, by beginning, conducting, and completing them, with prayer and thanksgiving, according to the word of God, and to his glory.—The security and prosperity of the church, in every part of the world, is the common cause of all Christians, wherever they reside: and all orders of men should assist in promoting them. No age, sex, or station of life, can free any person from this obligation: every one, in some way or other, may contribute towards it; and where "much "is given, much will be required." But alas, the rich and *noble* generally count it their privilege to be *idle*, or *useless*; which they cannot be, without setting an example, mischievous in proportion to their influence: and no wonder that they disregard the proclamations of the prince, which call them to attend the service of God, when they disdain the yoke of the almighty Lord himself. But before him they are upon a level with the meanest of their inferiors; except that a more dreadful punishment, and deeper disgrace, await their impenitent and ungrateful rebellion. Frequently the zeal and activity in the cause of God, of those in the inferior orders, expose and condemn the pride, sloth, and self-indulgence, or impiety, of those who are entrusted with more talents; and thus they whom men despise, obtain and engross that "honour which cometh "from God."—If in times of prevalent ungodliness, numbers, in different stations would agree, first to look to themselves, and to reform their families as far as they could; and then to use all their influence to promote the general work of reformation, we might expect that much good would speedily be done: and though most men still neglect this duty; let those who lament the triumphs of iniquity and the desolations of piety, every one "repair "opposite to his own house" or "chamber;" and let all endeavour to do what they can, by their prayers, their example, the education of their children, and pious conversation, to promote and recommend that cause which they have espoused. And when such attempts are directed by men of vigour, prudence, and piety, and conducted with entire harmony, remote from envy, contention, or divisions; and when every one, beside doing his proper work earnestly, is ready to assist those who are overburdened; there is no reason to doubt of success: "for the fruit of "righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." —May the Lord stir up the hearts of all his people, to lay aside their disputes, and to disregard their worldly interests, in comparison of "building the walls of Jerusalem," and defending the cause of evangelical truth, and vital godliness, against the assaults of avowed enemies. May those offences cease, which weaken the common cause, and expose it to reproach: and may the church of Christ thus fortified, as "a city that is at unity in itself," and adorned by the beauties of holiness, attract the attention, the admiration, and the love of beholders; silence the reproaches of calumniators, and dismay the heart, or repel the assaults, of every hostile invader! Amen.

CHAP. IV.

Sanballat and his company are very wroth, and mock the Jews: but Nehemiah prays, and builds the wall, 1—6. He discovers that they secretly are plotting against him, and sets a watch, 7—12. He arms the builders, and gives them suitable orders and directions, 13—23.

a ii. 10. 19. Ezra iv. 1—5. Acts v. 17.

BUT it came to pass, that when [a] Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and [b] mocked the Jews.

b Ps. xxxv. 15, 16. xliv. 13, 14. Matt. xxvii. 29. Heb. xi. 36.

2 And he spake before his brethren, and [c] the army of Samaria, and said, What do these [d] feeble Jews? will they [*] fortify themselves? [e] will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they [f] revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?

c Ezra iv. 9, 10

d 1 Sam. xiv. 11, 12. xvii. 43, 44. Zech. xii. 8. 1 Cor. i. 27.

* Heb. *leave to themselves.*

e xii. 27. 43.

f 10. Ez. xxxvii. 3—13. Hab. iii. 2.

3 Now [g] Tobiah the Ammonite *was* by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone-wall.

g ii. 10. 19. vi. 1. 1 Kings xx. 10. 18. 2 Kings xviii. 23.

4 [h] Hear, O our God; for we are [†] despised: and [i] turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:

h Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4.

† Heb. *despite.*

i 1 Sam. xvii. 26. Ps. lxxix. 12. Prov. iii. 34. Hos. xii. 14.

5 And [k] cover not their iniquity, and let not [l] their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked *thee* to anger [m] before the builders.

k Ps. lix. 5—13. lxix. 27, 28. cix. 14, 15. Jer. xviii. 23. 2 Tim iv. 14.

l Ps. li. 1, 9. Is. xliii. 25. xliv. 22.

m Is. xxxvi. 11, 12.

6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people [n] had a mind to work.

n vi. 15. 1 Chr. xxix. 3. 14. 17, 18. 2 Chr. xxix. 36. Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor. viii. 16, 17. Phil. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21.

7 ¶ But it came to pass, *that* when [o] Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and [p] the Ammonites, and [q] the Ashdodites, [r] heard that the walls of Jerusalem [s] were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, [t] then they were very wroth,

o i. 10.

p Judg. x. 7, &c. xi. 12, &c. 1 Sam. xi. 2. 2 Sam. x. 1—5. 2 Kings xxiv. 2. 2 Chr. xx. 1. Ez. xxv. 3—7. Am. i. 13.

q xiii. 23, 24. 1 Sam. v. 1, 2. 2 Chr. xxvi. 6—8. Jer. xxv. 20. Am. i. 8. iii. 9. Zech. ix. 5, 6.

r Ezra iv. 4—16. v. 8.

s Heb. *ascended.* Gen. iii. 15. Acts iv. 17, 18. v. 33. Rev. xii. 12, 13. 17.

t Ps. ii. 1—3. lxxxiii. 4—11. Is. viii. 9, 10 Acts xxiii. 12, 13.

8 And [u] conspired all of them together, to come *and* to fight against Jerusalem, and to [§] hinder it.

§ Heb. *make an error to it.*

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. (*Notes*, ii. 9, 10. 19, 20.) Sanballat, and the other enemies of the Jews, though enraged at them for undertaking to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, were restrained from openly opposing them, partly because they despised their feeble attempts. They concluded, either that they would not venture to undertake such a work; or if they did, that they would make little progress, however earnest they might be. But when they heard that all hands were diligently employed, they became very angry; yet they affected to treat the undertaking with the utmost disdain. Sanballat uttered his sarcasms before his brethren, (or the principal commanders in that neighbourhood,) and the army of Samaria; whom he knew to be more inveterate against the Jews, than any other of the tribes under his command: but he supposed what he said would soon be reported at Jerusalem, and tend to discourage the builders. With a mixture of scorn and indignation, he enquired, "what the feeble Jews were doing." Could *they* think of fortifying so large a city? Did they intend to complete such a work in a day, and to secure themselves from interruption, while they spent the next in sacrificing? And what would they do for materials? The stones formerly used in this work were broken in pieces, or decayed, by lying so long under the rubbish; the builders could not "revive" them, or make them new again, nor could they procure any others. With equal disdain Tobiah replied, that a wall built *by them*, in such haste, and of such materials, would be no security at all; for the weight of a fox running over it would break it down! But this contempt and ridicule induced them to lose the opportunity of attempting more effectual opposition.

V. 4, 5. The Jews were at this time the church of God: they were actually employed in his service: their enemies, without the smallest ground of complaint against them, despised and hated them for his sake: if they succeeded in their designs they would subvert true religion; and their condign punishment would form a salutary example to all other adversaries, and be subservient to the cause of truth and righteousness. So that, zeal for the honour of God, and love to his people, induced Nehemiah to pray, that these scorners might be exposed to that reproach which they cast on the Jews, and become "a prey to their enemies "in the land of captivity;" and that their sins might not be covered, or blotted out, by the merciful forgiveness of God: seeing they had endeavoured to discourage the builders, and render them disaffected to their work; (*Marg. Ref.* i—l.)—Such scriptural requests are prophetical, or declaratory of the judgments of God against persecutors: and the subsequent doom of these nations was an answer to this prayer. (*Notes, Ps.* lxix. 21—28. cix. 6—20.) 'This prayer ... was confirmed by the destruction of these 'nations by the Maccabees and their successors.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 6. *The half*, &c.] The whole circuit of the wall was completed to half of the intended height.—*Had a mind to work.*] They 'were very much set upon it, and went about 'it cheerfully, notwithstanding their jeers and contempt.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.* n.)

V. 7, 8. All these nations, (except perhaps the Arabians,) were subjects of the kings of Persia; and were induced by Sanballat to unite against Nehemiah and the Jews, when acting by the king's commission; so that their attempt was a *conspiracy* in the most criminal sense. Dreading either the resentment of the king, or the valour of the Jews; they had not hitherto dared to attack them openly, notwithstanding the greatness of their malice. (*Notes, Matt.* xxvi. 3—5. *Acts* xxiii. 12—22.) 'The last 'words in the Hebrew are *to make an error in it*; that is,

9 Nevertheless [u] we made our prayer unto our God, and [x] set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Judah said, [y] The strength of the [z] bearers of burdens is decayed, and *there is* much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11 And our adversaries said, [a] They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us [b] ten times, [*] From all places whence ye shall return unto us, *they will be upon you.*

13 Therefore [c] set I in [†] the lower places behind the wall, *and* on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with [d] their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, [e] Be not ye afraid of them: [f] remember the Lord, *which is* [g] great and terrible, and [h] fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and [i] God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, [k] every one unto his work.

16 And it came to pass from that time forth, *that* the half of [l] my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers *were* behind all the house of Judah.

17 They which builded on the wall, and they that [m] bare burdens, with those that laded, *every one* [n] with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other *hand* held a weapon.

18 For the builders, every one had his sword girded [‡] by his side, and *so* builded: and [o] he that sounded the trumpet *was* by me.

19 And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work *is* great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.

u 11. Gen. xxxii. 9—12. 28. 2 Kings xix. 14—19. Ps. l. 15. lv. 16—18. Luke vi. 11, 12. Acts iv. 24—30.
x Matt. xxvi. 41. Luke xxi. 36. 1 Pet. v. 8.
y Num. xiii. 31. xxxii. 9. Ps. xi. 1, 2. Hag. i. 2.
z 2 Chr. ii. 18. Ez. xxix. 18.
a Judg. xx. 29, &c. Ps. lvi. 6. Is. xlvii. 11. 1 Thes. v. 2.
b Gen. xxxi. 7. 41. Num. xiv. 22. Job xix. 3.
* Or, *That from all places ye must return to us.*
c Gen. xxxii. 13—20. 2 Chr. xxxii. 2—8. Ps. cxii. 5. Matt. x. 16. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.
† Heb. *From the lower parts of the place.*
d 17, 18. Cant. iii. 7, 8. Eph. vi. 11—20.
e Num. xiv. 9. Deut. i. 21. xx. 3, 4. Josh. i. 9. 2 Chr. xx. 15—17. xxxii. 7. Ps. xxvii. 1. xlvi. 11. Is. xli. 10—14. Heb. xiii. 6.
f Ps. xx. 7. lxxvii. 10—20. cxliii. 5. Is. li. 12, 13. lxiii. 11—13.
g i. 5. Deut. x. 17. Job xxxvii. 22. Ps. lxv. 5. lxvi. 3. Is. lxiv. 1—3. Nah. i. 2—7. Heb. xii. 20, 21. 28, 29.
h 2 Sam. x. 12.
i 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 14. Job v. 12, 13. Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. viii. 10. xliv. 25. Lam. iii. 37. 1 Cor. iii. 19, 20.
k Mark xiii. 34. Rom. xii. 11. 1 Thes. iv. 11.
l 23. v. 15, 16. Ps. ci. 6.
m 10.
n Dan. ix. 1 Cor. ix. xvi. 13. 2 Cor. vi. 7. Eph. vi. 11, &c. 2 Tim. ii. 3. iv. 7.
‡ Heb. *on his loins.*
o Num. x. 9. 2 Chr. xiii. 12—17.

'to put them by the work, or to make them not know 'which way to turn themselves.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9. The connexion, here marked, between the greatest simplicity and piety, in trusting God alone and seeking help from him by prayer, and the most vigilant and diligent activity in the use of all proper means, is well worthy of notice.

V. 10. Some of the principal persons among the Jews, while the work was in hand, represented to Nehemiah, that the people were so worn down, and the remaining labour (especially in removing the rubbish to get materials,) was so great, that their design was impracticable, and must be abandoned at least for the present. This must have been a great discouragement to him, in conjunction with all his other difficulties and dangers. (*Notes, Ps.* xi. 1—3. *Hag.* i. 2. 4.)

V. 11. Some think, that certain of the princes reported these sayings of the adversaries, in order to intimidate the builders: being themselves weary of the labour, and not cordially affected to the cause. It was not however likely, that Sanballat could introduce into the city so large a number of soldiers, as would suffice to overpower and destroy all the Jews, and stop the work; without being discovered, till he and his troops were in the midst of the builders. Indeed the conduct of those, who reported such a design, was more suited to intimidate the inconsiderate, than to convince wise men that they really expected it would be carried into execution.

V. 12. This verse is of difficult construction; which seems to have been the effect of the abrupt manner, in which the persons intended expressed their excessive terror. They lived near the hostile nations, and some of them were continually coming to Jerusalem with information, that the enemy was preparing to attack the builders from every quarter; and would certainly fall upon them, whether they continued at their work, or attempted to return home. Probably, they meant to put their brethren upon their guard: but such alarming rumours tended to intimidate them and drive them from the work. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13—15. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'All was at stake, therefore 'he exhorts them to be valiant, trusting in God, who was 'stronger than all their enemies.' *Bp. Patrick.* After all the preparations which Nehemiah and the Jews had made, the conspirators did not venture to attack them: and, neither being able to surprise them, nor fright them from their design, they for the present desisted; and so the Jews returned to their work.

V. 16—18. The builders could not possibly have made any progress, if they had *literally* held a weapon in one of their hands. Indeed it is evident, that they wore their swords by their sides. But the expression is figurative, implying that every man was both a builder, and a soldier. They worked, and bare arms, by turns: they wore swords at their labour, and those behind them had other arms ready, when the alarm should be given.—Nehemiah, being earnest in the undertaking, employed all his attendants in one way or other about it.

V. 19, 20. The priests were directed to blow the sacred

20 In what place *therefore* ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: [p] our God shall fight for us.

21 So [q] we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears, from the rising of the morning, till the stars appeared.

22 Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let [r] every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day.

23 So neither [s] I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, [t] *saving that* every one put them off for washing.

p Ex. xiv. 14. 25. Deut. i. 30. iii. 22. xx. 4. Josh. xxiii. 10.

q 1 Cor. xv. 10. 58. Gal. vi. 9. Col. i. 29.

r xi. 1, 2.

s v. 16, 17. vii. 2. Judg. ix. 48.

t Or, *every one went with his weapon for water.* Judg. v. 11.

trumpets; (*Note, Num.* x. 2—10;) and no doubt some of them constantly attended, one at least, in the different stations, which were selected for the purpose, to sound the alarm when needful: and this was a token that the Lord would fight for his people against their enemies. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22. Those, who lived in the adjacent cities and villages, were required to lodge, with one or more servants, in Jerusalem, to guard the work, and be ready for it in the morning; for this was to be attended to in preference even to their own families, as being more exposed to the assaults of their enemies. (*Note*, xi. 1, 2.)

V. 23. Nehemiah and his attendants, in order that they might always be prepared against any alarm, took necessary rest by turns, in their clothes and armour; never undressing themselves, except for cleanliness, or ceremonial purification. Or as the margin renders the words, "Every "one *went* with his weapon for water."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The pious labours of those, who endeavour to promote true religion, must always excite the indignation of such as are "haters of God," and of his truth and holiness: nay, in this case, the wisest and most excellent behaviour will be reproached and derided, as madness and folly.—The most sacred things may easily be represented in so ridiculous a light, as to excite profane laughter: a small measure of wit, united with competent malice, impiety, and impudence, will suffice for these pernicious and profane scoffings; and such presumptuous jesters whet one another's ingenuity, and embolden each other to the most daring blasphemies. Contempt and derision are indeed very painful to us: but they frequently prove the Christian's protection, and give him leisure to effect his designs, without more formidable opposition.—The means which he uses appear feeble to proud despisers; but, by the power and blessing of God, they produce durable and extensive effects: and all the efforts of man, seconded by the power and policy of hell, have failed, and ever will fail, to subvert the cause, which infidels have dreamed would fall of itself, or on the first assault. Ere long the church on earth will triumph over every adversary: and all believers will soon offer the sacrifice of praise, for complete and eternal victory and salvation; notwithstanding the scoffs and rage of their enemies.—When insulted or injured, let us then give up ourselves to prayer: and the supplications of believers, throughout the world, for the prosperity of the church, and the success of the gospel, will eventually be answered in the reproach and merited punishment, of all impenitent opposers. So long as they reject the atonement, their sins cannot be covered; and their endeavours to hinder the progress of the gospel will provoke the Lord above all their other sins.—Those, who disagree in almost every other thing, will often unite in persecution: (*Note, Matt.* xxii. 15—22:) and that enmity, which at one time dictates contempt and derision, will at another suggest more violent and cruel measures; especially when the servants of God are active, united, and successful. So that proud scorners are not fit to be trusted with power; whatever professions of candour they may make, or however they may plead for toleration.—When we engage in important and useful undertakings, we should expect discouragement from every quarter. For we shall be tried, not only by the anger, contempt, treachery and cruelty of enemies, but also by the inconstancy and lukewarmness of friends and helpers: and many who wish well to us will weaken our hands, by regarding and reporting the menaces, or slanders, or boastings of our adversaries.

V. 13—23.

No opposition will prove any real hindrance to us, in our endeavours to do good, if we be led by it to a more simple confidence in God, and to the more diligent use of proper means for obtaining success. A believing remembrance of his power, truth, and love, will prove a sufficient support in every danger; for "if God be for us, who can "be against us?" and, however craftily the plots of opposers are laid, he is able to detect them, and to bring to nought all their counsels.—If our enemies cannot fright us from our duty, or deceive us into sin, or find us unwatchful, they cannot hurt us. When ministers of religion or other active instruments, add the example of diligence, courage, self-denial, and patience, to their exhortations; others will be stirred up, who were before drawn or driven from their work.—Every true Christian is both a labourer and a soldier, working with one hand and fighting with the other, and called by the sound of the gospel, alternately to his work and to the conflict. We are widely dispersed in our several employments; but we all form one army, and must prepare to unite against the common enemy, in whatever place the assault is made. In this important cause personal and relative interests must be comparatively disregarded: or rather they are most wisely attended to, when we commit them to the Lord, and labour for the benefit of his church. While we stand armed and watching, as for the battle, we shall have the best security for peace; for Satan fears assaulting the vigilant Christian: or if we are attacked, "our God will fight for us." Thus must we wait to the close of life, never putting off our armour, till our work and warfare be ended; and then we

CHAP. V.

The poor Jews complain of the debts which they had unavoidably contracted, and which compelled them to mortgage their lands, and even sell their children, 1—5. Nehemiah rebukes the rich usurers, who oppress their brethren; and obliges them to engage by oath to make full restitution, 6—13. He refuses the governor's customary allowances, and maintains great hospitality at his own charge, 14—19.

AND [a] there was a great cry of the people and of their wives, against [b] their brethren the Jews.

2 For there were that said, [c] We, our sons and our daughters, *are* many: therefore [d] we take up corn *for them*, that we may eat and live.

3 *Some* also there were that said, [e] We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, [f] because of the dearth.

4 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for [g] the king's tribute, *and that upon* our lands and vineyards.

5 Yet now [*] our flesh *is* as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, [i] we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and *some* of our daughters are brought unto bondage *already*: neither *is it* in our power *to redeem them*; for other men have our lands and vineyards.

6 And [k] I was very angry when I heard their cry, and these words.

7 Then [*] I consulted with myself, and [l] I rebuked the nobles and the rulers, and said unto them, [m] Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And [n] I set a great assembly against them;

8 And I said unto them, We, [o] after our ability, have [p] redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even [q] sell your brethren? or [r] shall they be sold

a Ex. iii 7. xxii. 25—27. Job xxxi. 38, 39. xxxiv. 28. Is. v. 7. Luke xviii. 7. Jam. v. 4.
b Lev. xxv. 35—37. Deut. xv. 7—11. Acts vii. 26. 1 Cor. vi. 6—8.
c Ps. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 2—4. Mal. ii. 2.
d Gen. xli. 57. xlii. 2. xliii. 8.
e Gen. xlvii. 15—25.
f Mal. iii. 8—11.
g ix. 37. Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. Josh. xvi. 10. 1 Kings ix. 21. Ezra iv. 13. 20.
h Gen. xxxvii. 27. Is. lviii. 7. Jam. ii. 5, 6.
i Ex. xxi. 1—11. Lev. xxv. 39—43. 2 Kings iv. 1. Matt. xviii. 25.
k xiii. 8. 25. Ex. xi. 8. Num. xvi. 15. Mark iii. 5. Eph. iv. 26.
* Heb. *my heart consulted in me.* Ps. iv. 4. xxvii. 8.
l Lev. xix. 15. 2 Chr. xix. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxii. 1—4. Prov. xxvii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 16. Gal. ii. 11. 1 Tim. v. 20. Tit. ii. 15.
m Ex. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 36. Deut. xv. 2, 3. xxiii. 19, 20. xxiv. 10—13. Ez. xxii. 12. xlv. 9.
n 2 Chr. xxviii. 9—13. Matt. xviii. 17.
o Matt. xxv. 15. 29. 2 Cor. viii. 12. Gal. vi. 10.
p Lev. xxv. 47—49.
q Ex. xxi. 16. Deut. xxiv. 7.
r Rom. xiv. 15. 1 Cor. viii. 11.

shall be crowned as conquerors, and welcomed to the rest and joy of our Lord.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—5. It seems, that the attention of Nehemiah was interrupted, before the wall was completed, by the affair recorded in this chapter. (*Note*, vi. 15, 16.) Amidst the depredations to which the Jews were exposed, and their attention to self-defence, it is likely that tillage was in some degree neglected, and that a scarcity of corn ensued. It is also *supposed* by learned men, that these events occurred in the sabbatical year; which if indeed it were so, would increase the difficulties of the poor, as well as aggravate the guilt of those, who thence took occasion to oppress their brethren. The nation seems also to have been visited with scarcity for their sins. Such persons, therefore, as were in low circumstances, and had large families, were unable to buy necessary food, except upon credit, and probably at an exorbitant price; and they were compelled to raise money, by borrowing on interest, for the tribute imposed by the king of Persia. (*Note*, ix. 36, 37.) Of these difficulties the monied men took advantage, and, obtaining mortgages of their lands, got them into their possession: taking usury also for the money, of one hundredth part every month, or twelve per cent. a year, as it is generally supposed; which soon reduced the debtors to deep poverty; and at length to the necessity of selling into slavery their sons, and even their daughters; who would be peculiarly exposed in that situation: while there appeared no prospect of redress, no hope of redeeming either their lands or their children, no period to their accumulating distresses, except in entire and perpetual bondage. Yet they were not only of the same nature, but of the same chosen seed, the children of the covenant, equally with the more prosperous Jews. They had the same affection for their children, and accounted a numerous family a blessing, as long as they could provide for it. They had not reduced themselves to this distress by extravagance; but were necessitated to contract debts, through hard times and heavy taxes, and for necessary provisions: and the conduct of their oppressors was contrary to the letter and the spirit of the whole law. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, *Gen.* xlvii. 13—26. *Ex.* xxii. 25—27. *Lev.* xxv. 35—37. *Deut.* xv. 2—10. xxiv. 10—13. 2 *Kings* iv. 1. *Ez.* xxii. 12, 13.) In this extremity they appealed to Nehemiah, and he immediately determined to do them justice.

V. 6, 7. Nehemiah appears to have possessed a far more bold and eager spirit, than his contemporary Ezra. For, in a situation something similar, Ezra fasted, prayed, wept, and almost desponded: (*Notes*, *Ezra* ix:) but Nehemiah, fired with a holy indignation, united by sympathy with the poor sufferers, proceeded immediately, with all his authority and influence, to redress the grievances of his oppressed brethren; neither fearing the resentment of their powerful oppressors, nor doubting but he should be able to effect his purpose. (*Notes*, *Job* xxix. 12—17. xxxi. 33, 34. *Ps.* lxxxii. 2—4. *Prov.* xxxi. 8, 9.) He did not, however, act without consideration: but, having formed his plan after mature deliberation, he first sharply rebuked the nobles and rulers, who, instead of punishing other criminals, were themselves the most notorious usurers and extortioners. And, as he feared lest they should prove refractory, he convened an assembly of the people; that perceiving how generally their conduct was disapproved, they might be shamed into proper concessions, without the necessity of direct compulsion.

V. 8. Nehemiah, and Ezra, and other pious persons, had not only, with great zeal and earnestness, endeavoured to establish the security and prosperity of the nation; but they had redeemed from slavery several of the poor Jews

unto us? Then [s] held they their peace, and found nothing *to answer*.

9 Also I said, [t] It *is* not good that ye do: ought ye not [u] to walk in the fear of our God, because of [x] the reproach of the heathen our enemies?

10 [y] I likewise, *and* my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: [z] I pray you let us [a] leave off this usury.

11 [b] Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, [c] their lands, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses, also the hundredth *part* of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

12 Then said they, [d] We will restore *them*, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then [e] I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise.

13 Also [f] I shook my lap, and said, [g] So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and * emptied. And all the congregation said, [h] Amen, and [f] praised the LORD. And [k] the people did according to this promise.

14 ¶ Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, [l] from the twentieth year, even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that is*, twelve years, [m] I and my brethren have not eaten [n] the bread of the governor.

15 But the former governors, that *had been* before me, were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, [o] even their servants bare rule over the people: but [p] so did not I, [q] because of the fear of God.

16 Yea, also [r] I continued in the work of this wall, [s] neither bought we any land: and [t] all my servants *were* gathered thither unto the work.

17 Moreover *there were* [u] at my table [x] an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beside those that came unto us from among the heathen that *are* about us.

18 Now *that* [y] which was prepared

[a] Job xxix. 10. xxxii. 15, 16. Matt. xxii. 12. Rom. iii. 19.
[t] 1 Sam. ii. 24. Prov. xvi. 29. xvii. 26. xviii. 5. xix. 2. xxiv. 23.
[u] 15. Gen. xx. 11. xlii. 18. Acts ix. 31.
[x] Gen. xiii. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xii. 14. Ez. xxxvi. 20. Rom. ii. 24. 1 Tim. v. 14. Tit. ii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 12
[y] Mic. ii. 1. Luke iii. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ix. 12—18.
[z] 2 Cor. v. 11. 20. vi. 1. Philemon 8, 9.
[a] 7. Ex. xxii. 25—27. Ps. xv. 5. Ez. xviii. 8. 13.
[b] Lev. vi. 4, 5. 1 Sam. xii. 3. 2 Sam. xii. 6. Is. lviii. 6. Luke iii. 8.
[c] 3, 4.
[d] 2 Chr. xxviii. 14, 15. Ezra x. 12. Matt. xix. 21, 22. Luke xix. 8.
[e] x. 29. xiii. 25. 2 Chr. vi. 22, 23. xv. 13, 14. Ezra x. 5. Jer. xxxiv. 8—10. Matt. xxvi. 63.
[f] Matt. x. 14. Acts xiii. 51. xviii. 6.
[g] 1 Sam. xv. 28. 1 Kings xi. 29—31. Zech. v. 3, 4.
[s] Heb. *empty*, or *void*.
[h] Num. v. 22. Deut. xxvii. 14—26.
[k] 1 Chr. xvi. 36. 2 Kings xxiii. 3. Ps. l. 14. lxxvi. 11. cxix. 106. Ec. v. 5.
[l] B. C. 434. ii. 1.
[m] 1 Cor. ix. 4—15. 18. 2 Thes. iii. 8, 9.
[n] Ezra iv. 13, 14. Rom. xiii. 6, 7.
[o] 1 Sam. ii. 15—17. viii. 15. Prov. xxix. 12.
[p] Matt. v. 47. 2 Cor. xi. 9. xii. 13.
[q] 9. Job xxxi. 23. Ps. cxii. 1. cxlvii. 11. Prov. xvi. 6. Ec. xii. 13, 14. Is. l. 10. Luke xviii. 2—4.
[r] Luke viii. 15. Rom. ii. 7. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Gal. vi. 9.
[s] Num. xvi. 15. Acts xx. 33—35. 1 Thes. ii. 5, 6.
[t] 2 Cor. xii. 16—18. Phil. ii. 20, 21.
[u] 2 Sam. ix. 7. 13. 1 Kings xviii 19.
[x] Is. xxxii. 8. Rom. xii. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 9, 10.
[y] 1 Kings iv. 22, 23.

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who had been sold among the heathen. (*Note, Lev.* xxvi. 47—55.) What a contrast then was the conduct of these usurers, to their disinterested and liberal love to their countrymen! Did the one company redeem their enslaved brethren, that the other might sell them again for slaves, in direct violation of the divine law? Or did they expect to sell their enslaved brethren to Nehemiah and his friends, even as the gentiles took their money for such as they redeemed?—It was indeed impossible to reply to this animated and reasonable expostulation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. When Nehemiah said, "It is not good that ye "do," his words imply that they had acted very wickedly. 'A soft form of speech, used when they mean it is very 'bad. *Prov.* xvi. 29.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.* t.)—The exposed and distressed condition to which sin had reduced the nation, and the recent mercies which they had received, combined to enforce it upon them, to "walk in the "fear of God," lest he should give them up as a *reproach* to their enemies: or rather, lest the heathen, who were full of malice, should reproach them, as they justly might, for their avarice and cruelty; and thence take occasion to revile their religion, and blaspheme the name of God himself. (*Marg. Ref.* u, x.)

V. 10—13. Had Nehemiah, and his brethren and servants, acted towards the people, as these oppressors did; the authority of the Persian king would have enabled them to exact large contributions, from the rich especially. But as they, instead of such exactions, did not so much as take what was justly their due; (*Note*, 14, 15;) surely the rich ought to be ashamed of extorting from the poor, what they could have no shadow of a right to! Nehemiah therefore urged them *voluntarily* to leave off their usury, and to restore the lands of their poor brethren, and the increase of money and provisions, which they had exacted from them; to lend them *without pledge or usury*, in this time of distress; and to wait for payment till better times. This seems the immediate purport of his proposal: though probably he required the free remission of former debts, and the liberating of the children which were in bondage, as in the year of release.—His remonstrance had its desired effect, and the guilty persons promised to do so: but lest they should delay, or go back from their word, he called the priests as witnesses, and bound the persons concerned with a solemn oath to perform their promise; and then with a significant action, he denounced the vengeance of heaven, against every one who failed of this engagement. To this the congregation solemnly assented, and praised the Lord for sending them so just and merciful a ruler. (*Notes, Jer.* xxxiv. 8—22.)—Thus this matter was in one assembly amicably settled, by motives and arguments taken from true religion, and the law of God: yet one of a similar kind distracted the Roman state for ages, and the oppression was never effectually prevented! (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xxviii. 9—15. 1 *Tim.* vi. 1—5.)

V. 14—18. This passage must have been added by Nehemiah several years after the date of the transaction before recorded: for that occurred soon after he came to Jerusalem.—The former governors had received from the

for me daily *was* one ox, *and* six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all
z 14, 15. sorts of wine: yet for all this [z] required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.

19 [a] Think upon me, my God, for good, [b] *according* to all that I have done for this people.

a xiii. 14. 22. 31. Gen. xl. 14. Ps. xxv. 6, 7. cvi. 4. Jer. xxix. 11.
b Ps. xviii. 23—25. Matt. x. 42. xxv. 34—40.

people an income of about five pounds a day, (as it is generally interpreted;) besides a proportion of bread and wine for their households: while their attendants, (as it is too commonly the case,). lorded it over the people, and increased their burdens. It is not said who these governors were. Perhaps Ezra, who seems not to have been rich, was necessitated to take sufficient for the expenses of his station; but we may be sure, that he allowed of no oppression. It is probable, however, that the Persian governors west of the Euphrates were meant: for they seem to have had authority over the Jews in all civil concerns, until Nehemiah's commission was granted. But he, acting in the fear of God and from the pure motives of religion, and perceiving the poverty of the people, and the burdens in other respects laid upon them, would not receive this customary emolument: and, being very rich and liberal, he supported his dignity with great hospitality at his own expense, all the time he filled that exalted station; setting his rich countrymen an example of receding from legal claims for the publick good. At the same time he spared neither trouble nor expense in forwarding the fortifications of the city; and required his attendants to assist also: and would neither himself take, nor allow them to take, any advantage of the poverty of the Jews, by purchasing estates at a low price, as they might easily have done.—In reading this account which he gave of himself, we should remember, that he wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: and it was proper that his magnanimous, disinterested, and liberal conduct should stand upon record, for an example to all others, what use to make of great riches; how to render authority a publick blessing; and how to induce mankind to acts of justice and every good work, by taking the lead in them. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 13—18. 2 *Cor.* xi. 7—12. 16—20. xii. 11—15.)—'He loved religion better than riches, and took not his own due, that 'the people might serve God more cheerfully. ... They' (his servants) 'were constantly employed also in the same 'work, and received no pay for their labour, though it 'could not be done without neglect of his private business. ... There is no reason to think, that he speaks too 'much of himself, and his own worthy acts; for it was 'no more than ... St. Paul was constrained to speak of 'himself in his epistle to the Corinthians; of whom he 'would take nothing, that he might stop the mouths of 'false apostles and covetous people.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 19. Nehemiah had shewn great kindness to his brethren, to which they had not, in strict justice, any claim; and he lifted up his heart to God, when recording it, intreating him to shew like kindness to him, and to *remember* him for good. His conduct in these circumstances evidenced that he was a true believer: he desired no recompence from man, but confidently expected one from a merciful God: he evidently spoke and acted as one that knew himself to be a sinner; and he did not expect a recompence as of debt; but in the manner, that the Lord rewards a cup of cold water given to a disciple for his sake. (*Notes*, xiii. 14. *Matt.* x. 40—42. *Heb.* vi. 9, 10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

Every domestick or relative comfort may become to us an occasion of increasing anguish: we should not then be discontented in the want of children, or anxious about temporal things; but seek our whole happiness from God alone.—It is the peculiar duty and privilege of the poor, to trust the promise and providence of God, to supply their families with food and raiment, and to be content with necessaries; and of the rich, and of those who have no children, to contribute liberally to the support of their indigent brethren. But alas! too many take advantage of the necessities, to which others are reduced, in order to exact on them; that they may increase their own useless abundance, or support their luxurious and extravagant expenses! They wilfully forget, that the poor are of the same nature with themselves; and that they have the same wants, inclinations, natural affections, and feelings of pain and suffering. Instead of "doing to others, as they would that others "should do to them;" they grow careless of the welfare, and callous to the miseries, of their fellow-creatures; and usurp authority over them, as bond-slaves, in proportion as wealth, power, and prosperity increase. Every gratification is deemed requisite for the lordly oppressors; but the meanest morsel is good enough for the poor and enslaved, though far better characters than themselves. Thus men prey upon their own species, and, by "despising the poor, "reproach their Maker;" and aggravate, instead of relieving, those distresses, which are always entitled to compassion and assistance; and especially, when they are not the effect of extravagance, or sloth; but of hard times, heavy taxes, large families, and debts contracted for bare necessaries. (*Notes*, *Prov.* xiv. 31. xvii. 5. *P. O.* 1—15, *latter part.*) Such conduct disgraces even *human nature;* but who can express sufficient abhorrence of it when adopted by *professed Christians?* It exposes our holy religion to the reproach, scorn, and abomination of heathens, and gives occasion to our enemies to blaspheme that worthy name, by which these selfish wretches are improperly distinguished. Thus, in all the four quarters of the globe, millions of Mohammedans and Pagans abhor Christianity, through the avarice, treachery, and cruelty of men called Christians!—Well then may the report of such crimes, and the cry of the oppressed, kindle an honest indignation in the breast of every friend of mankind, of his country, and of the gospel. Those in authority should consult with themselves, and with each other, how to redress these scandalous abuses: and if fair means will not do, rough and decisive measures should be employed, notwithstanding the clamours of interested oppressors; if princes would have the blessing of God upon their dominions. Too often nobles and rulers are the chief in such exactions; and

CHAP. VI.

Sanballat and his party practise against Nehemiah, by insidious attempts, false rumours, and the hired counsel of pretended prophets, 1—14. The wall is finished, and the enemies are disheartened, 15, 16. The nobles of Judah traitorously correspond with Tobiah, 17—19.

[a] ii. 10. 19. iv. 1. 7. [b] 6. *Gashmu.* NOW it came to pass, [a] when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and [b] Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and *that* there was [c] no breach left therein; (though [d] at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

[c] iv. 6, 7. Dan. ix. 25. [d] iii. 3. 6.

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, [e] Come, let us meet together in *some one of* the villages in the plain of [f] Ono. But [g] they thought to do me mischief.

[e] 2 Sam. iii. 27. xx. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 12. Prov. xxvi. 24—26. Ec. iv. 4. [f] xi. 35. 1 Chr. viii. 12. [g] Ps. xii. 2. xxxvii. 12. 32. Jer. xli. 2. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Mic. vii. 4, 5. Luke xx. 19—21.

3 And [h] I sent messengers unto them, saying, I [i] *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

[h] Prov. xiv. 15. Matt. x. 16. [i] Ec. ix. 10. Luke xiv. 30. John ix. 4. 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.

4 Yet they sent unto me [k] four

[k] Judg. xvi. 6. 10. 15—20. Prov. vii. 21. Luke xviii. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Gal. ii. 5.

their power and affluence seem to defy investigation, and frequently prevent or intimidate those, who ought to promote the execution of justice: yet neither rank nor authority should screen them; nay, they should be first punished, for an example to others: and if they disregard the rebuke of an individual, *the great assemblies of nations* should be convened against them. If, however, they can be shamed or persuaded into a proper conduct, harsher measures are ineligible: and when earnestness, affection, wisdom, piety, humanity, a decided example, and cogent reasonings, concur, they will sometimes produce effect beyond expectation.—In expostulating with selfish people, it is good to contrast their conduct with that of others, who are remarkably liberal and benevolent: but it is best to point out to them the example of him, who, "though "he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we "through his poverty might be rich." When this is compared with the conduct of those, who do not care how many they reduce to the most abject penury or slavery, to enrich themselves; the contrast, between the Master and his professed disciples, is so striking, that it implies an argument, which is silencing, and unanswerable on any scriptural principles. It may further be enquired, whether such oppression is good in itself, or consistent with the fear of God, regard to his authority, and his command to love our neighbours as ourselves: whether men can deny, that the enemies of our holy religion do reproach us, because of such practices, and are prejudiced to their irreparable damage: and how they would approve it, if their superiors tyrannized over them, and extorted from them, as they do from their inferiors; and what will become of them, if God shew them no more mercy, than they shew their poor brethren. (*Note, Jam.* ii. 9—13, *v.* 13.) If our oppressors and slave-dealers were not, by habits long persisted in, more callous than these Jews, we might be encouraged to intreat and beseech them to leave off their extortion; to make restitution to the injured, and to shew mercy to the poor. But alas! these methods are seldom successful! and more conclusive reasons alone prevail. This remains for the magistrate; and here the preacher must leave them. If arguments, expostulations, warnings, and persuasions will not induce them "to repent, and to do works meet "for repentance:" we must "shake off the dust of our "feet, as a testimony against them;" assuring them that God will soon shake them out from their ill-gotten treasures, and cast them down into destruction; (*Note, Jam.* v. 1—6;) if they continue to neglect the salvation of Christ, or refuse to imitate his example of loving-kindness and mercy: and when the righteous Judge shall denounce this tremendous sentence against them, all the multitudes of the redeemed will cry, "Amen, and will praise the LORD."—We may further observe, that wise and good men may be of very different tempers, and consequently go about the same thing in a different manner. But they should not censure each other, nor should others censure them: let them serve God according to that ability which he has given them; and let it never be supposed, that one mere man is a perfect model for all others to follow.

V. 14—19.

We must not do our works to be seen of men, and it is seldom expedient to speak of them ourselves. Yet we should "let our light shine before men, that they may see "our good works, and glorify God:" (*Notes, Matt.* v. 14—16. vi. 1—4:) and sometimes a good man may be called upon, as in his presence, and with an appeal to the consciences of many witnesses, to declare his own disinterested and upright conduct, and the motives of it, for a reproof, an instruction, and an example, to mankind. But it is *always* necessary for those to set a decidedly good example, who are bold reprovers and active reformers of others, and who speak and act with decision and sharpness against their crimes. In this case a man should give up his right, neglect opportunities of gain, be willing to labour and endure hardship without recompence, and to expend his substance in the support of a good cause. And it is not enough for publick characters themselves to avoid evil, and the appearance of it: their servants and dependents must be restrained also. But the fear and love of God, and genuine love of the brethren, will influence a man to do this and much more; and will constrain him to abound in hospitality and every good work, according to the ability that God has given him. These are proper evidences and expressions of living faith; and our reconciled God will look for good, on such as abound in these fruits of righteousness, according to all that they have done to his people.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—4. Sanballat and his confederates, not daring openly to attack the Jews, yet earnestly desiring to prevent the completion of the fortifications, which were daily carried on; formed a stratagem to draw Nene-

times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 ¶ Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner, the fifth time, with [l] an open letter in his hand;

6 Wherein *was* written, [m] It is reported among the heathen, and [n] Gashmu saith *it*, [o] *that* thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, [p] that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

7 And thou hast also [q] appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, *There is* [r] a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king, according to these words. [s] Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

8 Then I sent unto him, saying, [t] There are no such things done as thou sayest, but [u] thou feignest them out of thine own heart.

9 For [x] they all made us afraid, saying, [y] Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. [z] Now therefore, *O God*, strengthen my hands.

10 Afterward I came unto the house of [a] Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the [b] son of Mehetabeel, who *was* [b] shut up; and he said, [c] Let us meet together in [d] the house of God, within the temple; and [e] let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, [f] in the night will they come to slay thee.

11 And I said, [g] Should such a man as I flee? and who *is there*, that, *being* as I *am*, [h] would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

12 And, lo, [i] I perceived that [k] God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had [l] hired him.

13 Therefore *was* he hired, [m] that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and [n] *that* they might have *matter* for an evil report, [o] that they might reproach me.

14 [p] My God, [q] think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these

[l] 2 Kings xviii. 26—28. 2 Cor. ii. 11. xi. 13—15. Eph. vi. 11. 2 Thes. ii. 10.
[m] Jer. ix. 3—6. xx. 10. Matt v. 11. Rom. iii. 8. 2 Cor. vi. 8. [n] Pet. ii. 12, 13. iii. 16.
[n] 1, 2. *Geshem.*
[o] ii. 19. Ezra iv. 12. 15.
[p] Luke xxiii. 2. John xix. 13.
[q] 12, 13.
[r] 2 Sam. xv. 10—12. 1 Kings i. 7. 18. 25. 34.
[s] Prov. xxvi. 24—26. Acts xxiii. 15.
[t] Acts xxiv. 12, 13. xxv. 7. 10.
[u] Job xiii. 4. Ps. xxxvi. 3. xxxviii. 12. lii. 2. Is. lix. 4. Dan. xi. 27. Matt. xii. 34. John viii. 44.
[x] 14. iv. 10—14. 2 Chr. xxxii. 18.
[y] 2 Chr. xv. 7. Ezra iv. 1—24. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Jer. xxxviii. 4. Heb. xii. 12.
[z] Ps. lvi. 3. lxviii. 35. cxxxviii. 3. Is. xli. 10. Zech. x. 12. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Eph. iii. 16. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13. 1 Pet. v. 10.
[a] 12. Ezra viii. 16. x. 31. Prov. xi. 9. Matt. vii. 15.
[b] 2 Kings ix. 3. Jer. xxxvi. 5. Ez. iii. 24.
[c] Ps. xii. 2. xxxvii. 12. cxx. 2, 3
[d] 1 Kings vi. 5. 2 Kings xi. 3.
[e] 2 Chr. xxviii. 24. xxix. 3. 7. Mal. i. 10. Acts xxi. 30.
[f] Job xxiv. 13—17. John iii. 20.
[g] 3. 1 Sam. xix. 5. Job iv. 3—6. Ps. xi. 1, 2. Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. x. 18. Luke xiii. 31—33. Acts viii. 1. xx. 24. xxi. 13. Heb. xi. 27.
[h] 9. Num. xxxii. 7—9. Ec. x. 1. Phil. ii. 17. 30.
[i] Ez. xiii. 22. 1 Cor. ii. 15. xii. 10.
[k] Jer. xiv. 14. xxiii. 16. 25. xxviii. 15 Ez. xiii. 7. 1 John iv. 1.
[l] Is. lvi. 11. Ez. xiii. 19. Mic. iii. 11. Acts xx. 33. 1 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. i. 7. 1 Pet. v. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 3. Rev. xviii. 13.
[m] Prov. xxix. 5. Is li. 7. 12, 13. lvii. 11. Jer. i. 17. Ez. ii. 6. Matt. x. 28. 2 Tim. i. 7. Rev. xxi. 8.
[n] 6. Prov. xxii. 1. Ec. vii. 1.
[o] Jer. xviii. 18. xx. 10. Dan. vi. 4, 5. Matt. xxii. 15. xxvi. 59. Acts vi. 13. 2 Cor. xi. 12. 1 Tim. v. 14. Tit. ii. 8.
[p] v. 19. Ps. xxii. 1. lxiii. 1.
[q] iv. 4, 5. xiii. 29. Ps. cxl. 5—11. Jer. xi. 20—23. xviii. 20—23. 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15. 1 John v. 16.

miah from his station, and to slay or imprison him, when they had him in their power. They therefore, on some plausible pretence, invited him to an interview: but he was aware of their intentions; and *on that account* would not have gone if he had not been so fully engaged. He, however, only answered, that, being fully employed in a most important work, his presence at Jerusalem was absolutely necessary; and that the work would stop if he left it: why then should he come down, in such circumstances? This was true, and a sufficient reason: and their subsequent importunity could not induce him either to comply, or to enter into any altercation with them; as indeed it was well calculated to confirm his suspicions. (*Notes, Judg.* xvi. 6—16.) 'They thought, I suppose, that if 'they did not take this opportunity to overthrow what he 'had done, before he set up the doors upon the gates, they 'should never be able to enter the city afterwards. He 'still persisted constantly to give no other answer; whereby 'they might understand he was resolved to finish the 'work.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5—9. When these most inveterate enemies had been baffled in their design, they devised a more dangerous stratagem. Sanballat sent, under a pretence of friendship, to inform Nehemiah of a report in circulation, that the Jews were preparing to revolt from the king of Persia, and place him on the throne; and that he employed prophets, who should preach this to them, as the will of God. This, *Gashmu*, or *Geshem* (2), attested to be fact, and was prepared to prove: and, being circulated in the surrounding nations, it was likely soon to come to the ears of Artaxerxes, and to bring upon the Jews the whole weight of his indignation.—If such reports had indeed been circulated and credited, there would have been cause for alarm: for those despotick kings, upon the least suspicion, often drove their lieutenants into rebellion, as their only hope of self-preservation. But it was entirely a fiction invented to frighten Nehemiah, or to render him incapable of proceeding. The letter was sent open; that the contents, being known to the people, might excite them to mutiny, or to forsake the work for fear of the Persians: (*Notes, 2 Kings* xviii. 26—35:) and the proposal of taking counsel with him, as if Sanballat and his friends were desirous of concerting measures for the common safety, was an artful device made in order to get him into their hands, that they might do him mischief. But Nehemiah, being conscious of his innocency, and satisfied that no such reports were circulated, simply denied the charge, and let them know, that he was aware that the whole was their own fiction: and, as they intended to weaken his hands from his work, he took occasion to beg of God to "strengthen his hands." The words, *O God*, are not in the original; and some interpret the sentence, as Nehemiah's resolution to proceed with increasing earnestness: but they seem rather to be an ejaculation; and the omission of the address implies the holy, yet reverend familiarity, with which this pious man communed with his condescending Father and Friend, and shews that his heart was habitually employed in thinking of his God. (*Note, John* xx. 11—17.)

V. 10—14. Sanballat and his party being once more baffled, employed a still more subtle and dangerous expe-

their works, and [r] on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 ¶ So [s] the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day* of *the month* Elul, [t] in fifty and two days.

16 And it came to pass, that [u] when all our enemies heard *thereof*, and all the heathen that *were* about us saw *these things*, they were much cast down in their own eyes: [x] for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.

17 ¶ Moreover in those days [y] the nobles of Judah [*] sent many letters unto Tobiah, and *the letters* of Tobiah came unto them.

18 For *there were* many in Judah sworn unto him, because he *was* the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of [z] Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of [a] Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

19 Also [b] they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my [†] words to him. *And* Tobiah sent letters [c] to put me in fear.

r 1 Kings xxii. 22—24. Is. ix. 14, 15. Jer. xiv. 15, 16. xxviii. 1. 10. 15. Ez. xiii. 16, 17. Matt. vii. 15. xxiv. 11. 24. 2 Tim. iii. 8. Rev. xix. 20.
s Ezra vi. 15. Ps. i. 3. Dan. ix. 25.
t iv. 1, 2.
u ii. 10. iv. 1. 7. vii. 1, 2.
x Ex. xiv. 25. Num. xxiii. 23. Josh. v. 1. Ps. cxxvi. 2.
y iii. 5. v. 7. xiii. 28. Mic. vii. 3—6. Matt. xxiv. 10—12.
* Heb. *multiplied their letters passing to Tobiah.*
z vii. 10. Ezra ii. 5.
a iii. 4. 30.
b Prov. xxviii. 4. John vii. 7. xv. 19. 1 John iv. 5.
† Or, *matters.*
c 9. 13. Is. xxxvii. 10—14. Acts iv. 18—21.

dient, suborning persons, who were reputed to be prophets, to give Nehemiah evil counsel in the name of God. The principal person concerned was Shemaiah, of whom Nehemiah seems previously to have had a good opinion. He was "shut up" in some chamber adjoining the sanctuary, probably as a token of his own fear, and a sign to Nehemiah of what he ought to do; who, perhaps being sent to, went to confer with him, as a friend and a prophet. The environs of the temple were secured by walls and gates, while the gates of the city were not set up. Shemaiah therefore professed great concern for Nehemiah's safety; and counselled him to take refuge in the temple with him, lest his enemies should come and murder him by night; or *that very night*, as his words seem to imply. If Nehemiah had followed this advice, he would have lost his reputation for courage and confidence in God; and have appeared weak and contemptible: the people would have taken the alarm, deserted the work, and sought their own safety: the accusations of his enemies would have gained credit, even in the Persian court; and he would have appeared conscious of bad intentions. In short, it would have overturned his whole design, and given his enemies their desired advantage. (*Notes, Matt.* iv. 1—11.) But Nehemiah soon saw through this project likewise. From the nature of the counsel, and by proper investigation, he perceived that Shemaiah was not delivering a message from God; but that he pronounced this prophecy against him, intending his ruin; having been hired by Tobiah and Sanballat, that Nehemiah might contract guilt, and expose himself to reproach.—When the rank of Nehemiah, and his authority, were considered, with his conscious integrity and professed confidence in God, and the importance of his work, it appeared very inconsistent for him to flee and hide himself. In such circumstances, even the preservation of life formed but a subordinate consideration: the support of the publick cause, by an example of intrepidity, firmness, and consistency, ought to be first considered. Any brave commander would venture his life, when the event of a decisive battle, and the fate of his country were at stake, and would scorn to flee at the appearance of danger: how much more then should Nehemiah venture his, for the glory of God and the benefit of his church! To take refuge in the temple in such a case, would be to prefer a disgraceful short-lived safety, to the most important of all causes: (*Note, Acts* viii. 1.) Nehemiah, therefore, not only with decided firmness rejected this counsel, as inconsistent with the most evident scriptural principles: but, as Shemaiah, and Noadiah the prophetess, and the other pretended prophets, had most basely sold their services to the enemies of God and religion; he subjoins his prayers for their confusion and disappointment. (*Note, 2 Tim.* iv. 14, 15.)

V. 15, 16. This important and difficult work was completed in so very short a time, and under so many disadvantages, that even the adversaries of the Jews were convinced that God had prospered them. He had given them health, strength, courage, and unity; he had restrained their opposers and kept off interruptions; and he succeeded the whole by his blessing: so that "the work was wrought "of their God." This dejected their enemies, and made them forebode the future prevalence of the Jews; but it did not allure them to desire a portion among that favoured people. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 16—22. *Esth.* vi. 13.)—*Elul.* (15) Answering to part of August and part of September, as it is supposed: for it is not elsewhere mentioned.

V. 17—19. While the wall was building, and afterwards, several of the nobles of Judah were in the interest of Tobiah, and held a traitorous correspondence with him: some of them, having joined affinity with him, had engaged others to swear to serve him, as they had opportunity. Nay, they had the confidence, or rather insolence, to report the good deeds, or supposed excellent endowments, of this bitter enemy of God and his people, to Nehemiah; either intimating to him that he ought to imitate them, or to form an alliance with so worthy a character! And at the same time they betrayed Nehemiah's measures to him. But this pious and excellent man, who had so strenuously pleaded the cause of the oppressed poor, would not, in his present circumstances, exercise the authority, with which he was invested, against his own enemies in Judah, however basely they acted towards him; but persevered in serving his people, notwithstanding their treachery and ingratitude!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The whole power and policy of Satan and his servants have always been directed against those, who zealously seek the welfare of the church of God: and though often baffled, they are unwearied in their projects.—The rage of

CHAP. VII.

Nehemiah, having finished the wall, and regulated the attendance of the Levites, commits the charge of the city to Hanani and Hananiah, 1—4. He finds a register of those who first came from Babylon, 5—7. The register is inserted, 8—69. The oblations made to the temple, 70—73.

persecutors, though terrible, is not so dangerous as the professed friendship of concealed enemies: so that except there is good evidence that men, who have opposed the cause of God, have truly repented, and been reconciled to him, they cannot safely be trusted, when they court the favour of his people, but should rather be suspected of some mischievous design. (*Notes* and *P. O. Ezra* iv. 1—6. *Notes, Acts* ix. 10—16. 23—30.) If we received no other damage from their insincere friendship, we should be taken off from our work to no purpose: we should not then suffer ourselves to be overcome by importunity; for we had better offend man by a refusal, than sin against God by compliance.—Even our common lawful business ought to have a decided preference to all matters of mere compliment: how much more then our peculiar duties as Christians, magistrates, or ministers of religion, in proportion to their importance and difficulty!—It is desirable to be constantly engaged in some useful employ; among other reasons, that we may have an answer ready for those invitations and proposals, which we cannot profitably accept, and scarcely know how to refuse. The active servant of God, may, on any such occasion, say, "I am doing a "great work, so that I cannot come down; why should "the work cease, while I leave it, and come down to "you?" And this is enough, as a reason for avoiding those circles, where no good can be got or done; and which interfere with the duties of the closet and the family, and prevent the redeeming of our time and the improvement of our talents.—The deceitful smiles of the world frequently form our first temptation in the path of duty. But if we stedfastly withstand them, and will not be diverted from our work; we must prepare for reproaches, slanders, and menaces, from the same quarter. Our *firmness* will be called *obstinacy;* our *zeal, rashness;* and our *activity, ambition:* nay, we shall be warned, that we are about to affront all our friends, and turn them into enemies; and to bring ourselves into dangers and difficulties, from which we cannot extricate ourselves, unless we follow other counsels, and act more circumspectly.—The zealous servants of God have also, in every age and place, been unjusty traduced, as rebellious to the ruling powers: and their malicious enemies have often represented their own slanders, as the general sentiments of mankind. (*Notes, Ezra* iv. 11—24. *P. O.* 7—24.) These misrepresentations tend to weaken the hands of the courageous; and they prejudice, alarm, and draw off such as were helpful to their pious designs. But a clear conscience, a lively faith, an assured persuasion that we are doing our duty, and a zeal for the honour of God, will carry us above all discouragements: and, being satisfied with denying the charges brought against us, it is best to persevere in our proper employment, without wasting time in altercations or self-vindication; only lifting up our prayer to God to "strengthen our hands," and encourage our hearts.

V. 10—19.

A thousand slanders will die away, one after another; while the malice of their authors will be exposed: but one real crime sometimes leaves an indelible stain upon a man's character, and obstructs his future usefulness: let us then fear the least sin far more than any calumny. But those temptations are the most dangerous, which come from professed servants of God, and our own friends. When persons of this description, with apparent piety and affection, counsel the zealous to be more moderate and cautious, the diligent "to spare himself," and the bold, *to take care of himself;* the insinuation has great effect. Our appeal, however, in this case, must be to the word of God. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 13, 14. *Matt.* xvi. 21—23.) That cannot be from him, let who will speak it, which contradicts his plain precept or truth; or which would induce us to neglect our duty, or prefer our own ease, emolument, credit, liberty, or life, to his glory and the welfare of his church; or which would persuade us to shrink from the cross, or refuse self-denial. Many such counsellors are in the pay of the enemy: for, being induced to time-serving in their own case, from interested motives, they consider the conduct of the more zealous as a reproach, and want to be kept in countenance by their example: and if we knew from what motives grave advice is sometimes given, we should understand from what quarter it came, without further information. We need not always, however, judge the *adviser;* but we ought in all cases, to try and prove the *advice*, and without scruple to reject all that is contrary to the word of God. Every man should also study consistency with his profession, former character, station, and engagements. That which is allowable in one man, may be very improper in another: and we ought to venture any thing in a good cause, trusting in the Lord, and committing ourselves to his protection. It is therefore useful frequently to enquire, 'Should such a man as I do so and so? Should I, who am a Christian, a saint, a child of God, a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, a ransomed sinner, an heir of heaven; one set up to be "a light in the world," and "the salt of the earth," a preacher of righteousness, and "a steward of the mysteries of God;" should I even *appear* to be covetous, or sensual, or proud, or envious? Should I yield to impatience, discontent, or anger? Should I be slothful, unbelieving, or unmerciful and unkind? What effects will such conduct in me have upon others? Will not some be grieved, many misled and prejudiced; others emboldened in ungodliness and enmity to the truth? Will not this prevent the effect of my exhortations or persuasions, in my family, among my connexions, or from the pulpit?' Thus, all that God has done for us, or by us, may become an argument for watchfulness, diligence, self-denial, and perseverance.—It is also peculiarly instructive to consider, how others in similar circumstances would act. 'Would Peter or Paul have done so, to save their money, to indulge their sloth or pride, to escape a cross, a prison, or death? Do even the men of the world suffer themselves so easily to be diverted from their object, by every appearance of difficulty or peril.'—In all cases indeed they, who would lead others in arduous services, must share the danger and the hardship: and this is the reason,

NOW it came to pass, when [a] the wall was built, and [b] I had set up the doors, and [c] the porters, and the singers, and the Levites were appointed,

2 That I gave [d] my brother Hanani, and [e] Hananiah [f] the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he *was* [g] a faithful man, and [h] feared God above many.

3 And I said unto them, [i] Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened, until the sun be hot: and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar *them:* and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and [j] every one *to be* over against his house.

4 Now the city *was* * large and great: but the people *were* few therein, and [k] the houses *were* not builded.

5 And [l] my God [m] put into my heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, [n] that they might be reckoned by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein;

6 These *are* [o] the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been carried away, [p] whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city;

a iii. 1, &c. vi. 15.
b iii. 3. vi. 1.
c x. 39. xi. 3, xii. 24. 1 Chr. xxiii. xxv. xxvi. 2 Chr. xxxi. 2. Ezra iii. 8
d i. 2.
e x. 23.
f ii. 8
g Num. xii. 7. Ps. ci. 6. Dan. vi. 4. Matt. xxiv. 45. xxv. 21. Luke xvi. 10—12. 1 Cor. iv. 2 2 Tim. ii. 2.
h v. 15. Gen. xlii. 18. Ex. xviii. 21. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. 1 Kings xviii. 3. 12. Job i. 1. Is. xxxiii. 5, 6. xiii. 19. Ps. cxxvii. 1. Matt. x. 16.
i iii. 23 28—30.
* Heb. *broad in spaces.*
k Is. lviii. 12. Hag. i. 4—6. Matt. vi. 33.
l v. 19. vi. 14.
m Ezra vii. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 5. viii. 16. Phil. ii. 12, 13. Col. i. 29. Jam. i. 16, 17.
n 64. 1 Chr. ix. Ezra ii. 62.
o B. C. 556. Ezra ii. 1, &c. v. 8. vi. 2.
p 2 Kings xxiv. 14—16. xxv. 11. 2 Chr. xxxvi. Jer. xxxix. lii.

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why the enemy of souls employs so many instruments, and forms so many projects, to discourage, or bring a reproach on, the active servants of God. If the shepherd can be frighted away, the flock will be scattered.—Every success of the gospel discourages the enemies of God: and they sometimes perceive that it is his work, and yet hate it the more on that very account: but false brethren are the severest trial to the faithful servants of God. "They who forsake "the law praise the wicked:" (*Note, Prov.* xxviii. 4:) and those who form marriages with the avowed opposers of the gospel, will probably soon join their party, notwithstanding their present pretensions. Many leading men, yea, preachers and prophets in the visible church of God, will be found "workers of iniquity." But under every discouragement, we should "consider Jesus, who endured "the contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be "weary, and faint in our mind;" and who "laid down "his life for his sheep;" that after his example we may persevere in our duty, amidst every danger and opposition, not being overcome by the treachery, ingratitude, or perverseness of those around us, but still endeavouring to "overcome evil with good:" and "in due season we shall "reap, if we faint not."

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. *The singers,* &c.] This either refers to some regulations made by Nehemiah concerning the ministrations of the Levites at the temple; or to his preparations for solemnly dedicating the wall. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* xii. 27—43.)

V. 2, 3. It has been supposed by some learned men, that Nehemiah, having finished the wall, and made other needful regulations, returned to the Persian court; but that he not long after came again to Jerusalem with a new commission: and that on this occasion he placed his brother Hanani, and Hananiah over the city, and gave them instructions how to manage in his absence. The charge, however, here given, and the service required, would be necessary even when Nehemiah resided at Jerusalem: for he could not superintend the gates and the watchmen, without being taken off from other important and numerous engagements. Doubtless Hanani was a proper person, or else Nehemiah would not have preferred him to this important trust; and his journey to Shushan, if it indeed took place, may be supposed to have been undertaken out of a zealous regard to his people and his religion: (*Note,* i. 2:) but of Hananiah it is expressly said, that "he was a faithful man, and feared God "above many." (*Notes,* v. 14—18. 1 *Kings* xviii. 3. 12—16. *Ps.* ci. 6.)—'At night he charges them to stand by, 'and see the gates shut and barred in their presence.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*Ruler of the palace* (2) 'So the house, where 'Nehemiah dwelt is called, because he was governor for 'the king, and a kind of Viceroy, who did all the king's 'business, and here, gave audience to the people, as the 'king was wont to do in his palace.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note,* ii. 8.)

V. 4. The walls had been built upon their old foundations, in confidence that God in due time would replenish the city: but there were only a small number of inhabitants, compared with those of former ages; so that large spaces remained unoccupied. This would render it the more requisite that a strict watch should be kept, lest their enemies should scale the walls unobserved: and on the same account it was absolutely necessary, that proper measures should be adopted for replenishing the city with inhabitants.

V. 5, 6. This account was taken of the people, in order to bring the tenth part of them to reside in Jerusalem; (*Note,* xi. 1, 2;) and as it proved an useful measure, Nehemiah piously and reasonably ascribed the first thought of it to God, who "put it into his heart." (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Jam.* i. 16—18.) In conducting this business, he found the register of those who came up with Zerubbabel; which is here inserted nearly as we had it before. (*Notes, Ezra* ii. 1—67.) 'Nehemiah found that list of those who 'came up in the first of Cyrus, as it was taken then: and '... he called over the names of the families, as they lay in 'order there: ... but he took the number of them, as they 'were now when he numbered them. Some families were 'now more in number than they were when that first was

7 Who came with [q] Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, [s] Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, [t] Mispereth, Bigvai, [u] Nehum, Baanah: the number, *I say*, of the men of the people of Israel, *was this;*

8 The children of [x] Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

9 The children of [y] Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

10 The children of [z] Arah, six hundred fifty and two.

11 The children of [a] Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred *and* eighteen.

12 The children of [b] Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

13 The children of [c] Zattu, eight hundred forty and five.

14 The children of [d] Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

15 The children of [e] Binnui, six hundred forty and eight.

16 The children of [f] Bebai, six hundred twenty and eight.

17 The children of [g] Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty and two.

18 The children of [h] Adonikam, six hundred threescore and seven.

19 The children of [i] Bigvai, two thousand threescore and seven.

20 The children of [k] Adin, six hundred fifty and five.

21 The children of [l] Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

22 The children of [m] Hashum, three hundred twenty and eight.

23 The children of [n] Bezai, three hundred twenty and four.

24 The children of [o] Hariph, an hundred and twelve.

25 The children of [p] Gibeon, ninety and five.

26 The men of [q] Beth-lehem and Netophah, an hundred fourscore and eight.

27 The men of [r] Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.

28 The men of [s] Beth-azmaveth, forty and two.

29 The men of [t] Kirjath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty and three.

30 The men of [u] Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

31 The men of [x] Michmas, an hundred and twenty and two.

32 The men of [y] Beth-el and Ai, an hundred twenty and three.

33 The men of the other [z] Nebo, fifty and two.

34 The children of [a] the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

35 The children of [b] Harim, three hundred and twenty.

36 The children of [c] Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

37 The children of [d] Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and one.

38 The children of [e] Senaah, three thousand nine hundred and thirty.

39 ¶ The priests: the children of [f] Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

40 The children of [g] Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

41 The children of [h] Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.

42 The children of [i] Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

43 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, *and* of the children of [k] Hodevah, seventy and four.

44 [l] The singers: the children of Asaph, an hundred forty and eight.

45 [m] The porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the chil-

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q xii. 1. 7. 10. Ez. i. 11. *Sheshbazzar.* ii. 2. Hag. i. 1. Matt. i. 12, 13. *Zorobabel.*
r Ezra iii. 8, 9. v. 2. Zech. iii. 1—3. *Joshua.*
s Ezra ii. 2. *Seraiah, Reelaiah.*
t Ezra ii. 2. *Mizpar.*
u xii. 3. Ezra ii. 2. *Rehum.*
x x. 14. Ezra ii. 3. viii. 3. *Pharosh.* x. 25.
y Ezra ii. 4. viii. 8.
z vi. 18. Ezra ii. 5. 775.
a x. 14. Ezra ii. 6. 2812. viii. 4.
b Ezra ii. 7. viii. 7. x. 26.
c Ezra ii. 8. 945.
d Ezra ii. 9.
e Ezra ii. 10. *Bani.* 642.
f Ezra ii. 11. 623.
g Ezra ii. 12. 1222.
h Ezra ii. 13. 666.
i Ezra ii. 14. 2056.
k Ezra ii. 15. 454.
l Ezra ii. 16.
m Ezra ii. 19. 223.
n Ezra ii. 17. 323.
o Ezra ii. 18. *Jorah.*
p Ezra ii. 20. *Gibbah.*

q Ezra ii. 21, 22. 179.
r Ezra ii. 23. Is. x. 30. Jer. i. 1. xi. 21.
s Ezra ii. 24. *Azmaveth.*
t Josh. ix. 17. Ezra ii. 25. *Kiriatharim.*
u Josh. xviii. 24, 25. Ezra ii. 26.
x 1 Sam. xiii. 5. 23. Ezra ii. 27. Is. x. 28. *Michmash.*
y Josh. viii. 9. 17. Ezra ii. 28. 223.
z Ezra ii. 29.
a 12. Ezra ii. 31.
b Ezra ii. 32. x. 31.
c Ezra ii. 34.
d vi. 2. xi. 34, 35. 1 Chr. viii. 12. Ezra ii. 33. 725.
e Ezra ii. 35. 3630.
f 1 Chr. xxiv. 7. Ezra ii. 36.
g 1 Chr. xxiv. 14. Ezra ii. 37.
h 1 Chr. ix. 12. xxiv. 9. Ezra ii. 38. x. 22.
i 1 Chr. xxiv. 8. Ezra ii. 39. x. 31.
k Ezra ii. 40. *Hodaviah.* iii. 9. *Judah.*
l 1 Chr. xxv. 2. Ezra ii. 41. 128.
m 1 Chr. xxvi. Ezra ii. 42. 139.

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made, some were less; and some that were in that list, were not to be found now. ... Some ... had come from Babel; some...were now gone back.' *Lightfoot, as quoted by Bp. Patrick.*—As however, the greatest part of the families consist of exactly the same number in both places; and the sum total in each, with several other particulars, entirely coincides; it can hardly be conceived, that almost a hundred years should have made no greater changes.—Should any, however, conjecture, that some ancient copyist had inserted the wrong register, and that his mistake had been generally followed; the very conclusion would shew, that such alterations are almost always liable to detection; and no reasonable man would think it the least objection to the divine inspiration of the sacred scriptures.

V. 7—69. *Marg. Ref.—Note,* 5, 6.—*The Tirshatha,* &c. (65) *Note, Ezra,* ii. 61—63.—*The whole,* &c. (66) *Note, Ezra,* ii. 64.

dren of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, an hundred thirty and eight.

n Lev. xxvii. 2—8. Josh. ix. 23—27. 1 Chr. ix. 2. o Ezra ii. 43. *Hasupha.*

46 ¶ The [n] Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of [o] Hashupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

p Ezra ii. 44. *Siaha.*

47 The children of Keros, the children of [p] Sia, the children of Padon,

q Ezra ii. 45, 46. *Hagabah, or, Hugab.* r Ezra ii. 46. *Shamlai.*

48 The children of Lebana, the children of [q] Hagaba, the children of [r] Shalmai,

49 The children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar,

50 The children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda,

s Ezra ii. 49. *Paseah.*

51 The children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of [s] Phaseah,

t Ezra ii. 50. *Nephusim.*

52 The children of Besai, the children of Meunim, the children of [t] Nephishesim,

53 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

u Ezra ii. 52. *Bazluth.*

54 The children of [u] Bazlith, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

55 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of

v Ezra ii. 53. *Thamah.*

[v] Tamah,

56 The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

x xi. 3.

57 ¶ The children of [x] Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of

y Ezra ii. 55. *Perida.*

[y] Perida,

z Ezra ii. 56. *Jaalah.*

58 The children of [z] Jaala, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

59 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of

a Ezra ii. 57. *Ami.*

[a] Amon.

b Ezra ii. 58.

60 All [b] the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, *were* three hundred ninety and two.

61 And these *were* they which went up *also* from Tel-melah, [c] Tel-haresha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, nor their * seed, whether they *were* of Israel.

c Ezra ii. 59. *Telharsa. Addan.*

* Or, *pedigree.*

62 The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, [d] six hundred forty and two.

d Ezra ii. 60. 652.

63 ¶ And [e] of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, which took *one* of the daughters of [f] Barzillai the Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name.

e Ezra ii. 61—63.

f 2 Sam. xvii. 27. xix. 31—39. 1 Kings ii. 7.

64 These sought their register *among* [g] those that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

g 5. 1 Chr. ix. 1.

65 And [†] the Tirshatha said unto them, [h] that they should not eat of the most holy things, [i] till there stood *up* a priest with Urim and Thummim.

† Or, *the governor.* viii. 9. x. 1. Ezra ii. 63.

h Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 17. x. 17, 18. xxi. 21—23.

i Ex. xxviii. 30 Num. xxvii. 21, Deut. xxxiii. 8.

66 ¶ The [k] whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore;

k Ezra ii. 64.

67 Besides [l] their man-servants and their maid-servants, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and they had [m] two hundred forty and five singing men and singing women.

l Is. xlv. 1, 2. Jer. xxvii. 7.

m Ezra ii. 65. 200.

68 [n] Their horses, seven hundred thirty and six: their mules, two hundred forty and five:

n Ezra ii. 66, 67.

69 *Their* camels, four hundred thirty and five: six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

70 ¶ And [‡] some of [o] the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. [p] The Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty [q] basons, five hundred and thirty priests' garments.

‡ Heb. *part.* Ezra ii. 68—70.

o Num. vii. 2—86. 1 Chr. xxix. 3—9.

p viii. 9. x. 1.

q Ex. xii. 22. xxiv. 6. 1 Kings vii. 45. 1 Chr. xxviii. 17. 2 Chr. iv. 8. 11. Jer. lii. 19.

71 And *some* of the [r] chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand and two hundred pound of silver.

r Job xxxiv. 19. Luke xxi. 1—4. 2 Cor. viii. 12.

72 And *that* which the rest of the people gave, *was* twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand pound of silver, and threescore and seven priests' garments.

73 So the priests, and the Levites,

V. 70—72. This seems to have been a distinct oblation from that recorded in Ezra: (*Note, Ezra* ii. 68—70:) and was probably made, after the people were registered by Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha or governor at this time, as Zerubbabel had been at the first return of the Jews from captivity. The principal persons also concurred with him liberally, according to their ability.

V. 73. This verse so accords with the last verse of the

and the porters, and the singers, and *some* of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities;

Ezra ii. 70. iii. 1. and [a] when the seventh month came, the children of Israel *were* in their cities.

CHAP. VIII.

The people being assembled, Ezra, with solemn worship, reads and expounds the law, 1—8. The people are greatly affected: but Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites, exhort them to joy in God, to cheerful feasting, and to liberality towards the poor, 9—12. Being instructed from the law concerning the feast of tabernacles, they keep it with great solemnity, 13—18.

a Ezra iii. 1. AND [a] all the people gathered themb Judg. xx. 1. 8. selves together [b] as one man into the street that *was* [c] before the water-gate; and they spake unto [d] Ezra the scribe to [e] bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

c 16. iii. 26. xii. 37. d 4—9. Ezra vii. 6. 11. Jer. viii. 8, 9. Matt. xxiii. 52. xxiii. 2. 13. 34. e 2 Chr. xxxiv. 15. Is. viii. 20. Mal. iv. 4.

2 And Ezra [f] the priest brought the law before [g] the congregation, both of men and women, and all that [*] could hear with understanding, upon [h] the first day of the seventh month.

f Deut. xvii. 18. xxxi. 9, 10. Mal. ii. 7. g Deut. xxxi. 11—13. 2 Chr. xvii. 7—9. * Heb. *understood in hearing.* Is. xxviii. 9. h Lev. xxiii. 24. Num. xxix. 1—6.

3 And [i] he read therein before the street that *was* before the water-gate, from the [†] morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand: and [k] the ears of all the people *were attentive* unto the book of the law.

i Luke iv. 16—29. Acts xiii. 15. 27. xv. 21. † Heb. *light.* Acts xx. 7. 11. xxviii. 23. k Matt. vii. 28, 29. Mark xii. 37. Luke viii. 18. xix. 48. Acts xvi. 14. xvii. 11. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Heb. ii. 1—3. Rev. ii. 29. iii. 22.

second of Ezra, and the first of the third, that it is doubtful whether it should be understood of the Jews, who returned under Zerubbabel; or of what followed after Nehemiah had registered them. If it be taken in the latter sense; and if the events next recorded took place in the same year with the building of the wall, as probably they did; there could be no time for Nehemiah to go to Babylon: (*Note*, 2, 3:) for the wall was not finished till the twenty-fifth day of Elul, or the sixth month. (vi. 15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The active servants of God, and of his church, will never want employment; for the completion of one design will make way for the commencement of another.—The fear of God, powerfully possessing the heart, produces proportionable fidelity and conscientiousness, in a man's whole character and conduct: and it is happy for the community, when men of this character have the charge of publick affairs.—"Except the LORD keep the city," the walls are built, and "the watchmen wake, in vain:" yet in this and all other concerns, God is to be *trusted* in the use of prudent and proper means, and not to be *tempted* by the neglect of them. (*Note*, *Ps.* cxxvii. 1. *P. O. Matt.* iv. 5—7.)—Magistrates and ministers have more extensive charges than others: but every man ought to watch over his own heart, and his own house, that sin, the worst enemy, may be kept at a distance, as much as possible.—Provision is made in the gospel, and in the city of our God, for immensely greater numbers than have yet been enrolled citizens: we should therefore be devising means for replenishing it with inhabitants, as well as for building its walls.—'All holy desires, all good counsels, and all just 'works are from God:' to him belongs the praise: when good thoughts are suggested; we should be careful not to "quench the Spirit," by rejecting them; (*Note*, 1 *Thes.* v. 16—22, *v.* 19:) and we ought continually to pray, that our God would put more and more of them into our hearts, and enable us to bring them to good effect; and that he would do the same for increasing numbers. Then we might hope that many would concur in designs, as yet scarcely thought of, for propagating the gospel and promoting the salvation of souls.—The Lord delights to honour those, who willingly face danger, and endure hardship for his sake: and he knows the names of all his people, and will produce the register at last. But woe be to those, who turn back from him, loving this present world: and happy they, who willingly come to dedicate themselves, and consecrate their substance to his service and glory!

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. The feast of trumpets was observed on the first day of the seventh month; and the people assembled to celebrate it, though not explicitly required. (*Note*, *Lev.* xxiii. 24, 25.)—It is probable, that Nehemiah, having formed a plan for their instruction from the law, called on them by this early attendance to concur in it. Doubtless the appointed sacrifices were offered; (*Note*, *Num.* xxix. 1—6;) but the courts of the temple not being so spacious or convenient, the congregation assembled in a broad street of the city, to hear the law read and expounded: and not only the women, but even the children who were capable of understanding, attended. Accordingly Ezra the priest, being a learned and ready scribe, having long been bestowing much pains on the sacred scriptures, and preparing correct copies of them, was called upon to take the lead in this service: and, though it does not appear that the measure originated with him, yet he most cordially concurred in it. (*Note*, *Ezra* vii. 6—10.) Some conjecture that Ezra had been at Babylon, during the preceding events, in which he is not mentioned; and that he had lately returned: but perhaps he had been privately occupied in his own line for the good of the people, and was well satisfied to leave publick affairs entirely to Nehemiah. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xii. 23.)

V. 3. The reading and expounding continued about six hours, from "the light," (*marg.*) till noon; and as most of the people must have stood in the open air during a great part of the time, it appears that they were not soon wearied. (*Notes*, ix. 3. *Acts* xx. 7—12. xxviii. 23—29.) Indeed "the ears of all the people were unto the book of "the law;" or hearkening to it with profound attention. (*Notes*, *Luke* xix. 45—48, *v.* 48. *Heb.* ii. 1—4.)

4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a * pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose: and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and [l] Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and [m] Malchiah, and [n] Hashum, and Hash-badana, Zechariah, *and* [o] Meshullam.

5 And Ezra [p] opened the book in the † sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people [q] stood up:

6 And Ezra [r] blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, [s] Amen, amen, [t] with lifting up their hands; and they [u] bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD [x] with *their* faces to the ground.

7 Also [y] Jeshua, and [z] Bani, and [a] Sherebiah, Jamin, [b] Akkub, Shabbethai, [c] Hodijah, [d] Maaseiah, [e] Kelita, [f] Azariah, [g] Jozabad, [h] Hanan, [i] Pelaiah, and the Levites, [k] caused the people to understand the law: and the people *stood* in their place.

8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, [l] and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.

9 And [m] Nehemiah, which *is* the ‡ Tirshatha, and [n] Ezra the priest the scribe, and [o] the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, [p] This day *is* holy unto the LORD your God; [q] mourn not nor weep. For [r] all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said unto them, [s] Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the

* Heb. *tower.*

l x. 25. xi. 5.
m x. 3.
n x. 18. Ezra x. 33.
o x. 7. 20. xi. 7. xii. 13. Ezra x. 29.
p Luke iv. 17.
† Heb. *eyes.*
q Judg. iii. 20. 1 Kings viii. 14. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. 2 Chr. vi. 4. Ps. xli. 13. lxxii. 18, 19. Eph. i. 3.
r 1 Pet. i. 3.
s v. 13. Jer. xxviii. 6. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.
t Gen. xiv. 22. Ps. xxviii. 2. lxiii. 4. cxxxiv. 2. cxli. 2. Lam. iii. 41. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
u Gen. xxiv. 26. Ex. iv. 31. xii. 27. 2 Chr. xx. 18. xxix. 30.
x Lev. ix. 24. Matt. xxvi. 39. Rev. vii. 11.
y iii. 19. ix. 4. x. 9. xii. 24.
z iii. 17. ix. 4. x. 13.

a ix. 4. x. 12. xii. 24. Ezra viii. 18
b xi. 16. 19. xii. 25.
c x. 10. 18.
d 4. iii. 23. xii. 41, 42. Ezra x. 22.
e x. 10. Ezra x. 23.
f iii. 23. x. 2. xii. 33.
g Ezra x. 22, 23.
h x. 10.
i x. 10.
k Lev. x. 11.

l Hab. ii. 2. Matt. v. 21, 22. 27, 28. Luke xxiv. 27. 32. Acts viii. 30—35. xvii. 2, 3. xxviii. 23.
m vii. 65. 70. x. 1.
‡ Or, *governor.*
n Ezra vii. 11.
o 7, 8. 2 Chr. xv. 3. xxx. 22. xxxv. 3. Hos. iv. 6.
p 2. Lev. xxiii. 24. Num. xxix. 1—6.
q Deut. xii. 7. 12. xvi. 11. 14, 15. xxvi. 14. Ec. iii. 4. Mal. ii. 13.
r 2 Kings xxii. 11. 19. Rom. iii. 20. 2 Cor. vii. 9—11.
s Ec. ii. 24. iii. 13. v. 18. ix. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

V. 4. "Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood," 'to raise him higher than the people, that he might be the 'better seen and heard by them all: whence in the He-'brew, it is called *a tower of wood;* but was not like our 'pulpits, ... but large and long, that many persons might 'stand in it, as appears by what follows.' *Bp. Patrick. Beside,* &c.] Some suppose that these persons, being priests or Levites under Ezra's direction, assisted by turns in the service, to prevent his being worn down with it: but others think, that they were principal persons who thus shewed their concurrence, by standing on his right hand and on his left; or that they were priests or Levites preparing for the same service on future occasions. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. Ezra, having reverently opened the sacred volume; before he began to read first "blessed the LORD, "the great God:" he gave him thanks for the good gift of his holy law, and for all his mercies; he adored his great and glorious Majesty; and he implored his blessing on the service before him. To this the people gave a cordial and repeated assent; and, prostrating themselves on the ground, added their most solemn worship. This was an excellent preparation for a due regard to the sacred scriptures; and the example should be imitated by those who preach and expound, or read and hear the word of God.

V. 7. The persons, mentioned in this verse, must not be confounded with those who stood by Ezra, in his pulpit, or tower: for only one of the same name occurs in both places; and, no doubt, in that instance, different men of the same name were meant. The persons here mentioned were most of them, if not all, priests and Levites: (*Marg. Ref.*) and as they "caused the people to understand the "law," and were not in the pulpit with Ezra; and as it can hardly be supposed, that he merely read, and that they expounded what he read: it is not unlikely, that they had separate audiences in different places, where they read and expounded the law, as Ezra did in the station assigned him: for one man's voice could not reach so great a multitude. (*Note, Acts* ii. 14—21, *v.* 14.) Perhaps different orders and descriptions of persons formed separate circles: and therefore it is added, that "the people stood in their place," as it had been appointed to each of them. "The people "stood in their place," 'listening both to what was read, 'and what was delivered as the explication of it.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 8. It is here said, "So *they* read, &c." which confirms the preceding supposition, there being evidently more than one reader.—The persons engaged in this service read the text distinctly, and then gave the interpretation: thus the meaning was declared to the people, with all plainness, and application to their present circumstances and conduct, for their conviction and instruction. This seems the obvious meaning of the passage. Some learned men, however, suppose, that the Jews had forgotten the Hebrew, during the captivity; and that the expositors merely rendered what was read into Chaldee. 'But if this were true, 'why did the prophets write in Hebrew after their return 'from captivity? and this very book shews the contrary, '(xiii. 23, 24;) where the Jews' language appears to have 'been spoken by the people.' *Bp. Patrick.* The opinion indeed is grounded chiefly on Jewish traditions, and customs introduced in later ages, and has no support in the scriptures themselves.

V. 9. The people, when the law of God was read and explained to them, were convinced of their guilt and danger; and, with tender consciences and broken hearts, mourned for their transgressions. (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxii. 8—11, *v.* 11. *Rom.* iii. 19, 20. vii. 9—12. *Gal.* ii. 17—18, *v.* 19.) This was indeed a proper and highly beneficial effect of that service: but as it was a holy festival, which the Lord would have kept with joy and gladness, they were instructed by their teachers to repress their grief, and to turn their thoughts to the mercy of God, and to hope and rejoice in him.—"The Levites," as well as Ezra, "taught the peo-"ple." (*Notes, 2 Chr.* xvii. 7—9. xxx. 21, 22, *v.* 22 xxxv. 1—3, *v.* 3.)

V. 10, 11. After the former part of the day had been

sweet, and [t] send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day *is* holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for [u] the joy of the LORD is your strength.

11 So the Levites [x] stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day *is* holy; neither be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, [y] because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

13 ¶ And on [z] the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even [*] to understand the words of the law.

14 And they found written in the law, which the LORD had commanded [†] by Moses, that the children of Israel should [a] dwell in [b] booths, in the feast of the seventh month:

15 And [c] that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and [d] in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto [e] the mount, and [f] fetch [g] olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and [h] palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as *it is* written.

16 So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themselves booths, every one upon [i] the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in [k] the courts of the house of God, and in [l] the street of the water-gate, and [m] in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

17 And all the congregation of them, that were come again out of the captivity, made booths, and [n] sat under the booths: for since the days of [o] Jeshua the son of Nun, unto that day, [p] had not the children of Israel [q] done so. And [r] there was very great gladness.

t Deut. xxvi. 11—13. Esth. ix. 19. 22. Job xxxi. 16—18. Ec. xi. 2. Luke xi. 41. Rev. xi. 10.
u Ps. xxviii. 7, 8. Prov. xvii. 22. Is. vi. 7, 8. xii. 1—3. xxxv. 1—4. 2 Cor. viii. 2. xii. 8, 9.
x Num. xiii. 30.
y 7, 8. Job xxiii. 12. Ps. xix. 8—11. cxix. 14. 16. 72. 97. 103, 104. 111. 127, 128. 130. 171. 174. Prov. ii. 10, 11. xxiv. 13, 14. Jer. xv. 16. Luke xxiv. 32.
z 2 Chr. xxx. 23. Prov. ii. 1—6. viii. 33, 34. xii. 1. Mark vi. 33, 34. Luke xix. 47, 48. Acts iv. 1. xiii. 42.
* Or, *that they might instruct in.* 7, 8. Luke xxiv. 32. 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.
† Heb. *by the hand of.*
a Lev. xxiii. 34. 40—43. Deut. xvi. 13—15. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John vii. 2.
b Gen. xxxiii. 17.
c Lev. xxiii. 4.
d Deut. xvi. 16.
e Judg. ix. 48, 49. Matt. xxi. 1.
f Lev. xxiii. 40.
g Gen. viii. 11.
h John xii. 13. Rev. vii. 9.
i Deut. xxii. 8. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Jer. xix. 13. xxxii. 29.
k 2 Chr. xx. 5. xxxiii. 5.
l 3. iii. 26. xii. 37.
m xii. 39. 2 Kings xiv. 13.
n John i. 14. Heb. xi. 9. 13.
o Josh. i. 1. *Joshua.* Heb. iv. 8. *Jesus.*
p 2 Chr. vii. 8—10. viii. 13. Ezra iii. 4.
q 2 Chr. xxx. 26. xxxv. 18.
r 1 Chr. xxix. 22. 2 Chr. vii. 10. xxx. 21—23.

spent in the ordinances of religion, the people were allowed, and even required, (probably by a publick notice from Nehemiah, enforced by the priests and Levites,) to spend the remainder in cheerful feasting, as a representation of the believer's joy in the service of his gracious God. (*Notes, Deut.* xii. 5—7. *Ec.* iii. 1—11.) It is probable that peace-offerings had been offered, and they were now called to feast together on them; and might lawfully drink the *sweet*, or *rich*, wines, which their vineyards produced, in as liberal a manner as consisted with temperance. But then they must remember to send portions to those for whom nothing had been prepared; to the poor, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. (*Deut.* xii. 12. 18, 19. *P. O.*) For this would distinguish their religious feasting from the sensual indulgence of carnal men, and complete the due solemnization of the holy day. They were also again reminded, not to indulge grief, on the present festival; (*Note*, 1, 2;) "for the joy of the LORD was their strength." A grateful, adoring recollection of his late mercies, and his ancient distinguished favours to the nation, and powerful interposition in their behalf; with cheerful meditation on his promises and perfections, inspiring confidence, love, and zeal, and leading them to abound in joyful praises and thanksgivings; would fortify their souls to meet the dangers, encounter the difficulties, resist the temptations, and perform the duties, which still lay before them. Whereas, indulged sorrow would induce desponding fear, enfeeble their resolutions, and unfit them for labours, trials, and conflicts. (*Notes, Ps.* xxviii. 6—8. *Prov.* xv. 13. *Is.* xii. 1—3. xxxv. 3, 4. 2 *Cor.* ii. 5—11. *Phil.* iv. 4—7.) 'What Nehemiah had said to as many as could hear him, 'the Levites said to the rest of the people; going about, 'and persuading them to lay aside their heaviness, and 'make it a good day.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12. The people in general had not only understood from the law, the will of God and their own sinfulness, but they had learned, in some degree, the grounds of holy rejoicing in the Lord: and having begun by sowing in tears, they soon were enabled to reap in joy. (*Note, Ps.* cxxvi. 5, 6.) 'This was an extraordinary reason for their 'mirth, that they were illuminated in divine knowledge, 'and understood the will of God better than they did be-'fore.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13. This was no festival; but, having profited from the word the day before, the people were desirous to be further instructed: and the chief of the fathers, priests, and Levites were the most forward to request Ezra, to favour them with an exposition of some other part of the law, being convinced of his superior knowledge in it. Hence it appears, that he instructed even those, who assisted in teaching the people.

V. 14—16. (*Notes, Lev.* xxiii. 34—43. *Num.* xxix. 12—38. *Zech.* xiv. 16—19. *John* vii. 2. 14—17. 37—39.) It may be supposed, that Ezra selected those portions of the law, which prescribed solemnities to be observed in the seventh month; especially the feast of tabernacles, as it had not in general been duly observed, and the season was approaching for it. (*Note, Jam.* i. 22—25.)

V. 17. It is evident that this and the other solemn feasts were *totally* neglected, at some times, and for a long while together: yet a few instances occur of the feast of tabernacles being kept; and these words must therefore be understood, of the exactness, unanimity, and joyfulness, with which it was at this time celebrated. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* viii. 63—65. *Ezra* iii. 4.) 'They rejoiced in the days of Joshua, 'that they had got possession of Canaan; and now they 'rejoiced that they were restored to it, and quietly settled 'in it.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* viii. 66. 2 *Chr.* xxx. 26, 27.)

[a] Deut. xxxi. 10—13.

18 Also [a] day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God: and they kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day *was* [*] a solemn assembly, [t] according unto the manner.

[*] Heb. *a restraint.*
[t] Lev. xxiii. 36. Num. xxix. 35. John vii. 37.

V. 18. The reading of the law every seventh year at the feast of tabernacles had been enjoined by Moses; but it seems not in general to have been duly attended to: at this time, however, it formed a part of the daily service, through the whole continuance of the feast. (*Note, Deut.* xxxi. 10—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Pious men of different dispositions may serve the church in their several ways. The studious may, as it were, prepare materials with which the active may work: and the active may make way for the studious, to bring forth their treasures for publick use. They ought therefore reciprocally to assist each other; and to welcome such assistance, without envy, competition, or prejudice.—The publick reading, expounding, and preaching of God's word has, in all ages, been the grand method of promoting true religion: they, therefore, who are eminently capable of this service, should be called forth from obscurity and retirement, and excited and encouraged to abound in it; all, of every age, sex, or rank, who are capable of understanding, should assemble to attend, and all ought to "give earnest heed "to the things which they hear." (*Note, 2 Chr.* xvii. 7—9. *P. O.* 7—19.) Those who are in reputation should set an example of diligence in this respect, and even teachers should be "swift to hear" other ministers, especially younger ministers their approved seniors, as they have opportunity, that they may become more competent for the service.—When the value of the scriptures, and of the immortal soul, is properly understood; and when we are earnestly engaged, and in a spiritual frame of mind; we shall not soon be weary of divine ordinances. Short sermons, therefore, or tired hearers, prove a very low state of religion: for facts demonstrate, that where the word of God is precious, even inconvenient situations and uneasy postures will be patiently endured: and when ministers, who are themselves in earnest, perceive the people thirsting for instruction, and drinking it in, they will be encouraged to proceed, and to preach as much and as often as required, so long as God gives them health for the work. —Reading and preaching should be attended with solemn worship: the perfections of our God are worthy of all adoration; his mercies call for our most grateful acknowledgment; and a sense of our own wants and unworthiness, love to his people, compassion for sinners, and regard to all orders of mankind, where they prevail, will dictate many prayers and supplications. In these services one person must speak, but all should join in their hearts, and express their solemn and cordial assent.—We cannot too humbly or reverently worship "the LORD, the great "God:" yet, blessed be his name, we may call him Father, in filial confidence and hope.—Whenever we open the sacred volume, we should bless the Lord for that precious gift, and proceed to peruse it, with entire submission to his teaching and authority.—Ministers should endeavour to make it evident to every one, that they preach according to these sacred oracles; producing clear scriptural warrant for all their doctrine; reading the word distinctly; diligently causing the people to understand it, by familiar explanations and illustrations; and applying it in the most plain and simple manner to their hearts and consciences.

V. 9—18.

The divine law, when faithfully unfolded, in its extensive demands and righteous sanction, is generally made successful by the Holy Spirit, in bringing the stout, hard, and proud hearts of sinners to tremble, to melt into godly sorrow, and to become abased before God. For it pierces the conscience, fills the soul with dismay, and thus prepares for the sweet consolations of the gospel, by which is "the knowledge of salvation, through the remission of "sins." Thus the broken heart is bound up, and the sinner learns to rejoice in God our Saviour.—Both godly sorrow and holy joy are profitable, and beautiful in their season: and it is peculiarly desirable to have all our passions regulated according to the will of God, and the duty of the present occasion. Those who mourn for sin should be comforted, instructed, and directed to rejoice in the Lord. This they have abundant reason to do, however many their sins have been, when they humbly come to trust in his mercy. His salvation is perfectly free; the provisions of his grace are plenteous; "his righteousness is for ever;" his "ways are pleasantness;" his protection sure; his consolations strong; and "hope" in his mercy and of his glory "maketh not ashamed, because the love of God "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." (*Note, Rom.* v. 3—5.) Joy in God, if genuine, adds strength and courage to the soul for every duty and for every trial; it inspires resolution for service, and vigour in resisting temptation; it satisfies, and sanctifies, and enlarges the heart in cheerful obedience, and in love to our brethren. Indeed, that joy is a mere counterfeit, which has not these effects: and they are enemies to their own sanctification, who always indulge sorrow, even for sin, and put from them those consolations, which are tendered to them by the word and Spirit of God.—It is consistent with godliness, cheerfully and moderately to use the comforts of Providence; when they are received with thanksgiving, and "sanctified by the word of God and prayer," and by liberally communicating to the poor and needy. But those who "eat the fat and drink the sweet;" and send no portion, or only scanty pittances, to those for whom nothing is prepared; have not this sanctified enjoyment of their abundance. This especially distinguishes a Christian feast, from the revellings and banquetings, which are ranked by the apostle with abominable idolatries. (*Note, 1 Pet.* iv. 3—5.) —Whatever causes a believer to rejoice, should excite him to abound in thanksgivings to God, and liberality to the poor. But his joy will not so much arise from worldly prosperity or indulgence, as from having understood the words of God, and from perceiving that sinners may hope in his mercy, and exult in the prospect of eternal glory.—Those, who have profited by the word of God, will be glad of an opportunity of hearing it on any day, as far as consistent with other duties: and when the people are so dis-

CHAP. IX.

A solemn fast is observed, 1—3. The Levites, as leading the worship of the people, piously acknowledge the manifold goodness of God to Israel, and humbly confess the sins of the nation, as the cause of their miseries, 4—37. The people solemnly covenant with God, 38.

NOW in the [a] twenty and fourth day [b] of this month, the [c] children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and [d] earth upon them.

2 And [e] the seed of Israel separated themselves from all [*] strangers, and stood and [f] confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

3 And [g] they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God, [h] *one* fourth part of the day; and *another* fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.

4 Then stood up upon the [†] stairs, of the Levites, [i] Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani, and [k] cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their God.

5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, and

a Lev. xxiii. 34. 2 Chr. vii. 10.
b viii. 2.
c Judg. xx. 26. 2 Chr. xx. 3. Ezra viii. 23. Esth. iv. 3. 16. Is. xxii. 12. Joel i. 13, 14. ii. 15—17. Jon. iii. 5—8. Acts xiii. 2, 3.
d Josh. vii. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 12. 2 Sam. i. 2. Job ii. 12.
e xiii. 3. 30. Ezra ix. 2. x. 11.
* Heb. *strange children.* Ps. cxliv. 7. 11. Is. ii. 6. Hos. v. 7.
f i. 6. Lev. xxvi. 39, 40. Ezra ix. 6, 7. 15. Ps. cvi. 6, 7. Dan. ix. 3—10. 20. 1 John i. 7—9.
g viii. 4. 7, 8.
h viii. 3.
† Or, *scaffold.*
i 5. *See on* viii. 7. x. 9—13. xii. 8.
k 2 Chr. xx. 19. Ps. lxxvii. 1. cxxx. 1. Lam. iii. 8. John xi. 43. Acts vii. 60.

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posed, the minister is called to be "instant in season and "out of season."—Some portions of scripture are more suitable to the circumstances of our congregations than others would be, especially when they remind them of present duty. For even true Christians neglect many things, through ignorance and forgetfulness, and for want of *particular* instructions. But it is admirable, when they no sooner hear the command of God, than they prepare for obedience; when attending on the word excites an increasing appetite for it; and when the ordinances afford great gladness to their souls.—Yet, alas, how little have the commandments and institutions of our God been hitherto observed, even among his professed worshippers! So that when individuals, or collective bodies, come near the standard of his word, in the power of godliness, they become "men wondered at." But though none, from age to age, or through whole nations of professed Christians, have ever served God, as some small company may aim to do; yet if these be evidently obeying the plain meaning of scripture, they ought not to be censured as singular, precise, or affected; but to be commended and imitated.—True religion will make us strangers and pilgrims upon earth: and those who refuse conformity to the world, and have their conversation in heaven, and their joy in the Lord, must appear strange and uncouth in the eyes of the servants of that other master, who "worketh "in all the children of disobedience."

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1. No doubt the day of atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month, had been duly observed: the feast of tabernacles lasted from the fifteenth to the twenty-second day of it; (*Notes, Lev.* xvi. 29—31. xxiii. 26—43;) and then, only one day having intervened, the people kept a solemn fast, with every customary expression of godly sorrow and humiliation. This seems to have been done, not only by the authority of the governor, but by the general approbation of the people; who, by hearing the law read and expounded, had discovered their own numerous and heinous transgressions, with those of their fathers, and of the nation in preceding ages: (*Notes,* viii. 9—13:) and it was intended as an introduction to their solemn covenanting with God, as afterwards recorded. (*Notes,* 38. x. 1.) It is probable that Nehemiah had formed the plan of this from the beginning of these solemnities, and had consulted with Ezra, and other principal persons, about the best method of accomplishing his purpose; which he accordingly did with their hearty concurrence.

V. 2. Before the appointed fast began, the Israelites carefully separated from among them those strangers, or Gentiles, who either by marriage or amity were intermingled with them. This was intended as a preparation for the solemn observance: for it seems that the people had again intermarried with the surrounding nations, after Ezra had separated them from their heathen wives. (*Notes, Ezra* x.)

V. 3. The persons afterwards mentioned, (4, 5,) stood up to perform the services of the day; and they spent "one fourth" of it in reading the law, (probably expounding it also, as in the former instances, *Notes,* viii. 1—8,) and "one fourth" in confessing their sins, and in other acts of solemn worship.—Some think that six hours, (a fourth part of the twenty-four,) were at once spent in each of these sacred duties. Others suppose, that 'they read 'the law, and confessed, (that is, praised God, 5,) inter-'changeably. For in one fourth part of the day, from the 'first hour to the third, they did the one; and from thence 'to the sixth hour, (that is, till twelve o'clock,) they did 'the other. Then they began the former again, till the 'ninth hour; and from thence to the evening they spent 'their time in the other.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Perhaps the three hours previous to the offering of the morning-sacrifice, were assigned for the people to prepare themselves and their families for the publick solemnity; and the three hours after the evening-sacrifice, for their consenting to the covenant and sealing it, and the improvement of what they had heard, by meditation, pious converse, and devotion: for on solemn fasts it was customary for the Jews to take no food till after sun-set. The *publick* services of the day, however, continued *at least* six hours without intermission.

V. 4. It is probable, that these Levites were placed at proper distances, (so as not to interfere with each other, when they "cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their "God,") upon pulpits, or scaffolds, erected for that purpose, with distinct auditories around them. (*Notes,* viii. 4. 7. *Acts* ii. 14—21, *v.* 14.)

V. 5. Eight Levites are mentioned both in this verse and the preceding, and five of the names are the same: it may therefore be supposed, that the same persons are in-

Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said, [l] Stand up *and* [m] bless the LORD your God for ever and ever; and blessed be [n] thy glorious name, which is [o] exalted above all blessing and praise.

6 Thou, [p] *even* thou, art LORD alone; [q] thou hast made heaven, [r] the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all *things* that *are* therein, the seas, and all that *is* therein, and thou [s] preservest them all; and the [t] host of heaven worshippeth thee.

7 Thou *art* the LORD the God, who didst [u] choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of [x] Ur of the Chaldees, and [y] gavest him the name of Abraham;

8 And [z] foundest his heart faithful before thee, and [a] madest a covenant with him, to give the land of [b] the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give *it, I say,* to his seed, [c] and hast performed thy words; for thou *art* [d] righteous:

9 And [e] didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and [f] heardest their cry by the Red Sea;

10 And [g] shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that [h] they dealt proudly against them. So [i] didst thou get thee a name, as *it is* this day.

11 And thou didst [k] divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and [l] their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, [m] as a stone into the mighty waters.

12 Moreover [n] thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light [o] in the way wherein they should go.

13 Thou [p] camest down also upon mount Sinai, and [q] spakest with them from heaven, and [r] gavest them right judgments and * true laws, good statutes, and commandments;

l 1 Kings viii. 14. 22. 2 Chr. xx. 18, 19. Ps. cxxxiv. cxxxv. 2, 3.
m 1 Chr. xxix. 20. Ezra iii. 11. Ps. ciii. 1, 2. cxvii. cxlv. 2. cxlvi. 2. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11. Matt. xi. 25. Eph. iii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. i. 3.
n Ex. xv. 6. 11. Deut. xxviii. 58. 1 Chr. xxix. 13. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. cxlv. 5. 11, 12. 2 Cor. iv. 6.
o 1 Kings viii. 27. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps. cvi. 2.
p Deut. vi. 4. 2 Kings xix. 15. 19. Ps. lxxxvi. 10. Is. xliii. 10. xliv. 6. 8. Mark xii. 29, 30. John x. 30.
q Gen. i. 1. ii. 1. Ex. xx. 11. Ps. xxxiii. 6. cxxxvi. 5—9. cxlvi. 6. Jer. x. 11, 12. Col. i. 15, 16. Rev. iv. 11. xiv. 7.
r Deut. x. 14. 1 Kings viii. 27.
s Ps. xxxvi. 6. Col. i. 17. Heb. i. 3.
t Gen. ii. 1. xxxii. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 19. Ps. ciii. 21. cxlviii. 2—4. Is. vi. 2, 3. Heb. i. 6. Rev. v. 13.
u Gen. xii. 1, 2. Deut. x. 15. Josh. xxiv. 2, 3. Is. xli. 8, 9. ii. 2.
x Gen. xi. 31. xv. 7. Acts vii. 2—4.
y Gen. xvii. 5.
z Gen. xii. 1—3. xv. 6. xxii. 1. Acts xiii. 22. 1 Tim. i. 12, 13. Heb. xi. 17. Jam. ii. 21—23.
a Gen. xii. 7. xvii. 7, 8. xxii. 16—18. Deut. vii. 8, 9. ix. 5. Ps. cv. 8, 9. Luke i. 72, 73.
b Gen. xv. 18—21. Ex. iii. 8. 17. Deut. vii. 1. Josh. ix. 1. xi. 3.
c Deut. xxvi. 3. Josh. xi. 23. xxi. 43—45. xxiii. 14. Ps. cv. 43, 44.
d Num. xxiii. 19. Ps. xcii. 14, 15. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18. 1 John i. 9.
e Ex. ii. 25. iii. 7. 9. 16. Acts vii. 34.
f Ex. xiv. 10—12.
g Ex. vii.—x. xii. 29, 30. xiv. 15—31. Deut. iv. 34. xi. 3, 4. Ps. lxxviii. 12, 13. 43—53. cv. 27—37. cvi. 7—11. cxxxv. 8, 9. cxxxvi. 10—15. Acts vii. 36.
h Ex. v. 2. 7, 8. ix. 17. x. 3. xviii. 11. Job xl. 11, 12. Dan. iv. 37. v. 23. 1 Pet. v. 5.
i Ex. ix. 16. Josh. ii. 10, 11. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Is. lviii. 12. 14. Jer. xxxii. 20. Ez. xx. 9. Dan. ix. 15. Rom. ix. 17.
k Ex. xiv. 21, 22. 27, 28. Ps. lxvi. 6. lxxviii. 13. cxiv. 3—5. cxxxvi. 13—15. Is. lxiii. 11—13.
l Ex. xv. 1—21. Ps. cvi. 9—11. Heb. xi. 29.
m Ex. xv. 10. Rev. xviii. 21.
n 19. Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xiv. 19, 20. Ps. lxxviii. 14. cv. 39.
o Ps. cvii. 7. cxliii. 8.
p Ex. xix. 11. 16—20. Deut. xxxiii. 2. Is. lxiv. 1. 3. Hab. iii. 3.
q Ex. xx. 1. 22. Deut. iv. 10—13.

33. v. 4. 22—26. Heb. xii. 18—26. r Deut. iv. 8. x. 12, 13. Ps. xix. 7—11. cxix. 127, 128. Ez. xx. 11—13. Rom. vii. 12—14. 16. * Heb. *laws of truth.* Ps. cxix. 160.

tended, of whom some were known by different names, though some think, that another company is spoken of.—Perhaps the people were prostrate on the ground, or kneeling, while they humbly confessed their sins, and craved mercy from God, each for himself, and for his people: but they were called upon to "stand up," when the publick adorations began; and to bless and "praise the LORD "their God for ever and ever;" or as long as they had any being; or, to bless him, as "their God for ever and ever." He indeed is "exalted above all blessing and praise." His essential glory is incomprehensible and infinite; so that the most sublime adorations of the highest created beings must fall unspeakably below his majesty and excellency. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19. *Ps.* cvi. 2.) Yet he accepts their adorations and thanksgivings, when they worship him according to their capacities. Nay, he delights in the feeble praises and blessings of sinners, when they come before him in humble faith and cordial grateful love; and counts himself glorified by them, though the best of them are not only defective, but defiled! (*Notes*, *Ps.* l. 22, 23, & 23. *Heb.* xiii. 15, 16. 1 *Pet.* ii. 4—6.)

V. 6. *Marg. Ref.*—1 *Kings* viii. 27. *Jer.* x. 9—11. *Rev.* iv. 9—11.

V. 7. 'Here follows a compendious history of the affairs 'of the Hebrew nation, in this confession of God's benefits 'and their ingratitude; which Nehemiah and Ezra, it is 'likely, composed in the form of a prayer, and delivered 'it to the Levites, whom they ordered to speak it distinctly 'before the whole congregation, from their several scaffolds, 'which were conveniently placed in several parts of the 'assembly, that they might be heard.' *Bp. Patrick.*—As at least three hours were employed in this part of the service, far more must have been spoken than is here written; which seems to have been a kind of compendium, or directory, to those who officiated, that all might be evidently of one mind; on the several parts of which, it is probable, each of them enlarged according to his ability. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Deut.* vii. 6—8. *Josh.* xxiv. 2. *Is.* xli. 8, 9. *Acts* vii. 1—8.)

V. 8. The Lord tried the faith of Abraham on many occasions; especially when he commanded him to offer up Isaac: and "he found his heart *faithful.*" Abraham stood every trial, and was fully approved. God also shewed himself *righteous* towards Abraham and his posterity; both in faithfully performing his covenant-engagements, and in justly punishing their cruel and haughty oppressors. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1 *Tim.* i. 12—14. *Heb.* xi. 8—19. *Jam.* ii. 21—24. 1 *John* i. 8—10.)

V. 9—12. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Ex.* iii. 7. xiii. 21, 22. xiv. xv. *Heb.* xi. 27—29.

V. 13. God spake the law of ten commandments "from "heaven," in respect of its original, as distinguished from the statutes of earthly lawgivers. Or the word *heaven* may mean the higher regions of the air.—The moral law is right, true, and good: grounded upon eternal *truth*, resulting from the nature of God and man, and our relations to him and to each other; and forming the standard of excellency and the rule of felicity. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xx. 1.

14 And [s] madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and [t] commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of [u] Moses thy servant;

15 And [x] gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and [y] broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should [z] go in to possess the land which thou hadst [*] sworn to give them.

16 But they and our fathers [a] dealt proudly, and [b] hardened their necks, and [c] hearkened not to thy commandments,

17 And [d] refused to obey, neither were [e] mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion [f] appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou *art* [g] a God [†] ready to pardon, [h] gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and [i] forsookest them not.

18 Yea, [k] when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This *is* thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations;

19 Yet thou, [l] in thy manifold mercies, forsookest them not in the wilderness: [m] the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.

20 Thou [n] gavest also thy [o] good Spirit to instruct them, and [p] withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and [q] gavest them water for their thirst.

21 Yea, [r] forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, *so that* they lacked nothing; [s] their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

22 Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst [u] divide them into corners: so they possessed [x] the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan.

s Gen. ii. 3. Ex. xvi. 29. xx. 8—11. Ez. xx. 12. 20.
t Ex. xxi.—xxiii. Lev. xxvii. 34. Deut. iv. 5. 45. v. 31.
u i. 8. John i. 17.
x Ex. xvi. 4. 14, 15. Deut. viii. 3. 16. Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25 cv. 40. John vi. 31—33. 1 Cor. x. 3.
y 20. Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 9—11. Deut. viii. 15. Ps. lxxvii. 15—20. cv. 41. cxiv. 8. 1 Cor. x. 4.
z Deut. i. 8. Josh. i. 2—4.
* Heb. *lift up thine hand.* Gen. xiv. 22. Num. xiv. 30. Ez. xx. 15.
a *See on* 10 29. Ex. xxxii. 9. Deut. ix. 6. 13. 23, 24. 27. xxxii. 15. Ps. lxxviii. 8. cvi. 6. Is. lxiii. 10. Jer. ii. 31. Acts vii. 51.
b Deut. xxxi. 27. 2 Kings xvii. 14. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. xxxvi. 13. Ps. xcv. 8—10. Prov. xxix. 1. Is. xlviii. 4. Jer. xix. 15. Rom. ii. 5. Heb. iii. 13. 15.
c Ex. xv. 26. Deut. v. 29. Ps. lxxxi. 8. 11—14. Is. xlviii. 18.
d Num. xiv. 3, 4. 11. 41. xvi. 14. Ps. cvi. 24, 25. Prov. i. 24. Heb. xii. 25.
e Ps. lxxviii 11. 42, 43. cvi. 7. 13. Matt. xvi. 9—11. 2 Pet. i. 12—15.
f Num. xiv. 4. Acts vii. 39.
g Num. xiv. 18, 19. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. 15. cxxx. 4. Mic. vii. 18, 19.
† Heb. *of pardons.*
h Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxviii. 38. ciii. 8—18. cxlv. 8, 9. Is. lv. 7—9. Joel ii. 13. Rom. ix. 15. Eph. i. 6, 7.
i 1 Kings vi. 13. viii. 57. Ps. cvi. 43—46.
k Ex. xxxii. 4—8. 31, 32. Deut. ix. 12—16. Ps. cvi. 19—23. Ez. xx. 7, &c.
l Ps. cvi. 7, 8. 45. Lam. iii. 22. Ez. xx. 14. 22. Dan. ix. 9. 18. Mal. iii. 6.
m *See on* 12.—Ex. xl. 38. Num. ix. 15—22. Is. iv. 5, 6. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.
n 30. Num. xi. 17. 25—29. Is. lxiii. 11. 14.
o Ps. cxliii. 10. Rom. xv. 30. Gal. v. 22, 23. Eph. v. 9. 2 Pet. i. 21.
p Ex. xvi. 35. Josh. v. 12.
q Ps. cv. 41. Is. xli. 17, 18. xlviii. 21. xlix. 10. John iv. 10. 14. vii. 37—39.
r Ex. xvi. 35. Num. xiv. 33, 34. Deut. ii. 7. viii. 2. Am. v. 25. Acts xiii. 18.
s Deut. viii. 4. xxix. 5. Ps. xxxiv. 10.
t Josh. x. xi. Ps. lxxviii. 55. cv. 44.
u Deut. xxxii. 26. Josh. xi. 23.
x Num. xxi. 21—35. Deut. ii. 26—36. iii. 1—17. Ps. cxxxv. 10—12. cxxxvi. 17—22.

Deut. iv. 6—8. xxxii. 2—4. *Ez.* xx. 11. *Rom.* vii. 7—12.) The *judgments* (or judicial law, the rule of the magistrate,) given to Israel, were more consistent with the true difference between right and wrong, and the relative proportion of crimes and punishments, than the municipal laws of any other country in any age hitherto have been: (*Note, Ex.* xxi. 1:) and the *ritual* law prefigured the true way of a sinner's justification, sanctification, and obtaining eternal life. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex.* xxi—xxiv.)

V. 14. By the observance of the sabbath, the Israelites were distinguished, as the worshippers of the great Creator, who had also been their Deliverer from Egyptian bondage: and on this holy day they enjoyed a most important means of promoting true religion, in their own hearts, and in their families. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex.* xvi. 28—30. xx. 8—11. xxxi. 13—17. *Ez.* xx. 12.)

V. 15—17. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex.* xvi. xvii. 1—7. xxxiv. 5—7. *Num.* xiii. xiv. *Ps.* lxxviii. 32, 33. cvi. 24—27.—*Appointed a captain,* &c. (17) 'It seems they came 'to this resolution, that they agreed upon a captain, to 'lead them back to Egypt. Or their resolving to do it, 'was the same with the actual appointment of a captain, 'as it was in the case of Abraham's offering his son.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Num.* xiv. 2—4.)

V. 18, 19. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex.* xxxii—xxxiv. *Ps.* cvi. 19—23. 40—45. *Is.* lxiii. 7—14. *Ez.* xx. 11—26.

V. 20. The Spirit of prophecy, in Moses, Joshua, the seventy elders, and the subsequent prophets, both instructed the Israelites by their ministry, and testified against them when rebellious (30). The example, conversation, and exertions of those who partook of his sanctifying influences, tended to reform the nation: and no doubt, the Spirit of God, by his convictions, powerfully excited, in the consciences of the unconverted, a sense of guilt and dread of punishment; and in other ways strove with them. But in all these respects "they resisted the Holy Ghost." (*Marg. Ref.* n, o. *Notes, Is.* lxiii. 10. *Acts.* vii. 51—53. 1 *Thes.* v. 16—22, *v.* 19. *Heb.* x. 28—31, *v.* 29.)—The unspeakable condescension and compassion of the blessed Spirit of God, in his operations upon the polluted souls of sinful men, as well as the beneficent tendency of those operations, are strongly marked in the words "thy good "Spirit." (*Note, Ps.* cxliii. 10.)

V. 21, 22. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut.* viii. 2—5. xxix. 5, 6.—*Into corners.* (22) That is, into all the corners of the promised land, from which the old inhabitants had been driven. Some expositors think, that the situation of Canaan, as favourable to Israel's separation from other nations, being divided by seas, mountains, and deserts, from the most flourishing kingdoms in the world, was denoted by this expression. And indeed it is observable, that Jerusalem, which God chose for the metropolis of his people, was situated at a distance from the sea, and from all navigable rivers; and therefore could not become a place of extensive commerce.—Others, however, suppose, that the dispossessed nations are meant, who were driven into corners.—Heshbon being the city of Sihon, the words should be rendered, "*even* the land of the king of Hesh-"bon." (*Notes, Num.* xxi. 21—34.)

23 Their children also [y] multipliedst thou, as the stars of heaven, and [z] broughtest them into the land, concerning which [a] thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess *it*.

24 So the children went in and possessed the land, and [b] thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them [*] as they would.

25 And they took [c] strong cities, and [d] a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, [†] wells digged, vineyards, and olive-yards, and [‡] fruit-trees in abundance: so they [e] did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and [f] delighted themselves in thy great goodness.

26 Nevertheless [g] they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and [h] cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets, which testified against them to turn them to thee, and [k] they wrought great provocations.

27 Therefore [l] thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and [m] in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them [n] saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

28 But after they had rest, they [§] did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them; yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou [o] heardest *them* from heaven, and [p] many times didst thou deliver them, according to thy mercies;

29 And [q] testifiedst against them that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: [r] yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, ([s] which if a man do, he shall live in them,) and [‖] withdrew the shoulder, [t] and hardened their neck, and would not hear.

30 Yet [u] many years didst thou [*] forbear them and testifiedst against them [x] by thy Spirit in [†] thy prophets; yet would they not give ear: [y] therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the [†] people of the lands.

31 Nevertheless, [z] for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou *art* a [a] gracious and merciful God.

32 Now therefore, [b] our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who [c] keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the [‡] trouble seem [d] little before thee that hath [§] come upon us, [e] on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, [f] since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day.

33 Howbeit [g] thou *art* just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but [h] we have done wickedly:

34 Neither have our kings, our

y Gen. xv. 5. xxii. 17. 1 Chr. xxvii. 23.
z Josh. i. iii. &c.
a Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15—17. xv. 18. xvii. 8. xxvi. 3.
b Josh. xviii. 1. 1 Chr. xxii. 18. Ps. xliv. 2, 3.
* Heb. *according to their will.* 2 Tim. ii. 26.
c Num. xiii. 27, 28. Deut. iii. 5. vi. 10—12. ix. 1—3.
d 35. Deut. viii. 7—10. xxxii. 13. Ez. xx. 6.
† Or, *cisterns.*
‡ Heb. *tree of food.*
e Deut. xxxii. 15. Ps. lxv. 11. Is. vi. 10. Jer. v. 27, 28. Hos. xiii. 6.
f 1 Kings viii. 66. Jer. xxxi. 14. Hos iii. 5. Rom. ii. 4.
g Judg. ii. 11, 12. iii. 6, 7. x. 6. 13, 14. Ps. lxxviii. 56, 57. cvi. 34—40. Ez. xvi. 15, &c. xx. 21. xxiii. 4, &c.
h 1 Kings xiv. 9. Ps. l. 17. Ez. xxxiii. 3—5.
i 1 Kings xviii. 4. 13. xix. 10. 2 Chr. xxiv. 20, 21. xxxvi. 16. Jer. xxvi. 20—23. Matt. xxi. 35. xxiii. 34—37. Acts vii. 52.
k 18. 2 Kings xxi. 11. Ez. xxii. 25—31.
l Deut. xxxi. 16—18. Judg. ii. 14, 15. iii. 8, &c. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17. Ps. cvi. 41, 42. Dan. ix. 10—14.
m Deut. iv. 29—31. Judg. iii. 15. vi. 6—10. x. 15, 16. Ps. cvi. 43—45.
n Judg. ii. 18. iii. 9. 15. 1 Sam. xii. 10, 11. 2 Kings xiii. 5. xiv. 27. Ob. 21.
§ Heb *returned to do evil.* Judg. iii. 11, 12. 30. iv. 1. v. 31. vi. 1.
o 1 Kings viii. 33, 34. 39. Is. lxiii. 15.
p Ps. cvi. 43—45.
q 26. Deut. iv. 26. xxxi. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 13. 2 Chr. xxiv. 19. xxxvi. 15. Jer. xxv. 3—7. Hos. vi. 5.
r 10. 16. Ex. x. 3. Jer. xiii. 15—17. xliii. 2. xliv. 10. 16, 17. Dan. v. 20. Jam. iv. 6—10.
s Lev. xviii. 5. Ez. xx. 11. Luke x. 28. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.
‖ Heb. *gave a withdrawing shoulder.* Zech. vii. 11, 12.
t *See on* Jer. vii. 26. xvii. 23. xix. 15.
u Ps. lxxvi. 15. Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.
* Heb. *protract over them.*
x 20. Is. lxiii. 10. Acts vii. 51. xxviii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 11. 2 Pet. i. 21.
† Heb. *the hand of thy prophets.*
y Is. v. 5, 6. xlii. 24. Jer. xl. 2, 3. xliv. 22. Lam. ii. 17. Zech. vii. 13.
z Jer. iv. 27. v. 10. 18. Lam. iii. 22. Ez. xiv. 22, 23. Dan. ix. 9.
a *See on* 17.—Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. 2 Kings xiii. 23. 2 Chr. xxx. 9. Ps. ciii. 8, 9. cxlv. 8, 9.
b i. 5. Deut. vii. 21. Ps. xlvii. 2. lxvi. 3. 5.
c Deut. vii. 9. 1 Kings viii. 23. Dan. ix. 4. Mic. vii. 18—20.
‡ Heb. *weariness.*
d Lev. xxvi. 18. 21. 24. 28. Ezra ix. 13.
§ Heb. *found us.*
e 2 Kings xxiii. 29. 33, 34. xxv. 7. 18—21. 25, 26. 2 Chr. xxxvi. Jer. viii. 1—3. xxii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 19—22. xxxix. lii. Dan. ix. 6. 8.
f 2 Kings xv. 19. 29. xvii. 3. Is. vii. 17, 18. viii. 7, 8. x. 5—7. xxxvi. xxxvii.
g Gen. xviii. 25. Job xxxiv. 23. Ps. cxix. 137. Jer. xii. 1. Lam. i. 18. Dan. ix. 7. 14. xxxiii. 27. Ps. cvi. 6. Dan. ix. 5—10.
h Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Job

V. 23, 24. *Notes, Josh.* iii—xi. *Ps.* cv. 42—45. *Is.* lxiii. 11—14.

V. 25. (*Marg. Ref.—Deut.* vi. 10—12.) 'They were 'enriched with the estates of the people whom they de-'stroyed, having houses ready built, and well furnished, 'together with all sorts of trees planted to their hands.' *Bp. Patrick.—Delighted themselves,* &c.] 'Their highest 'pleasure indeed ought to have been, in their thoughts, 'how good God was unto them. But the meaning of 'these words is no more than this:—That God had be-'stowed so many blessings upon them, that they took great 'pleasure in the enjoyment of them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 26—30. *Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 14—16. *Ps.* cvi. 34—46. *Jer.* ii. 26—30. *Ez.* xvi. xx. 28—39. xxiii. *Matt.* xxi. 33—39. xxiii. 34—39. *Acts* vii. 51—53.—*And testifiedst,* &c. (26, 29, 30.) The prophets were sent from God to explain to the people his judgments and mercies: and to testify against them, that their miseries were deserved by their sins, and that far worse would come upon them unless they turned to God with true repentance. (*Notes, Jer.* xxvi. 12—15. xliv. 2—6. *Zech.* i. 5, 6. vii. 4—13. *Acts* xx. 18—21, *v.* 21.)—*Saviours,* &c. (27) The deliverers, which God immediately raised up for his people, as the judges, and king David, by whom they were rescued from the miseries into which their sins had plunged them, were all types of the great Saviour, who delivers us from wrath, and from our enemies, that we may become the servants of that God whom we have offended.—*If a man,* &c. (29) *Note, Lev.* xviii. 5.—*Thy Spirit,* &c. (30) *Marg. Ref.—Notes,* 20. 2 *Pet.* i. 19—21.

V. 31—35. *Marg. Ref.—Notes,* i. 5—11. *Ezra* ix. 7—15. *Dan.* ix. 4—20.—'They acknowledge the justice of

princes, our priests, nor our fathers kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy
i 30. 2 Kings xvii. 15. commandments, and [i] thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them.

k Deut. xxviii. 47. Jer. v. 19. Rom. iii. 4, 5. l 25. 35 For [k] they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in [l] thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and
m Deut. viii. 7—10. xxxii. 12—15. in the large and [m] fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works.

n Deut. xxviii. 48. 2 Chr. xii. 8. Ezra ix. 9. 36 Behold, [n] we *are* servants this day; and *for* the land that thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we *are* servants in it.

o Deut. xxviii. 39. 51. Ezra iv. 13. vi. 8. vii. 24. 37 And [o] it yieldeth much increase unto the kings, whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins: also they have [p] dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we *are* in great distress.

p v. 8. Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut. xxviii. 48. John viii. 33.

q x. 29. 2 Kings xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. xv. 12, 13. xxiii. 16. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31. Ezra x. 3. * Heb. are *at the sealing*, or, *sealed*. x. 1. 38 And because of all this, [q] we make a sure *covenant*, and write *it*; and our princes, Levites, *and* priests, * seal *unto it*.

'God, in all the punishments he had inflicted upon them, 'though heavy, and of long continuance. For, from the 'highest to the lowest, they had all done wickedly, and 'would not be reclaimed.' *Bp. Patrick.* They acknowledge also the *mercy* of God, in that they had not been entirely consumed. (31. *Notes, Ps.* cvi. 40—46. *Lam.* iii. 21—23.)

V. 36, 37. The situation of Israel was very different, at this time, from what it had been under their own kings, and in the days of their prosperity. God had for their sins set over them the kings of Persia, who exacted from them heavy taxes; and who had their property, liberty, and lives entirely in their power. (*Note, John* viii. 30—36.) It was very distressing for the worshippers of God, to be in slavery to the worshippers of dumb idols: and though they had no intention of revolting from the kings of Persia, who allowed them to live according to their own laws, and in many respects shewed them much favour; yet they hoped, that, upon their deep repentance, and more entire return to God, he would more effectually deliver them from captivity and bondage, and restore them in due season to their former liberty, independence, and prosperity. (*Note*, v. 1—5. *Ps.* lxxxv. 1—8. cvi. 46—48.)

V. 38. 'In consideration of which, they resolved to 'renew their covenant with God, of better obedience, 'which they promised under their hands and seals, as the 'only remedy to procure perfect deliverance. And to make 'it more effectual, they... declare this in the presence of 'God, at the conclusion of the foregoing confession and 'prayer.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, x. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The diligent study of God's word will more and more shew us both our own sinfulness, and the plenteousness of his salvation; and thus alternately call us to mourn for sin, and to rejoice in him.—Seasons of comfort should remind us of his condescending goodness, and so lead us to deeper self-abasement on account of our crimes against him: and thus joyful feasts and solemn fasts may properly succeed, and prepare our hearts for each other.—Our sorrow and humiliation for sin must be evidenced to be genuine by separation from it, and from every occasion or temptation to it.—Every discovery of the truth and will of God should endear to us his sacred word, and render us more unwearied in our attendance on it, and on his worship. A few hours, or even occasionally a whole day, cannot be too long to spend in those exercises and meditations, which are preparations for heaven, and anticipations of its sacred joys: yet alas, we are most of us sooner weary in the courts of the Lord, than the trifler is at his diversions, or even the labourer at his work!—Our God knoweth our thoughts before we speak, and mental prayer may suit our secret intercourse with him: but those who address him in publick, should speak audibly and with animation; that the people may hear and be affected: and if, on some occasions, "they cry with a loud voice unto the LORD their "God," or be more copious than usual, they cannot be censured, without involving those who are commended in the sacred scriptures.—Whether we feast and rejoice, or fast and mourn for sin, we should be ready to bless and praise the Lord our God for his eternal excellences; for his goodness to us as our Creator, and the sole Author of all our temporal comforts; and above all, "as the God "of salvation," for the wonders which he has done for his church of redeemed sinners from the beginning hitherto.

V. 7—31.

In reviewing this abstract of the Lord's conduct toward Israel, as a people, from the choice and call of Abraham to the days of Nehemiah: we perceive a continued display of his power, wisdom, truth, and love, requited by persevering ingratitude, and perverse disobedience. All their distinguishing advantages originated from the Lord's choice of them; and accorded to his gracious promises, which he most faithfully performed. But while surrounded with the riches of his bounty, and the demonstrations of his power and presence; while his holy law yet sounded in their ears, Sinai's fiery top was before their eyes, and they were guided, guarded, sustained, and instructed by miracles; they rebelled against God, set up idols, attempted to return to Egypt, and rushed vehemently into the most daring provocations! Yet he did not destroy them, he withdrew not his mercies from them, he was ever ready to hear their prayers, to pardon their sins, and to do them good; though they still relapsed into murmurings, and provocations! The dealings of the Lord toward them, as a nation, in their warnings, corrections, and deliverances, throughout the whole history; and their ingratitude, perverseness, neglect of his worship, contempt and persecution of his prophets, relapses into idolatry and other enormities; tended to shew the riches of his goodness, for-

CHAP. X.

The names of those who sealed the covenant, 1—27. The rest of the people bind themselves to observe it, 28, 29. Some particulars to which they bound themselves, 30—39.

bearance, and long-suffering, and the hardness of their impenitent hearts. And even when at length justice demanded, that they should be given up into the hands of their enemies, and their temple, city, and country desolated; his tender mercy prevented him from utterly casting them off! their miseries were great and terrible; but the Lord was just in all that he had done: yea, it was of his mercies that they were not consumed, and that a remnant had been brought back to their own land; who soon began to shew the same spirit of unthankful and perverse disobedience.—And is not their conduct a specimen of human nature? Our land, for instance, has for ages been favoured with deliverances, opportunities, and benefits, little, if at all, inferior to those vouchsafed to Israel: and have we not copied Israel's ingratitude, rebellion, and iniquity? Oh, may a general reformation, while yet we are spared, prevent our being given up into the hands of foreign conquerors, or domestick oppressors! (*P. O. Deut.* xxxii. 15—35. *Ps.* lxxviii. 12—54. cvi. 28—48. *Ez.* xvi. xx. 10—49.)

But especially we should each of us study our own history. Let us look back to the time, when we received our being, as rational creatures, from the goodness and power of the Lord; let us recollect the distinguishing advantages of our infancy and childhood: then let us ask ourselves, what were our first returns to our kind Friend and Benefactor? what were our first thoughts, words, and works? —As our faculties began to unfold, revolving years brought with them recent comforts and advantages: and did they not witness increasing perverseness, ingratitude, and ungodliness? Let us divide our lives past into distinct periods, and carefully investigate the mercies and the transgressions of each, until we have brought down the enquiry to the present hour: praying all the while, that the Holy Spirit may assist our recollection, and enable us to form a proper estimate of the Lord's dealings with us, and our behaviour towards him; and to deduce proper conclusions from the whole, with suitable affections. And if prejudice, ignorance, or self-flattery do not blind our minds, we shall certainly see abundant cause for deep humiliation and for admiring gratitude; and to acknowledge, that all our sufferings have been justly merited, all our comforts mercifully bestowed.—Besides the temporal provision which we have from the Lord's bounty, (though not by miracle;) we are favoured with means and opportunities of becoming wise unto salvation, even beyond what Israel enjoyed in their most favoured times. We have the sacred oracles, now completed and ever at hand, to give us light, and to shew us the way in which we should go. We have the Gospel preached among us, and the holy sabbaths and ordinances of our God: but have we never neglected, profaned, and despised them? We have not been without salutary chastisements, and merciful deliverances perhaps in answer to prayer: but have we not requited them by returning unto sin? We have had, not only the testimony of God's servants, but the strivings of his good Spirit: but have we never hated or despised the one, and quenched the other? nay, we are especially "under the ministration "of the Spirit:" yet perhaps have neglected to pray for his gracious influences, and derided those who did! And have not we proudly cast off the authority of God's law; and as proudly endeavoured to justify ourselves before him? This I say, was the case with us once, perhaps is so still with some who read these observations. Yet, whilst others have been cut off, we are spared! May this review of the Lord's mercies, and of our sins, bring us to true repentance, and induce us to condemn ourselves, as having imitated and vindicated all the transgressors who have gone before us: may it bring us to submit to the Lord's righteousness, to accept of his salvation, and to set our seal to his new covenant of mercy and grace: that "being delivered from "all our enemies, we may serve him in righteousness be-"fore him," the remainder of our days. (*P. O. Deut.* ix. xxxii. 1—14. *Ps.* cvi. 1—27. *Ez.* xx. 1—9.)

Even, if by the Lord's choice of us, and his grace given to us, we have on the whole been *made* and found *faithful* to him; and if his covenant have been ratified to us with all its precious promises; we shall not only have cause to adore him for these inestimable mercies, and for his Son Jesus Christ, and redemption by his atoning blood, as the Foundation of them all; but we shall, upon every review, see cause to admire his present patience and gentleness, and to lament our ingratitude and disobedience. We have been delivered from a far worse oppression, than that of the Egyptian tyrant, and by a far more wonderful exertion of almighty power and love. We are guided by a superior light, sheltered by a more glorious protection, and favoured with stronger consolations, than Israel of old. We feed upon "the Bread of life, which came down from "heaven, to give life unto the world:" we drink the Waters which flow from "the Rock of ages" who was smitten for us; we are clothed with the robe of righteousness and salvation; our "feet are shod with the preparation of "the gospel of peace;" and the good Spirit of God, is not only our condescending Instructor and Sanctifier, but our Comforter also, who deigns to make our hearts his temple! and we possess the hope and earnests of everlasting glory. But, while we rejoice in the Lord's great goodness to us, what requital do we make? We are, perhaps, kept from habitual and gross disobedience: but we are conscious how often we are setting up our idols, and in heart returning to our bondage; how often we forget him, "grieve his Holy Spirit," and neglect his service; and how often we are kept from still greater revolts by no higher motives than the terror of his judgments, and the anguish of his salutary chastisements, which yet we soon forget, when he has mercifully removed them. Were he not slow to anger and ready to pardon, he would have cast us off long ago. But our heavenly Advocate still pleads, and we are spared; and his mercies and our privileges are continued to us!

V. 32—38.

On every review of our past conduct we shall find cause to lie down ashamed before God, praising his great goodness, and confessing our great unworthiness. Let us then thank him for his merciful corrections, as well as his consolations: let us renew our acceptance of his salvation, and ratification of his covenant: let us beg of him to de-

NOW * those that sealed *were* [a] Nehemiah the † Tirshatha, the [b] son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah,

2 [c] Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,
3 [d] Pashur, [e] Amariah, [f] Malchijah,
4 [g] Hattush, [h] Shebaniah, [i] Malluch,
5 [k] Harim, [l] Meremoth, Obadiah,
6 Daniel, [m] Ginnethon, [n] Baruch,
7 [o] Meshullam, [p] Abijah, [q] Mijamin,
8 Maaziah, [r] Bilgai, [s] Shemaiah: these *were* the priests.

9 And the Levites: both [t] Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of [u] Henadad, Kadmiel;

10 And their brethren, [x] Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

11 Micha, Rehob, [y] Hashabiah,

12 Zaccur, [z] Sherebiah, Shebaniah,
13 Hodijah, Bani, Beninu.
14 The chief of the people; [a] Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zatthu, [b] Bani,
15 Bunni, [c] Azgad, Bebai,
16 Adonijah, [d] Bigvai, Adin,
17 Ater, Hizkijah, Azzur,
18 Hodijah, [e] Hashum, Bezai,
19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,
20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
21 Meshezabeel, Zadok, Jaddua,
22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,
23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hashub,
24 Hallohesh, Pileha, Shobek,
25 [f] Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,
26 And Ahijah, Hanan, Anan,
27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

* Heb. *at the sealings.* ix. 38.
a viii. 9.
† Or, *governor.* vii. 70. Ezra ii. 63.
b i. 1.
c iii. 23. xi. 11. xii. 1. 33, 34.
d xi. 12.
e xii. 2. 13.
f iii. 11. viii. 4. *Malchiah.*
g iii. 10.
h xii. 14.
i xii. 2.
k iii. 11.
l iii. 4. 21. xii. 3.
m xii. 4. *Ginnetho.*
n iii. 20.
o iii. 6. viii. 4. xi. 11. xii. 13. 25—33.
p xii. 4.
q xii. 5. *Miamin.* 17. 41. *Miniamin.*
r xii. 5. *Bilgah.*
s iii. 29. xii. 6. 18. 42. Ezra x. 21.
t iii. 19. vii. 43 viii. 7. ix. 4.
u iii. 18. 24. xii. 8. 24.
x viii. 7. ix. 4, 5. Ezra x. 23.
y xi. 15. 22. xii. 24. Ezra viii. 19. 24.
z viii. 7. ix. 4. xii. 8
a iii. 11. vii. 8. 14—13. *Zattu.*
b vii. 15. *Binnui.* Ezra ii. 10.
c vii. 16, 17. Ezra ii. 11, 12. viii. 11, 12. x. 28.
d vii. 19—21. Ezra ii. 14—16. viii. 14.
e vii. 22, &c. Ezra ii. 17, &c.
f iii. 17, &c.

liver us from all other lords, that we may serve him more entirely. And let us frequently meditate on these subjects, that we may be preserved humble, thankful, and watchful; as well as be prepared for communion with him in every sacred ordinance.—It behoves all men to reflect seriously and frequently on the greatness, justice, and goodness of the Lord; to consider the terrible power of his indignation, and the infinite value of his favour. And they should remember that pride, obstinacy, and impenitence are the sins which ruin the soul; and that no former crimes can ruin the penitent believer. Let then the sinner trust in the mercy of him, who is a God of pardons, and "ready "to forgive;" let the backslider repent and return to him; let the believer walk humbly with him: let the prosperous fear abusing the Lord's goodness: let the afflicted be warned to seek deliverance from the wrath to come. Let us ever remember that all our miseries are the effect of sin, and that they are all less than we deserve, though hard for us to bear: let us then pray to be delivered from 'the bit-'ter pains of eternal death;' and not forget to intreat the Lord to deliver his church from the oppression of every enemy, and to establish it in the beauty of holiness.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. We have several times read of the rulers, priests, and people solemnly covenanting before God, to renounce their transgressions and to adhere to his service. Such transactions were sometimes ratified with sacrifices, solemn oaths, and other expressions of the most entire consent to them: but this is the only instance met with of a covenant drawn up in writing, and ratified by the names and seals of the persons who consented to it. (*Notes*, 29. *Ex.* xxiv. 3—11. *Deut.* xxvi. 17—19. xxix. 10—15. *Josh.* viii. 30—35. xxiv. 14—27. 2 *Kings* xi. 17—20. xxiii. 3. 2 *Chr.* xv. 12—15. *Is.* xliv. 3—5. *P. O.* 1—5.) No doubt this was devised, to render the transaction more affecting; and that the deed might remain as a durable testimony, under their own hands and seals, against those who violated it: the explicit ratification thus given would render the persons concerned more sensible of their obligations, and more afraid of transgression; it would fortify them against temptation, preserve them from forgetfulness, and be a constant argument for them to insist upon in cautioning, exhorting, or reproving each other.—The same uses may be made of those professions, and of that consent to the new covenant, which are virtually made in baptism, whether personal or that of our children; and in the Lord's supper; when those ordinances are duly explained and understood, administered and attended on. (*Notes*, and *P. O. Matt.* xix. 13—15. *Note*, xxvi. 26—28. *P. O.* 26—35.)—To this covenant the chief persons alone set their names and seals; and Nehemiah the governor first.—Perhaps Zidkijah was one of the princes; but no other *name* is explicitly mentioned of that order.

V. 2—8. All the persons named in these verses were priests, and no doubt chief persons of that order.—It is observable that Eliashib, the high priest, is not found among those who sealed the covenant. And it is probable, that neither he nor his sons favoured the measure. (*Notes*, xiii. 4. 23—30.)—But it is more surprising, that the name of Ezra is wanting. There is no reason to think that he was absent; for he was at Jerusalem both before and after this transaction: (viii. 1—6. xii. 36:) perhaps he was confined by sickness or infirmity; or the measure so entirely originated with him, and he had bestowed so much pains in drawing up the covenant, and inducing others to consent to it, that his further ratification of it was deemed superfluous. (*Note*, *Dan.* iii. 8—12.)

V. 9—17. Most, if not all, of the Levites, who led the publick devotions, set their seal to the covenant; which may be admitted as a probable indication, that they were earnestly and zealously engaged in that service. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, ix. 4, 5.)

V. 18—27. (*Marg. Ref.*) Many of the names, here mentioned, are found among those who returned with Zerubbabel, about ninety years before: so that, either the same names were preserved in the several families; or the principal descendants of these persons, when in general favourable to the measure, subscribed their family-name; that is, the name of that ancestor, by relation to whom they were commonly distinguished. (*Luke* i. 61.)

28 ¶ And [g] the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and [h] all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands, unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, [i] every one having knowledge, and having understanding;

29 They [j] clave to their brethren, their nobles, and [k] entered into a curse, and into an oath, [l] to walk in God's law, which was [m] given * by Moses the servant of God, and [n] to observe and do all the commandments of [o] the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;

30 And [p] that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons:

31 And *if* [q] the people of the land bring ware, or any victuals, on the sabbath day to sell, *that* we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or [r] on the holy day; [s] and *that* we would leave the seventh year, and [t] the exaction of every † debt.

32 Also we made ordinances for us, [u] to charge ourselves yearly with [x] the third part of a shekel, for the service of the house of our God;

33 For [y] the shew-bread, and for the continual meat-offering, and for [z] the continual burnt-offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy *things*, and for the sin-offerings, to make an atonement for Israel, and *for* [a] all the work of the house of our God.

34 And we [b] cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for [c] the wood-offering, to bring *it* into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, [d] as *it is* written in the law:

35 And to bring [e] the first fruits of our ground, and the first fruits of all

g vii. 72, 73. Ezra ii. 70.
h ix. 2. xiii. 3. Ezra ix. 1, 2. x. 11—17. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17.
i viii. 2. Ec. v. 2. Jer. iv. 2.
j Is. xiv. 1. Acts xi. 23. xvii. 34. Rom. xii. 9.
k v. 12, 13. xiii. 25. Deut. xxvii. 15, &c. xxix. 12—14. 2 Chr. xv. 13, 14. Ps. cxix. 106. Acts xxiii. 12—15. 21.
l 2 Kings x. 31. xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 16. xxxiv. 31. Jer. xxvi. 4.
m Deut. xxxiii. 4. Mal. iv. 4. John i. 17. vii. 19.
* Heb. *by the hand of.*
n Deut. v. 1. 32. Ps. cv. 45. Ez. xxxvi. 27. John xv. 14. Tit. ii. 11—14.
o Ps. viii. 1. 9.
p Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3. Ezra ix. 1—3. 12—14. x. 10—12.
q xiii. 15—22. Ex. xx. 10. Lev. xxiii. 3. Deut. v. 12—14. Jer. xvii. 21, 22.
r Ex. xii. 16. Lev. xvi. 29. xxiii. 21. 35, 36. Col. ii. 16.
s Ex. xxiii. 10, 11. Lev. xxv. 4—7. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21.
t v. 7. 12. Deut. xv. 1—3. 7—9. Matt. vi. 12. xviii. 27—35. Jam. ii. 13.
† Heb. *band.* Is. lviii. 6.
u Gen. xxviii. 22. Prov. iii. 9, 10.
x Ex. xxx. 11—16. Matt. xvii. 24—27. 2 Cor. viii. 12.
y Lev. xxiv. 5—9. 2 Chr. ii. 4.
z Num. xxviii. xxix.
a 2 Chr. xxiv. 5—14.
b 1 Chr. xxiv. 5. 7. xxv. 8, 9. Prov. xviii. 18.
c xiii. 31. Lev. vi. 12. Josh. ix. 27. Is. xl. 16.
d Lev. vi. 12, 13.
e Ex. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 26. Lev. xix. 23—26. Num. xviii. 12. Deut. xxvi. 2. 2 Chr. xxxi. 3—10. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 8—12.

V. 28. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'All that did not subscribe and 'seal, because they were too many, yet gave their consent 'to what the forenamed persons did: and not only the 'men, but their wives and their children, who were arrived 'at years of discretion, engaged themselves.' *Bp. Patrick. All they that had separated*, &c.] It is probable, that these were the proselytes, who, having been circumcised, separated from their idolatrous connexions, and kept the law of Moses, and thus were numbered among the native Jews.

V. 29. By the nobles, in this place, the superior persons, priests, or Levites, are evidently meant. The body of the people, who were old enough to be capable of knowing what was intended, assembled together, and signified, by some appointed token, their consent to the covenant, as in the presence of God, and under the solemn obligation of an oath; and to an awful curse, which was denounced against such as violated these obligations. (*Notes*, v. 10—13. *Deut.* xxvii. 15—26.) They engaged in general to obey the whole law of Moses: and some instances were specified, in which they had been remarkably guilty, or which were peculiarly ensnaring.

V. 30, 31. (*Notes, Ezra* ix. x.)—It seems, that Nehemiah would not venture, in the present unsettled state of the Jews, to exercise his authority, to prevent their heathen neighbours from vending provisions at Jerusalem, or in the cities of Judah, on the sabbath: and he supposed, that by engaging the people, in this solemn manner, not to buy of them, they would be discouraged from coming. But he soon found that many evaded or violated the engagement, without regard to consequences; and he was afterwards constrained to employ coercive measures. (*Notes*, xiii. 15—22.)—It may be concluded from this narrative, that none of the Jews attempted to carry on trade on the sabbath; though some of them would buy of the Gentiles. This gave the latter an undue advantage, and proportionably injured the Jews. And certainly, carrying on trade is as contrary to the law of hallowing the sabbath, as any kind of labour whatever.

The exaction, &c. (31) *Notes*, v. 6—13. *Lev.* xxv. 1—7. *Deut.* xv. 2, 3. *Matt.* xviii. 23—35.

V. 32, 33. A half shekel apiece had been collected for erecting the tabernacle in the wilderness; and that sum is supposed to have been paid from time to time, for the purchase of sacrifices, and other expenses of the stated worship. (*Notes, Ex.* xxx. 11—16. *2 Kings* xii. 4, 5. *Matt.* xvii. 24—27.) But it was now computed, that one third of a shekel apiece, or something less than a shilling of our money, annually, would suffice for these expenses. During prosperous times, the treasury of the temple, replenished by voluntary oblations, it is probable, supplied what was wanted; and on some occasions the liberality of kings and nobles rendered such contributions unnecessary: but the circumstances of the nation now required them.

V. 34. It is probable, that the wood for fuel had hitherto been provided for, out of the same fund with the sacrifices: but on this occasion it was deemed expedient to bear the expenses of it in another manner.—It seems each family engaged to send in a regular supply at an appointed time every year; and that the order was determined by lot.

V. 35—39. (*Marg. Ref.*) The priests had a tithe out of the tithe given to the Levites; and one of them was at this time appointed to see that it was regularly paid. (*Notes, Num.* xviii. 25—32. *2 Chr.* xxxi. 5—10. *Mal. iii.* 7—12.)

fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD:

Ex. xiii. 2. 12—15. xxxiv. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26. 27. Num. xviii. 15, 16. Deut. xii. 6.

36 Also [f] the first-born of our sons, and of our cattle, as *it is* written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds, and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, [g] unto the priests that minister in the house of our God:

g Num. xviii. 9—19. 1 Cor. ix. 6—14. Gal. vi. 6.

h Lev. xxiii. 17. Num. xv. 19—21. xviii. 12, 13. Deut. xviii. 4. xxvi. 2.

37 And *that* we should bring [h] the first fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine, and of oil, unto the priests, [i] to the chambers of the house of our God; and [k] the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same

i xiii. 5. 9. 1 Kings vi. 5—10. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11, 12.

k Lev. xxvii. 30—33. Num. xviii. 21. 24—32. 2 Chr. xxxi. 6.

Levites might have the tithes, in all the cities of our tillage.

38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, [l] when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into [m] the treasure-house.

l Num. xviii. 26—28.

m xiii. 12, 13. 1 Chr. ix. 26. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11, 12.

39 For [n] the children of Israel and [o] the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where *are* the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and [p] we will not forsake the house of our God.

n Deut. xii. 6—11. 17. xiv. 23—27. 2 Chr. xxxi. 12.

o Num. xviii. 30.

p xiii. 10, 11. Ps. cxxii. 9. Heb. x. 25.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—29.

As the creatures and subjects of the Lord, we are bound by his authority to obey all his commandments, and are exposed to a tremendous curse for violating them. But our offended Sovereign, in his infinite mercy, has provided a better covenant, according to which believers are delivered from this curse, and are taught and enabled to perform a new, sincere, and acceptable obedience through Jesus Christ. The word of God calls us to consent to this covenant, and to partake of its inestimable benefits. And when we humble ourselves in godly sorrow and penitent confessions of sin; when we receive the atonement and reconciliation, which the Mediator of this covenant has made by his precious blood, and seek for mercy through his intercession by fervent prayers; and when in our purposes of renewed obedience, we rely on his gracious assistance:—when these transactions have indeed taken place in secret, between God and our souls; our publick sealing and ratifying the covenant at the Lord's table, or in any other solemn way, will be honourable to God, edifying to his people, and encouraging to ourselves; and we may trust in him to enable us to fulfil the engagements with acceptance. But where this preparation of heart is wanting, such publick engagements are mere hypocrisy. (*P. O. Deut.* xxix. 1—17. *2 Chr.* xxx. 13—27.) This detestable evil will intrude in all great revivals of religion, after every possible precaution; and the hypocrites must be left to the judgment of a heart-searching God. But men should be warned, that those, who in baptism, or at the Lord's table, or when admitted into the ministry, or in any other way, engage for what they do not intend, or afterwards do not take care, to perform, bring themselves under an additional and most awful curse: as do all, who trifle with solemn oaths, vows, or sacramental engagements of any kind; and all, who despise, oppose, or pervert the salvation of the gospel.—Every one, capable of understanding, is alike required to obey the law of God; all need the mercy and grace of the gospel; all therefore should be exhorted and commanded, to set their seals to the new covenant: but those who have the pre-eminence in society, or take the lead in religious exercises, ought to set the example; and they, who are remarkably zealous to reform others, should be as remarkably zealous in every good work.—The influence and example of the great will always have a powerful effect upon their inferiors: their distinction is truly honourable, when, in following and cleaving to them, others follow and cleave to the Lord: and the Christian equality of the common people, *as brethren* to believing nobles and rulers, will influence them to render the more heartily "honour to whom honour is due." (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 1—5.)

V. 30—39.

We are not sincere in covenanting with God, except we aim to obey all his commandments: for if we allow ourselves in violating one of them habitually, it is evident that we have not truly repented of our former trangressions *in that particular;* that we have never sought forgiveness of them in a due manner; that we do not desire the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, to mortify that peculiar sinful propensity: and consequently that we are not born of God, nor interested in the righteousness and atonement of Christ. But real believers, at least all, who by a consistent conduct give satisfactory evidence that they are such, place the strongest guard where there is the greatest danger; and use every means of avoiding and subduing those sins, which have the most foiled and ensnared them. Separation from intimate connexions with ungodly persons, and the conscientious hallowing of the Lord's day, are peculiarly attended to by them. They do not infringe upon the sacred rest, and they shew a marked disapprobation of those who do: they carefully remove occasions of transgression, and previously so arrange every thing, as may best promote the strict observance of that holy day. Their attention to the ordinances of God is connected with justice to all men, and mercy to those who need it. They do not *exact* from their brethren, when it would distress them; but they trust the Lord to repay what they thus lose or expend. Though they be poor or burdened, they will find a little to spare for pious or charitable uses; that little will be accepted; and, coming from great numbers, will form large funds for useful purposes.—As the ordinances of God are the appointed means of sustenance to our souls, the believer should not grudge the expense of them. Even

CHAP. XI.

The rulers, with every tenth man taken by lot, and those who offered voluntarily, dwell at Jerusalem, 1, 2. Their names, 3—19. The rest dwell in the other cities, 20—36.

a vii. 4, 5. Deut. xvii. 8, 9. Ps. cxxii. 5.
b x. 34. Josh. xviii. 10. 1 Chr. xxvi. 13. Prov. xvi. 33. Acts i. 24.
c Judg. xx. 9, 10.
d 18. Is. xlviii. 2. lii. 1. Matt. iv. 5. xxvii. 53.
e Deut. xxiv. 13. Job xxix. 13. xxxi. 20.
f Judg. v. 9. 2 Cor. viii. 16, 17.
g vii. 6. Ezra ii. 1.
h vii. 73. 1 Chr. ix. 1, 2. Ezra ii. 70.

AND [a] the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also [b] cast lots, to bring [c] one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem [d] the holy city, and nine parts *to dwell* in *other* cities.

2 And the people [e] blessed all the men, that [f] willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

3 Now these *are* [g] the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, *to wit*, [h] Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and [i] the children of Solomon's servants.

i vii. 57—60. Ezra ii. 55—58

4 And at Jerusalem, [k] dwelt *certain* of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin. Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalaleel, of the children of [l] Perez;

k 1 Chr. ix. 3, 4.
l Gen. xxxviii. 29. Ruth iv. 18. *Pharez.* Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Pharcs.*

5 And Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of [m] Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of [n] Shiloni.

m iii. 15.
n Gen. xxxviii. 5. *Shelah.* Num. xxvi. 20. *Shelanites.* 1 Chr. iv. 21. ix. 5.

6 All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem, *were* four hundred threescore and eight valiant men.

7 ¶ And these *are* [o] the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam,

o 1 Chr. ix. 7—9.

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the poor will part with their money for bread: yet most men leave their souls to starve! But the covenanted servant of God "honours him with his substance and with the "first fruits of all his increase," and that brings a blessing upon the rest: (*Note, Prov.* iii. 9, 10:) nor will he defraud or withhold from the ministers, who labour in the word and doctrine, their proportion of a suitable maintenance. —In short, we must render to God, to the king, to magistrates, superiors, equals, inferiors, relatives, the poor, and all men, that which is due unto them, according to the precepts of scripture; if we would *evidence* ourselves to be the true disciples of Christ, and, "adorn the doctrine "of God our Saviour:" and in these things we must persevere, exhorting one another, "not to forsake the house "of our God," but to "walk before him in all his ordi-"nances and commandments blameless."

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Jerusalem at this time was not a place of trade, by which men could acquire wealth; the houses in general were not built; the adversaries of the Jews were peculiarly hostile to that city, both as the capital of the people, whose returning prosperity they envied, and the place of the holy worship which they hated: so that the cities of Judah, and other situations in the country, afforded a fairer prospect of living in peace, and of growing rich. It was therefore deemed a necessary policy, to replenish Jerusalem, for the re-establishment of the Jews as a distinct nation; and for the honour of the temple, and the protection of the priests and worshippers from the invasion of their enemies. It was "the "holy city," as chosen, separated, and sanctified of God, for his immediate presence and instituted worship; as a type of Christ and even of heaven; and as the place, where the greatest advantages of becoming holy were enjoyed: yet the Jews, in general, had not sufficient zeal, or desire after spiritual improvement, to venture the consequences of removing thither. Some indeed willingly offered themselves to dwell there; whom their brethren commended, thanked, and prayed for; though few would imitate them. The rulers fixed their residence there, that the courts of justice, and the business connected with publick affairs, might draw others: and, in addition to these inhabitants, one family in ten was expressly required to remove to Jerusalem; the selection of which was by lot referred to the determination of God. 'They cast lots, that among ten 'men, it might be known whom God chose to come thi-'ther: and the lot falling by divine appointment upon 'such a person rather than another; no doubt, he removed 'the more contentedly to this city.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Lev.* xvi. 8—10. *Prov.* xvi. 33. *Acts* i. 23—26.)

V. 3. *Israel*, in this verse, seems to mean those of the ten tribes, who went up with the Jews. These were not required to dwell at Jerusalem, but inhabited the cities and villages allotted to them. The priests, Levites, Nethinims and the children of Solomon's servants likewise, were left at liberty when not attending at the temple. (*Notes, 1 Chr.* ix. 2. *Ezra* ii. 55—58. vii. 24—26.)

V. 4—6. "Shiloni" (6) is supposed by some to mean *Shelah*, Judah's youngest, but only surviving son, by Shuah, the Canaanitess. (*Marg. Ref.* n.) If this supposition be well grounded, his descendants seem to have been included in the four hundred threescore and eight valiant men of Perez, or Pharez; that, being the principal branch of the tribe of Judah.—Many or most of these men of Judah seem to have offered themselves willingly to dwell at Jerusalem, in order to defend it; and probably they were, in general heads of families: yet the number from this principal tribe, appears to have been comparatively small.—In Chronicles, a larger number is stated: but it may be supposed, that the descendants of Zerah, (Judah's other son,) are also included, of whom no more than one is mentioned in this chapter. (24. *Note*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 3—9.)

V. 7—9. The greatest part of Jerusalem was situated within the lot of Benjamin; and, it is probable, the men of that tribe were most desirous of having it fully replenished.—Nearly twice as many of this tribe, (we may sup-

the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah.

8 And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight.

9 And Joel the son of Zichri *was* their overseer: and [p] Judah the son of Senuah *was* second over the city.

10 ¶ Of the priests: [q] Jedaiah the son of [r] Joiarib, Jachin.

11 [s] Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, *was* [t] the ruler of the house of God.

12 And their brethren that did the work of the house, *were* eight hundred twenty and two: and [u] Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah,

13 And his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amashai the son of Azareel, the son of Ahasai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

14 And their brethren, mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty and eight: and their overseer *was* Zabdiel, the son [*] of *one of* the great men.

15 ¶ Also of the Levites: [v] Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni.

16 And [x] Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, [†] *had* the oversight of the outward business of the house of God.

17 And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of [y] Zabdi, the son of Asaph, *was* the principal, [z] to begin the [a] thanksgiving in prayer; and [b] Bakbukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

18 All the Levites in [c] the holy city *were* two hundred fourscore and four.

19 Moreover the porters, [d] Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept [‡] the gates, *were* an hundred seventy and two.

20 ¶ And the residue of Israel, of the priests, *and* the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.

21 But [e] the Nethinims dwelt in [§] Ophel: and Ziha and Gispa *were* over the Nethinims.

22 The [f] overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* [g] Uzzi the son of [h] Bani, the son of [i] Hashabiah, the son of [k] Mattaniah, the son of Micha. [l] Of the sons of Asaph, the singers

p 1 Chr. ix. 7. *Hodaviah — Hasenuah.*
q vii. 39. xii. 19. 1 Chr. ix. 10. *and Jehoiarib.* Ezra ii. 36. viii. 16.
r xii. 6.
s 1 Chr. vi. 7—14. ix. 11. *Azariah.* Ezra vii. 1—5.
t Num. iii. 32. 1 Chr. ix. 1. 2 Chr. xix. 11. xxxi. 13. Acts v. 24.
u 1 Chr. ix. 12, 13.
* Or, *of Haggedolim.*
v 1 Chr. ix. 14—19.
x viii. 7.
† Heb. were over. 1 Chr. xxvi. 29.
y 1 Chr. ix. 15.
z *Zichri.* xii. 8. 31. 1 Chr. xvi. 4. 41. xxv. 1—6.
a Phil. iv. 6. 1 Thes. v. 17, 18.
b xii. 9. 25.
c 1. 1 Kings xi. 13. Dan. ix. 24. Matt. xxiv. 15. xxvii. 53. Rev. xi. 2. xxi. 2.
d vii. 45. xii. 25. 1 Chr. ix. 17—22.
‡ Heb. *at the gates.*
e iii. 26. 31. 2 Chr. xxvii. 3.
§ Or, *the tower.*
f 9. 14. xii. 42. Acts xx. 28.
g xii. 42.
h iii. 17. viii. 7. ix. 4, 5. x. 13.
i x. 11. xii. 24. Ezra viii. 19.
k 17. xii. 25. 35. xiii. 13. 1 Chr. ix. 15.
l 17. xii. 46. 1 Chr. xxv. 1—6.

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pose, with their families,) dwelt there, as of Judah. (*Note*, 4—6.) The number does not exactly agree with that in the ninth of the first of Chronicles; though there can be no reasonable doubt that the same events are intended: but at this distance of time it cannot be supposed that such trivial variations can in all cases be accounted for; though the reason of them might be very evident to contemporaries.—From this time Jerusalem was progressively repeopled; so that it soon became very populous, and continued to be so, till destroyed by the Romans.—Joel was the principal commander of the Benjamites in Jerusalem: and Judah, or Hodaviah, (*Marg. Ref.* p,) was his deputy, or the next in authority under him.

V. 10—15. (*Notes*, xii. 10—21. 1 *Chr.* vi. 4—15.) Eliashib was high priest at this time, under whom it is probable Seraiah had the oversight of all the temple-service (11). Some think the captain of the temple held the same office. The priests, mentioned in these verses, seem to have constantly resided at Jerusalem, by their own choice; besides those who attended by rotation. (*Note*, 3.)

V. 16. *The outward business*, &c.] (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxvi. 29.) These persons seem to have had the charge of providing the sacrifices, and making all the other outward preparations for the worship, which the priests performed in the courts and in the sanctuary.

V. 17. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 12—18.) The time of the morning and evening-sacrifices were the principal hours of prayer to the Jews, who then resorted to the courts of the temple for their devotions.—These were, it seems, preceded by the solemn praises and thanksgivings, which the Levites rendered to the Lord with musick and singing. Over this sacred service, Mattaniah, as precentor, statedly presided; while the others acted under his direction. Mattaniah was descended from Asaph; and the others were descendants of Jeduthun, chief singers in David's time. (*Notes*, 22, 23. 1 *Chr.* xvi. 37—43. xxv. 1—7. 2 *Chr.* v 12, 13. xxix. 25—30.)

V. 19. The children of Akkub and Talmon are numbered with the porters which came up with Zerubbabel, at least ninety years before the events here recorded. In this and a few other instances of the same kind, it must be supposed, either that the children were called by the names of their fathers; or that, having distinct names of their own, they were also honoured in their publick characters, by the names of their more illustrious ancestors. (*Note*, x. 18—27.)

V. 22, 23. (*Note*, 17.) The descendants of Asaph, pre-

[m] *were* over the business of the house of God.

23 For *it was* [n] the king's commandment concerning them, that [*] a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day.

24 And Pethahiah the son of [o] Meshezabeel, of the children of [p] Zerah the son of Judah, *was* [q] at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.

25 And for the villages, with their fields, *some* of the children of Judah dwelt at [r] Kirjath-arba, and *in* the villages thereof, and at [s] Dibon, and *in* the villages thereof, and at [t] Jekabzeel, and *in* the villages thereof,

26 And at Jeshua, and at [u] Moladah, and at [x] Beth-phelet,

27 And at [y] Hazar-shual, and at [z] Beer-sheba, and *in* the villages thereof.

28 And at [a] Ziklag, and at Mekonah, and in the villages thereof.

29 And at [b] En-rimmon, and at [c] Zareah, and at [d] Jarmuth,

30 [e] Zanoah, [f] Adullam, and *in* their villages, at [g] Lachish, and the fields thereof, at [h] Azekah, and *in* the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-sheba unto [i] the valley of Hinnom.

31 The children also of Benjamin [†] from [k] Geba *dwelt* [‡] at [l] Michmash, and [m] Aija, and [n] Beth-el, and *in* their villages,

32 *And* at [o] Anathoth, [p] Nob, Ananiah,

33 Hazor, [q] Ramah, [r] Gittaim,

34 Hadid, [s] Zeboim, Neballat,

35 [t] Lod, and Ono, [u] the valley of craftsmen.

36 And [x] of the Levites *were* [y] divisions *in* Judah, *and* in Benjamin.

[m] 1 Chr. 16. 1 Chr. ix. 26—32.
[n] 1 Chr. ix. 33. Ezra vi. 8, 9. vii. 20—24.
[*] Or, *a sure ordinance.*
[o] x. 21.
[p] Gen. xxxviii. 30. *Zarah.* Num. xxvi. 20. Matt. i. 3. *Zara.*
[q] 1 Chr. xviii. 17. xxiii. 28. *margins.*
[r] Josh. xiv. 15.
[s] Josh. xv. 22. *Dimonah.*
[t] Josh. xv. 21. *Kabzeel.*
[u] Josh. xv. 26. xix. 2.
[x] Josh. xv. 27. *Beth-palet.*
[y] Josh. xv. 28. xix. 3.
[z] Gen. xxi. 31. xxvi. 33. Judg. xx. 1.
[a] Josh. xv. 31. 1 Sam. xxvii. 6
[b] Josh. xv 32 *Rimmon.*
[c] Josh. xv. 33. *Zoreah.* xix. 41. Judg. xiii. 25. *Zorah.*
[d] Josh. xv. 35.
[e] iii. 13. Josh. xv. 34.
[f] Josh. xii. 15. Mic. i. 15.
[g] Josh. x. 3 xv. 39. Is. xxxvii. 8.
[h] Josh. xv. 35.
[i] Josh. xviii. 16. Jer. vii. 31, 32. xix. 2. 6.
[†] Or, *of.*
[k] vii. 30. *Guba.* Josh. xviii. 24.
[‡] Or, *to.*
[l] vii. 31. *Michmas.* 1 Sam. xiii. 11. 23. Is. x. 28.
[m] vii. 32. *Ai.* Gen. xii. 8. *Hai.* Josh. viii. 9. *Ai.*
[n] Gen. xxviii. 19. Josh. xviii. 13.
[o] vii. 27. Is. x. 30. Jer. i. 1.
[p] 1 Sam. xxi. 1. xxii. 19. Is. x. 32.
[q] Josh. xviii. 25. 1 Sam. vii. 17. Matt. ii. 18. *Rama.*
[r] 2 Sam. iv. 3.
[s] 1 Sam. xiii. 18.
[t] vii. 37. 1 Chr. viii. 12.
[u] 1 Chr. iv. 14.
[x] Josh. xxi.
[y] Gen. xlix. 7.
[z] 1 Chr. vi. 54—81.

sided over some business relative to the temple and its repairs, at those times when not employed in psalmody. And they were appointed to this service, because, it seems, the king of Persia allowed those employed in singing the praises of God a daily stipend, besides their maintenance as Levites. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 31—33, *v.* 33. *Ezra* vii. 24—26.)

V. 24. (*Note*, 4—6.) Pethahiah, a descendant of Judah by Zerah, probably was the king's commissioner, who received the tributo, made all payments from it, and managed all such matters, according to orders from the king. It was an advantage to the Jews to have one of their own nation in this office: and it may be supposed he was preferred to it, through Nehemiah's recommendation.

V. 25—36. No account is given of those who dwelt in the cities and villages; but merely of the places which they inhabited. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Some of these great towns, or 'cities without walls, had little villages about them; but 'others had only fields, and no villages in them, the coun-'try being as yet but thinly peopled. ...The rest of the 'Levites, who were not settled at Jerusalem, were distri-'buted among the people of Judah and Benjamin, who 'dwelt in the forenamed towns, whom they taught and in-'structed in religion and good manners.' *Bp. Patrick.* (36.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It has in all ages been justly lamented, that men prefer their own ease and emolument to the publick good; that even professed Christians too commonly "seek their own, "and not the things of Jesus Christ;" and that but few have such an attachment to holy places and holy things, as to renounce their secular pleasures or advantages for the sake of them. Yet surely, where opportunities of spiritual improvement most abound, and where Jesus, the Ruler of our holy city, especially resides, there we should delight to dwell; in preference to all interests and connexions, and notwithstanding persecutions, tribulations, perils, and losses. Otherwise, where is our "meetness for the inherit-"ance of the saints in light?" and how shall we be willing to depart hence, and be "absent from the body, that "we may be present with the Lord?" For, to the carnally-minded, the perfect holiness of heaven, of its inhabitants, its employments, and its pleasures, and especially of that God who there unveils his glory, would be proportionably more intolerable, than the feeble beginnings of holiness in his church on earth, which excite their disgust, their weariness, and aversion.—The remnant who now willingly offer themselves to self-denying and perilous services, from love to the church, and zeal for the glory of God, shall in the event be distinguished with peculiar honour, and are now entitled to it from their brethren: indeed many will commend and wish them well, who, alas! have not courage to imitate them.—Our habitations are allotted us by the Lord himself; and we should not be hasty in changing them, though they be in some respects incommodious, especially if convenient for attendance on divine ordinances, and giving us opportunities of doing good.—In every station in life we should "study to be quiet, and to do our own "business" with diligence; and, at all times, to cast our cares on God, and make our requests known unto him, by prayer with thanksgiving. We cannot be so afflicted, as not to have cause for gratitude; nor so prosperous, as to have no need of prayer: these duties should therefore be always united. (*Notes*, *Phil.* iv. 5—7. 1 *Thes.* v. 16—22, *v.* 17, 18.) And to this the ministers ought to stir up the people, not only by their exhortations, but by their example likewise.—As far as the Lord sees good, he makes even strangers to protect and provide for his servants. Let us then seek first his favour and his glory; let us study contentment, patience, and usefulness in our several stations; and wait in cheerful hope for an admission into the holy city of our God above.

CHAP. XII.

The priests and Levites who came up with Zerubbabel, 1—9. The succession of high priests after the captivity, 10, 11. The names of some chief priests, 12—21; and of some eminent Levites, 22—26. The solemnity of dedicating the wall, 27—43. The offices and portions of the priests and Levites, 44—47.

NOW these *are* [a] the priests and the Levites that went up with [b] Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and [c] Jeshua: [d] Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

2 Amariah, [e] Malluch, Hattush,

3 [f] Shechaniah, [g] Rehum, [h] Meremoth,

4 Iddo, [i] Ginnetho, Abijah,

5 [k] Miamin, [l] Miadiah, Bilgah,

6 Shemaiah, and [m] Joiarib, Jedaiah,

7 [n] Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These *were* the chief of the priests, and of their brethren, in the days [o] of Jeshua.

8 Moreover the Levites; [p] Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* [q] Mattaniah, *which was* over [*] the thanksgiving, he and his brethren.

9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, *were* [r] over against them in the watches.

10 ¶ And [s] Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and [t] Eliashib begat Joiada,

11 And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.

12 And in the days of Joiakim were priests, [u] the chief of the fathers: of [x] Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

13 Of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

14 Of [y] Melicu, Jonathan; of [z] Shebaniah, Joseph;

15 Of [a] Harim, Adna; of [b] Meraioth, Helkai;

16 Of [c] Iddo, Zechariah; of [d] Ginnethon, Meshullam;

17 Of Abijah, Zichri; of [e] Miniamin; of [f] Moadiah, Piltai;

18 Of Bilgah, Shammua; of [g] Shemaiah, Jehonathan;

19 And of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;

20 Of [h] Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;

21 Of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethaneel.

22 ¶ The Levites, in the days of [i] Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, *were* [k] recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian.

23 The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, *were* written in [l] the book of the chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

24 And the chief of the Levites: [m] Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise *and* to

a vii. 7. Ezra ii. 1.
b 1 Chr. iii. 17—19. Ezra iii. 8. iv. 2. v. 2. Hag. i. 1. 12. 14. ii. 2. 21—23. Zech. iv. 6—10. Matt. i. 12, 13. *Zorobabel. Salathiel.*
c 10. Zech. iii. 1—9. vi. 11. *Jothua.*
d 12—21. x. 2. Ezra ii. 2.
e 14. *Melicu.*
f 4. *Shebaniah.*
g 15. *Harim.*
h 15. *Meraioth.*
i 16. *Ginnethon.*
k 17. *Miniamin.*
l 17. *Moadiah.*
m x. 10. 1 Chr. xxiv. 9. *Jehoiarib.*
n x. 14. *Sallai.*
o 1. Ezra iii. 2. Zech. iii. 1.
p vii. 43. ix. 4. x. 9—13.
q xi. 17. 22.
* That is, *the psalms of thanksgiving.* 24. 1 Chr. ix. 33.
r Ps. cxxxiv. 1—3.
s 26. 1 Chr. vi. 3—15.
t iii. 1. xiii. 4. 7. 28.
u 22. 1 Chr. ix. 33, 34. xv. 12. xxiv. 6—31.
x 1.
y 2. *Malluch.*
z 3. *Shechaniah.*
a 3. *Rehum.*
b 3. *Meremoth.*
c 4.
d 4. *Ginnetho.*
e 5. *Miamin.*
f 5. *Moadiah.*
g 6.
h 7. *Sallu.*
i 10, 11.
k 12, 13.
l 1 Chr. ix. 14, &c.
m 8. viii. 7. ix. 4. x. 9—13.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—6. It is evident that Ezra, here mentioned, was not Ezra the scribe, but a priest of the same name, who came up to Jerusalem long before with Zerubbabel. Several of the names are the same with those of the priests who sealed the covenant: (*Marg. Ref.*) but different persons must be intended; and it is evident, the same names were sometimes preserved in their families. (*Notes*, x. 18—27. xi. 19.)

V. 7. "The chief of the priests" seem to have been the heads of the courses established by David; with the next in succession to the high priesthood, and the ruler or captain of the temple. Perhaps the twenty-four courses were not yet fully re-established. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxiv. 6—10. *Ezra* ii. 36—39.)

V. 8, 9. *Note*, xi. 17.—*Jeshua.* (8) *Marg. Ref.* p.—*In the watches.* (9) It is probable, that some of the Levites, in succession, sang the praises of God in the sanctuary, during the watches of the night. (*Note, Ps.* cxxxiv.)

V. 10, 11. Jaddua is, by most expositors, supposed to have been high priest in the time of Alexander the great, and to have met that haughty conqueror in his pontifical habit; in consequence of which Alexander greatly favoured the Jews. (*Note, Dan.* viii. 5—7.) It is, however, evident, that he was high priest long after the events, which are mentioned at the close of this book; for Joiada then filled that office: (xiii. 28:) and as "Darius the Persian" (22), is supposed to mean the last king of Persia, who was subdued by Alexander, about a hundred years after the principal transactions recorded in this book; this verse, and the twenty-second, must have been added by another hand after the death of Nehemiah (26).

V. 12—21. These verses contain a catalogue of the next race of chief priests, as descended from those who came up from Babylon with Zerubbabel. (*Note*, 1—6.)—The marginal references shew the variations which occur in respect of their names.

V. 22—26. It is not easy or perhaps possible, to determine, why these few names of the Levites were here inserted: but probably they were persons who greatly distinguished themselves, and were highly honoured and trusted by their contemporaries. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Darius the Persian.* (22) 'This is thought to be that Darius, whom

give thanks, [a] according to the commandment of David [o] the man of God, [p] ward over against ward.

25 [q] Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, *were* porters, [r] keeping the ward at the [s] thresholds of the gates.

26 These *were* in the days of [s] Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak; and in the days of [t] Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

27 ¶ And at [u] the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sought the Levites [x] out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication [y] with gladness, both with [z] thanksgivings, and with singing, *with* cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.

28 And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of [a] the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of [b] Netophathi;

29 Also from [c] the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of [d] Geba, and [e] Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem.

30 And the priests and the Levites [f] purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

31 Then I brought up [g] the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed [h] two great *companies of them that gave* thanks, *whereof one* went on the right hand upon the wall toward the [i] dung-gate;

32 And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah,

33 And [k] Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,

34 Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah,

35 And *certain* of the priests' sons [l] with trumpets; *namely*, [m] Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph;

36 And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the [n] musical instruments of David the man of God, and [o] Ezra the scribe before them.

37 And at [p] the fountain-gate, which was over against them, they went up by [q] the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the [r] water-gate eastward.

38 And [s] the other *company of them that gave* thanks went over against *them*, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond [t] the tower of the furnaces, even unto [u] the broad wall:

39 And from above [x] the gate of Ephraim, and above [y] the old gate, and above [z] the fish-gate, and [a] the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto [b] the sheep-gate: and they stood still in [c] the prison-gate.

40 So stood [d] the two *companies of them that gave* thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me:

41 And the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai,

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'Alexander conquered.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*David the man of God.* (24) 36. *Notes, Deut.* xxxiii. 1. 2 *Chr.* viii. 14. 1 *Tim.* vi. 11, 12.—*Ward over against ward.*] *Notes*, 8, 9. 1 *Chr.* xxv. 8.—'In their turns, one coming on, when another 'went out, to attend in their courses, which are called '*wards.*' *Bp. Patrick.* (xiii. 30. *Notes*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 23. xxvi. 6—12, *v.* 12. 13.)—*These*, &c. (26) *Note*, 10, 11.

V. 27, 28. Jerusalem was the holy city, and the wall was built under the immediate superintendance and blessing of JEHOVAH: it was therefore proper that it should be dedicated to that God who was there worshipped, by solemn praises, thanksgivings, prayers, and sacrifices; and thus committed to his gracious protection. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Deut.* xx. 5—9. *Ezra* vi. 13—18. *Dan.* ix. 24—27.)

V. 29. *Builded*, &c.] The singers had builded villages for their residence about Jerusalem; that they might be near at hand, when wanted; and attend more conveniently and regularly at the temple.

V. 30. When the priests and Levites had prepared themselves by the appointed purifications, they proceeded to purify the people, the gates, and the wall; probably by sprinkling the water of purification, with suitable prayers and supplications. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Lev.* xvi. 15, 16. *P. O.* 1—19. *Notes, Num.* xix.)

V. 31—43. The princes and priests were divided into two companies on the wall, Ezra going before the one, and Nehemiah after the other. (36. 38.) Thus they marched in a row opposite ways, in the circuit of the wall, the priests sounding the sacred trumpets, the Levites playing upon instruments and singing the praises of God, and the

Zechariah, *and* Hananiah, [e] with trumpets;

42 And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer. And the singers [*] sang loud with Jezrahiah *their* [f] overseer.

43 Also that day they [g] offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced; for [h] God had made them rejoice with great joy: [i] the wives also and the children rejoiced; so that [k] the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.

44 ¶ And at that time were [l] some appointed over [m] the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them, out of the fields of the cities, the portions [†] of the law for the priests and Levites: for [‡] Judah rejoiced for the priests and for [n] the Levites that [§] waited.

45 And both [o] the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and [§] [p] the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, *and* of Solomon his son.

46 For in the days of David [q] and Asaph, of old *there were* chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God.

47 And all Israel, in the days of [r] Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, [s] gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and [t] they [‖] sanctified *holy things* unto the Levites, and the Levites sanctified *them* unto the children of Aaron.

e 35. * Heb. *made* their voice *to be heard.* Ps. lxxxi. 1. xcv. 1. xcviii. 4—9. c. 1, 2. ‖. xii. 5, 6.
f xi. 14.
g Num. x. 10. Deut. xii. 11, 12. 1 Chr. xxix. 21, 22. 2 Chr. vii. 5—7. 10. xxix. 35, 36. Ps. xxvii. 6.
h 2 Chr. xx. 27. Job xxxiv. 29. Ps. xxviii. 7. xxx. 11, 12. xcii. 4. Is. lxi. 3. lxvi. 10—14. Jer. xxxiii. 11. John xvi. 22.
i Ex. xv. 20, 21. 2 Chr. xx. 13. Ps. cxlviii. 11—13. Jer. xxxi. 13. Matt. xxi. 9. 15. Eph. v. 19. Jam. v. 13.
k 1 Sam. iv. 5. Ezra iii. 13.
l x. 37—39. xiii. 5. 12, 13. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11—13.
m 1 Chr. ix. 26. xxvi. 21—26.
† That is, *appointed by the law.*
‡ Heb. *the joy of Judah rejoiced.*
n Num. iii. 10. viii. 24, 25. 1 Chr. xxiii. 28. 2 Chr. v. 11, 12. Prov. viii. 34. Is. xl. 31. Rom. xii. 7.
§ Heb. *stood.*
o 1 Chr. xxv. xxvi.
p 1 Chr. xxiii. 28. 2 Chr. xxiii. 6.
q 1 Chr. xxv. 1, &c. 2 Chr. xxix. 30. Ps. lxxiii—lxxxiii. *titles.*
r 1. 12. 26.
s x. 35—39. xiii. 10—12. 2 Chr. xxxi. 5, 6. Mal. iii. 8—10. Gal. vi. 6.
t Num. xviii. 21—29.
‖ That *is, set apart.*

people accompanying them on each side, part of them on the wall, and part, it may be supposed, by the side of it. (*Marg. Ref.*) When they met on the opposite side of the city, they marched in a body to the temple, and offered sacrifices and thank-offerings, with rejoicings: for God, by enabling them to rebuild and fortify the city, had made them to rejoice with great joy: so that the praises and acclamations of so large a multitude were heard at a great distance. (*Notes, Ezra* iii. 12, 13. *Jer.* xxxi. 10—14. *Matt.* xxi. 8—11.)—Zechariah (35), being descended from Asaph, of the line of Gershom, was no priest; and the word "*namely*" is improperly added. (*Marg. Ref.* m.)—*Man of God.* (36) *Note*, 22—26, *v.* 24.

V. 44—47. The attendance, and behaviour, of the priests and Levites, on this solemn occasion, seem to have greatly rejoiced the pious Jews. 'They were so glad to 'see such a great concourse of them (27, &c.) and that 'they performed their duty upon this occasion to the 'general satisfaction of all that were present; that their 'hearts were enlarged in love to them.' *Bp. Patrick.* They were therefore zealous to provide for them, that their incomes might be properly paid, and regularly and impartially distributed by persons appointed for that purpose. Thus matters were settled, as they had been in the days of David and Solomon. (*Marg. Ref.*) Similar regulations had been made in the days of Zerubbabel; but they were completed, and put upon a durable footing, in the time of Nehemiah. (*Notes*, xiii. 5—14. 2 *Chr.* xxxi. 5—19. *Mal.* iii. 7—12.)—The tithes were paid to the Levites, as sanctified to their use; and the tithe of them was, by the Levites, sanctified to the use of the priests. (*Notes*, x. 35—39. *Num.* xviii. 25—32.)—'The porters "kept the ward of purifi-'"cation" (45); that is, duly observed the orders about '*purification*, in not suffering any unclean person or un-'clean thing to come into the house of God.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord raises up a succession of worshippers from age to age, who honour him by their "sacrifices of praise and "thanksgiving;" (*Note, Heb.* xiii. 15, 16;) and who derive instruction and encouragement from the examples and actions of those, who have long before entered into their rest.—The believer should undertake nothing, which he cannot, and does not, dedicate to God, by seeking his direction and assistance in it and his blessing upon it; by designing his glory, and by giving praise for success in all things: and whatever he possesses he should commit to the Lord's keeping and disposal, and use it according to his will. (*Note, Ps.* xxx. *title. P. O. Note, Col.* iii. 16, 17, *v.* 17.)—But all that we sinners do must be purified by the blood of sprinkling, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, or it cannot be acceptable unto God: and the whole church of God, which is "the lot of his inheritance," and the object of his choice and delight, being descended from fallen Adam, must be thus purified and rendered holy unto the Lord.—Those who would be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, and the sanctification of believers, must begin with themselves: and when we "acknowledge God "in all our ways," he will so prosper and comfort us, as often to cause us to rejoice with great joy.—If our families be trained up to join in the solemn worship of God, and in attendance on his word, we may hope that they will share our joys and privileges; and the prosperity of the church gladdens the hearts of all true believers: and in all cases, where the ministers of religion generally come forward in support of pious and benevolent measures, with zeal and alacrity, to the satisfaction of all concerned; they take the most effectual method, not only of doing much good, but of securing the liberal and cheerful payment or contribution for the supply of themselves and families. When their affections are thus lively, they will be disposed to love and rejoice in those ministers, who are instrumental to their comfort; and to care for their suitable provision. They ought, however, to attend to their several duties, and not to be anxious about their interests; and then God will stir up the hearts of the people, to supply them in a comfortable and creditable manner. This they may receive with songs of praise and thanksgiving, and

CHAP. XIII.

On reading the law, Israel separates from the mixed multitude, 1—3. Eliashib having, during Nehemiah's absence, prepared a chamber at the temple for Tobiah, Nehemiah on his return, being grieved and indignant, causes the chambers to be cleansed, 4—9. He reforms abuses concerning tithes and offerings, 10—14. He prevents the profanation of the sabbath, 15—22. He opposes those who had married strange wives, and drives away the grandson of Eliashib, 23—28. His other services and prayers, 29—31.

ON that day * they read in the book of Moses in the † audience of the people; and therein was found written, that [a] the Ammonite and the [b] Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever;

2 Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but [c] hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit [d] our God turned the curse into a blessing.

3 Now it came to pass, [e] when they had heard the law, [f] that they separated from Israel all [g] the mixed multitude.

4 And before this, [h] Eliashib the priest, ‡ having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, *was* [i] allied unto Tobiah;

5 And he had prepared for him [k] a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, § which was commanded *to be given* to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.

6 But [l] in all this *time* was not I at Jerusalem: for in [m] the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon, came I unto the king, and ‖ after certain days * obtained I leave of the king.

* Heb. *there was read.* viii. 3—8. ix. 3. Deut. xxxi. 11, 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 2. Is. xxxiv. 16. Luke iv. 16—19. x. 26. Acts xiii. 15. 27. xv. 21.
† Heb. *ears.*
a 23. Deut. xxiii. 3—5. Is. xv. xvi. Jer. xlviii. Ez. xxv. 1—11. Am. ii. 1—3.
b ii. 10. 19. iv. 3. Ps. lxxxiii. 7—9. Jer. xlix. 1—6. Am. i. 13—15.
c Num. xxii. 3—6. Josh. xxiv. 9, 10.
d Num. xxiii. 8—11. 18—24. xxiv. 5—9. Ps. cix. 28. Mic. vi. 5.
e Ps. xix. 7—11. cxix. 9. 11. Prov. vi. 23. Rom. ii. 20.
f ix. 2. x. 28. Ezra x. 11. Jam. i. 27.
g Ex. xii. 38. Num. xi. 4.
h 7. xii. 10.
‡ Heb. *being set over.* xii. 44.
i 28 vi. 17, 18.
k x. 38, 39. xii. 44.
§ Heb. *the commandment of the Levites.* Num. xviii. 21—24.
l Ex. xxxii. 1. 2 Chr. xxiv. 17, 18. Matt. xiii. 25.
B. C. 433.
m ii. 1. v. 14.
‖ Heb. *at the end of days.* ii. *b*, 6.
* Or, *I earnestly requested.*

need not fear sanctifying a portion even of their portion, to the more immediate service of God and the support of his cause.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—3. Some expositors think, that the events recorded in these verses, took place several years after those related in the former chapter, and that, during a great part of the time, Nehemiah had been absent at the Persian court. But the introductory language seems rather to imply, that they occurred immediately: though the words "on that day" may be understood with some latitude, and may mean, *about that time.* Indeed, it can hardly be supposed, that when the gross abuses stated in the sequel of the chapter prevailed, the publick reading of the law at the temple was regularly kept up, and the people zealous to reduce it to practice. It is therefore more probable, that, before Nehemiah left Jerusalem, or when he was first gone, the law was publickly read and expounded to the congregation. (*Notes*, viii. 1—8. 13—18. ix. 3, 4.) At that time, the passage here referred to, coming in course, excited peculiar attention; and the people of their own accord, without compulsion, but with the concurrence of the magistrates, resolved to separate from the intimate society of the mixed multitude, especially of Ammonites and Moabites, according to the meaning of the law. (*Marg. Ref.* a, b.—*Notes, Deut.* xxiii. 3—6.) Whether intermarriages with any of those nations, even when fully proselyted, or with their descendants, was, or was not, intended in the law, many instances would doubtless occur, in which a separation would be required; for probably few, in comparison of those with whom alliances had been formed, were fully proselyted.—It is supposed, that from the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, synagogues were built in every part of the land, where God was publickly worshipped, and his word read, expounded, or preached; which produced very salutary effects. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* iv. 23. 2 *Chr.* xvii. 7—9.) A copy of the scriptures then extant, was placed in every synagogue; and the whole was divided into portions or lessons, for the several days when they were accustomed to assemble for that purpose; and probably the same became the general usage in the court of the temple. (*Luke* iv. 16—22. *Acts* xiii. 13—15. xv. 21.)

V. 4. Eliashib had *before this* formed an alliance with Tobiah the Ammonite, but perhaps *secretly* to escape censure. (*Notes*, ii. 9, 10. 19, 20. iv. vi. 17—19.) It does not appear, that the high priest was, or that his sons were, married to any of Tobiah's family: but he was confederated with him, and related to those who were; and his authority over the temple and all its buildings, enabled him to commit that scandalous profanation, which is next related.—The word rendered "chamber," seems to mean the outbuildings of the temple in general.

V. 5, 6. Nehemiah was first commissioned by Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign; and this journey to court took place in his thirty-second year; so that twelve years had elapsed, concerning which we have little account: and the following events occurred after the end of those years.—When Nehemiah was gone from Jerusalem, Eliashib seems to have invited Tobiah thither: and though all Moabites and Ammonites had been publickly excluded from the congregation, according to the law of God; yet the high priest admitted this unproselyted Ammonite, who was as bitter an enemy to Israel as Balak or Balaam had been, even into the chambers of the temple; casting out thence the consecrated oblations to make room for him; (2 *Chr.* xxxi. 11—13, *v.* 12. *Notes*, x. 35—39. xii. 44—47. 1 *Kings* vi. 5, 6. 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 11—13;) and probably forming him a sumptuous apartment, by throwing many of them into one!—This was as great contempt of the divine law,

7 And I came to Jerusalem, and
n Ezra ix. 1. 1 Cor. v. 1. n understood of the evil that Eliashib
o 1. 5. Lam. i. 10. Matt. xxi. 12, 13. Acts xxi. 28, 29. did for Tobiah, o in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.

p Ezra ix. 3, 4. x. 1. Ps. lxix. 9. 8 And p it grieved me sore: there-
q Mark xi. 15—17. John ii. 13—17. fore q I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.

r xii. 45. 2 Chr. xxix. 5. 15—19. 9 Then I commanded, and r they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense.

s x. 37. xii. 47. Mal. i. 6—14. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. 10 ¶ And I perceived that s the portions of the Levites had not been given *them:* for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one
t Num. xxxv. 2. u 17. 25. v. 6—13. Job xxxi. 34. Prov. xxviii. 4. x x. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 17. Mal. iii. 8—11. t to his field.

11 Then u contended I with the rulers, and said, x Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their * place.

* Heb. *standing.*

12 Then y brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil unto the † treasuries.

y x. 37—39. Lev xxvii. 30. Num. xviii. 20—26. Deut. xiv. 22.
† Or, *storehouses.*

13 And z I made treasurers over the treasuries, a Shelemiah the priest, and b Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, c Pedaiah: and ‡ next to them *was* Hanan the son of d Zaccur, the son of e Mattaniah: for they were f counted faithful, and § their office *was* g to distribute unto their brethren.

z xii. 44. 2 Chr. xxxi. 12—16.
a iii. 30.
b viii. 4.
‡ Heb. *at their hand.*
c x. 12.
d xi. 22. xii 35.
e vii. 2. 2 Kings xii. 15. xxii. 7. Luke xii. 42. xvi. 10—12. Acts vi. 3. 1 Cor. iv. 2. 1 Tim. i. 12.
§ Heb. it was *upon them.*
f Acts iv. 35. vi. 1.
g 22. 31. v. 19. Heb. vi. 10. Rev. iii. 5.

14 h Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my ‖ good deeds that I have done h for the house of my God, and for the * offices thereof.

‖ Heb. *kindnesses.*
h 1 Chr. xxix. 3. 2 Chr. xxiv. 16. xxxi. 20, 21. Ezra vii. 20. 24. 27. Ps. cxxii. 6—9.
* Or, *observations.*

15 ¶ In those days saw I in Judah *some* i treading wine-presses on the

i Ex. xx. 8—11. xxxiv. 21. xxxv. 2. Is. lviii. 13. Ez. xx. 13.

profanation of the temple, and disgrace of the priesthood, as could well be imagined.

King of Babylon. (6) The kings of Persia reigned over Babylon, and all the regions, which had been before subject to the kings of Babylon: but their general residence was at Shushan, or Susa. (i. 1.) This was much more distant from Jerusalem than Babylon: but Nehemiah, most probably, journeyed thither on this occasion.

V. 7—9. Nehemiah is generally supposed to have been absent from Jerusalem only one year: but the great abuses, which prevailed at his return, favour the opinion of those who think that about five years intervened; and there is nothing in the text that militates against it: for the words rendered "after certain days," or, *at the end of days,* (6. *marg.*) do not necessarily signify *after one year,* but may denote a longer time. (*Dan.* xii. 13. Heb.) At his return, however, he was greatly afflicted and displeased at what had taken place, and he soon exercised his authority, in the most decided manner, to clear the temple from such a profanation, and to purify the chambers, in the appointed and accustomed manner, that they might be restored to their proper use. (*Notes,* v. 6, 7. *Ezra* ix. 3—15. x. 2.)—It is probable, that Eliashib was dead before Nehemiah returned; and that Tobiah did not choose to appear at Jerusalem to see after his furniture.

V. 10—13. As the high priest had ventured profanely to appropriate the chambers of the temple, for the entertainment of an Ammonite; perhaps he had also sacrilegiously intercepted the revenues of the Levites for similar purposes: or the people were reluctant to pay their tithes, when so bad a use was made of them, or so little care was taken of them. (*Note,* xii. 44—47.) Thus the Levites were driven from their office, to get their living by cultivating the land, or by other secular employments; and the temple-service, especially the psalmody, was interrupted.—The rulers, who had been left in trust, ought to have exerted their authority to prevent such mismanagement; but probably they had concurred in it, out of regard to their secular interests; and therefore Nehemiah called them to account for this misconduct. Malachi is supposed to have prophesied about this time, and he seems repeatedly to refer to these abuses. (*Notes, Mal.* i. 9—14. iii. 7—12.) 'It is a great artifice of the devil, by his instruments, to defraud the ministers of religion of their necessary maintenance, that he may thereby abolish religion itself.' *Wolphius, in Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes,* 1 *Cor.* ix. 7—18.) Nehemiah, however, not only recalled the Levites, but having, it seems, without difficulty, induced the people to bring their tithes, he placed the distribution of them in the hands of faithful men, in whom all parties reposed confidence. (*Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxxi. 15—19. *Acts* vi. 1—6.)

V. 14. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*) It is evident Nehemiah expected that the Lord would remember his good deeds, and vouchsafe them a gracious recompence, notwithstanding defects in them, and sin in him; after the same manner, as even the apostle Paul assures the Hebrews, that the Lord would "not forget their work and "labour of love;" not as claiming "a reward of debt." (*Notes,* 20—22, *v.* 22. *Rom.* iv. 4, 5. *Heb.* vi. 9, 10.) But it is also worthy of notice, that these "good deeds," or *kindnesses,* "which he had done for the house of God," consisted in using his authority to protect the ministers of religion, from those who defrauded them of their maintenance. There have been times, when enriching the clergy beyond all bounds, and without requiring them to attend on their ministry, was thought the height of piety: but it may be questioned whether rulers may not at present, as well as for some past ages, have run into the contrary extreme; and Nehemiah's firm and prudent conduct in this respect, might be imitated with good effect by Christian princes and rulers. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxxi. 5—7. *P. O.* 1—10.)

V. 15—18. It can hardly be supposed, that in the course of *one year* of Nehemiah's absence, such gross and open profanation of the sabbath should have been intro-

sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all *manner of* [k] burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath-day: and [l] I testified *against them*, in the day wherein they sold victuals.

16 There dwelt [m] men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

17 Then [n] I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the sabbath-day?

18 [o] Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet [p] ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem [q] began to be dark before the sabbath, [r] I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath-day.

20 So the merchants, and sellers of all kind of ware, lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 Then [s] I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye [*] about the wall? if ye do *so* again, [t] I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no *more* on the sabbath.

22 And [u] I commanded the Levites, that they should [x] cleanse themselves, and *that* they should come *and* keep the gates, to [y] sanctify the sabbath-day. [z] Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this also, and [a] spare me according to the [†] greatness of thy mercy.

23 ¶ In those days also saw I Jews [b] *that* had [‡] married wives of [c] Ashdod, of [d] Ammon, *and* of Moab:

24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and [§] could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of [‖] each people.

25 And [e] I contended with them, [f] and [*] cursed them, and [g] smote certain of them, and [h] plucked off their hair, and [i] made them swear by God, *saying*, [k] Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

26 [l] Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? [m] yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: never-

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duced and become general (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, x. 30, 31. *Num.* xv. 30—36. *Jer.* xvii. 19—27. *John* v. 10—16.)—The Tyrians, as heathens, not regarding the sabbath, tempted the Jews to break it by trading with them. The magistrates must have been shamefully negligent, in conniving at these abuses, till they were become so notorious: and, the nation seemed to be proceeding, in many respects, as their fathers had done, in provoking the wrath of God against them.—*Fish.* (16) How far the concessions made by our laws, in respect of the selling some fish on the Lord's day, agree with this, or consist with hallowing the sabbath, may fairly be questioned.

V. 19. *Some of my servants*, &c.] (*Notes*, iv. 16. 18—23. v. 14—18.) Nehemiah could place more dependence in this case on his own attendants, than on the porters appointed by the nobles and rulers of Judah; who probably countenanced this profanation, in order to indulge their luxury or avarice.

V. 20—22. The merchants and dealers, from Tyre and other places, still hoped to find some opportunity of trading on the sabbath, either with the citizens or countrymen; but, as they were endeavouring to induce the Jews to break the law of God, and also that of the rulers of Judah; Nehemiah solemnly assured them, that if they did not desist, he would proceed to inflict punishment on them.—He also appointed the Levites to watch the gates, perhaps supposing they would be more regarded than his servants; and also, because he would have the watch continued, even if he should leave Jerusalem.—This reformation seems to have produced very durable effects; for in the after ages of the Jewish church, they became exact even to superstition in observing the sabbath. Probably, his other regulations were at last equally effectual; but we have no more canonical history concerning them.

Remember, &c. (22) 'Nehemiah had besought God to '"remember his good deeds" (14); but to shew that he 'did not think there was any proper merit or worthiness 'in them, which required a reward as a debt, in justice 'due to them, he here explains himself; and desires to be 'rewarded, or rather pardoned, out of God's free goodness, according to the *greatness*, or *the multitude*, of his 'mercies.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, 31. *Ps.* cvi. 4, 5. cxix. 132. *Luke* xxiii. 39—43.)

V. 23—30. Some time must have elapsed after Nehemiah's departure from Jerusalem, before the children of these marriages could betray their origin by their speech:

theless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

n 1 Sam. xxx. 24. 27 [n] Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God, in marrying strange wives?

o xii. 10. 22. 28 And *one* of the sons of [o] Joiada,
p iii. .. the son of [p] Eliashib, the high priest,
q 4, 5. vi. 17—19. *was* [q] son-in-law to [r] Sanballat the Ho-
r ii. 19.
s 25. Ps. ci. 8. Prov. xx. 8. 26. Rom. xiii. 3, 4. ronite: therefore [s] I chased him from me.

29 [t] Remember them, O my God, [*] because they have defiled the priesthood, and [u] the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.

t vi. 14. Ps. lix. 5—13. 2 Tim. iv. 14.
* Heb. *for the defilings of.* Lev. xxi. 1—7.
u Num. xvi. 9, 10. xxv. 12, 13. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Mal. ii. 4—8. 11, 12.

30 Thus [x] cleansed I them from all strangers, and [y] appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;

x x. 30.
y xii. 2—26. 1 Chr. xxiii—xxvi.

31 And for [z] the wood-offering, at times appointed, and for the first-fruits. [a] Remember me, O my God, for good.

z x. 34.
a 14. 22. Ps. xxv. 7. cvi. 4. Luke xxiii. 42.

for though the Ashdodites lived near the Jews, their language was, it seems, materially different from their's: yet probably they were not contracted before that event, and the reform seems to have been made very soon after his return. This separation also evidently was diverse from that recorded before: (*Note*, 1—3:) for that was the effect of reading the law, and by voluntary consent; this by more vehement and coercive measures.—When this zealous reformer found these undeniable proofs of the people's guilt, he began without delay to put a stop to the evil. He contended, or vehemently argued, the matter, with those who were concerned; proving the criminality and the fatal effects of such marriages from the scriptures, in an unanswerable manner. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xi. 1—13.) He then denounced the awful curse of God upon such as persisted in disobedience, and perhaps excluded them from the congregation: he punished such as were refractory, with immediate scourging; and put others of them under a disgraceful stigma, by plucking off their hair; (*Note*, *Is.* l. 5, 6:) and made them all solemnly swear to separate from their heathen wives. (*Notes*, v. 10—13. x. 29—31. *Ezra* ix. x. *Mal.* ii. 1—16.)—Among the other examples of his impartial severity, he banished the grandson of Eliashib, who had married the daughter of Sanballat. (*Notes*, *Lev.* xxi. 7—15.) Josephus relates that this young man was named Manasseh, and that at his instance Sanballat and the Samaritans built their temple upon mount Gerizim, in opposition to that at Jerusalem; at which he officiated, in some measure, according to the ritual appointments of Moses. Hence schism, emulation, and rancorous enmity between the two nations, were perpetuated to future ages. The authority, which Nehemiah exercised over the priests, even the chief of them, and in requiring the ministers of religion to attend to their several duties; as well as over the people, requiring them to render the priests and Levites their dues; is no where expressly enjoined on governors, or kings, in the Mosaick law: yet as this exercise of authority was entirely limited to the things which God had commanded; he performed a good and acceptable service, and properly improved his talents. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxix. 3—5. xxx. 12.)

Remember them, &c. (29) By visiting with some evident token of his holy indignation, the principal offenders in these things, the Lord would both display his own glory, and give a salutary warning to others, tending to repress such gross violations of his law; and even to bring the offenders to repentance. (*Notes*, *Lev.* x. 1—3. xxi. 7—15. *Num.* xxv. 11—13. 1 *Cor.* v. 1—5, *v.* 5.)

V. 31. 'It becomes all men, especially those who are 'employed in divine things, if they have done any thing 'that is good, to remember it was by God's help and as-'sistance, not by their own power: beseeching the Father 'of mercies, by his only begotten Son, to make it ser-'viceable to his church, and his own good.' *Wolphius, in Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The publick reading of the whole word of God, as far as it relates to our faith and practice, is of immense advantage to true religion. Though we have heard many sermons, and have the Bible in our hands, few of us are acquainted with every part of it; and many live in violation of its injunctions, through ignorance or inattention. But when those who are well disposed hear the word of God condemn any part of their conduct, they are reminded to repent and seek forgiveness, and to break off the sin, and attend to the neglected duty.—They who are unkind to the people of God, who attempt to afflict them, or who wish them evil, will be punished as his enemies; and he will turn their curses and malicious deeds into blessings to those who trust and obey him.—Alas, how prone is human nature to evil! When the restraints of influence or authority are withdrawn, men break out into those excesses of which they seemed incapable; whilst the eye and authority of God are treated with almost atheistical disregard.—They who have enjoyed the highest dignities in the visible church, by *divine right*, have sometimes been equally distinguished by sacrilegious impiety; and have openly committed those crimes, which the most profane of the laity would not have ventured on without hesitation and dismay! But if sacredness of character will not restrain men from setting a pernicious example, it should not shelter them from censure, or condign punishment by the magistrate. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27.)—As nobles have too generally, in every age and country, deemed themselves privileged to disregard the divine law, and many human institutions obligatory on others; magistrates and reformers need courage and resolution, as well as impartiality and integrity.—Our grief, for the sins which we witness, should stimulate us to oppose them strenuously, according to the duty of our station, and not induce us to yield to unmanly despondency.—It is not expedient, that magistrates or ministers should be long absent from their respective charges: for "one sinner" will often take advantage of their absence, to "destroy much good;" and by example, insinuation, and influence, to subvert their most useful regulations, and to render their designs abortive.—Few

ministers are willing, during any length of time, to labour in their ministry, under the pressure or the prospect of indigence; but most of them will turn to more profitable occupations: so that depriving the clergy of a suitable maintenance forms one of Satan's projects, for causing the house and ordinances of God to be forsaken. Pious magistrates should peculiarly attend to this: they should take care that the ministers of the gospel be encouraged to labour in their proper places, and that a competent provision be made for them: nor are any, except men of approved fidelity, to be trusted in such concerns.

V. 15—31.

The due observance of the Lord's day forms an important object for the attention of those, who would promote true godliness: and the Christian magistrate ought to take proper measures, to prevent that sacred season from being profaned by labour, merchandise, or those occupations which subserve the luxury and pride of life. As nobles too commonly set the example both of breaking God's commandments, and of disregarding royal edicts, in this particular; they must first be contended with, and vigorously urged to do their duty. Persons in the higher orders of society, in general, little consider the extensive effects of their misconduct: if they violate the holy day of God, others will assuredly imitate their impiety; and thus the flood-gates of ungodliness and wickedness will be thrown open, which must bring the wrath of God on guilty nations. Indeed the present state of unprincipled profligacy in these kingdoms, may be shewn in great measure to originate from the relaxed sentiments, which some time after the reformation began to prevail concerning the spending of the sabbath. And as these have gained ground, that holy day has gradually become more and more the time, when the lower orders are let loose to corrupt one another.—It is also necessary to repeat the observation, that improper marriages have ensnared the wisest men, have always led to apostasies, and tended to the ruin of succeeding generations. The children readily imbibe the principles of the infidel or ungodly parent, and soon forget the very language and appearance of piety; or substitute a corrupt religion, in the stead of that which comes from God, and leads to him.—Mothers likewise have a very important part allotted them in forming the manners of mankind; as the care of children in their tender years is almost wholly committed to them. It is therefore of great consequence to society, that females should be educated with a view to this most momentous employment, and qualified for the discharge of their duty in it. Every wise man, in contracting marriage, should consider whether the object of his choice would be a proper person to entrust with his children's tuition: and every mother should consider, that this is the most important part of her charge, and most of all calls for assiduity, prudence, and circumspection. (*Note, 2 Tim.* i. 3—5. *P. O.* iii. 10—17.)—In opposing fashionable and reputable vices; conclusive arguments, vehement expostulations, apposite examples, awful declarations of the wrath of God, and solemn engagements, may have the proper effect upon some: but the magistrate must often use more vigorous measures. He must disgrace, punish, and chase away the ringleaders in iniquity, without respect of persons or families: and severity to a few will prove mercy to many. But in every thing the word of God must be our rule; the love and fear of God, our principle; and his glory, in the prosperity of his cause and the welfare of his people, our great object. Whilst we labour in this manner, we must expect the enmity and opposition of a wicked world: but we may go on with confidence in the spirit of faith and prayer. We may humbly hope, that the Lord will "remember us," and "not wipe out our services;" that he will "spare us according to the greatness of his "mercy," accept both our persons and our defective endeavours to glorify him: and if he "remember us for "good," that will be a sufficient recompence and happiness for ever: while those who impenitently sin against him, and especially such as disgrace a sacred character and office, will be remembered for evil, to their everlasting shame, confusion, and destruction, except timely and deep repentance intervene.

THE BOOK

OF

ESTHER.

THIS book, which takes its name from the principal character introduced in it, was most probably written by Mordecai, and inserted in the canon of Scripture by Ezra and his assistants, or by their successors: but there are various opinions among learned men on this subject. The Jews have always held the book of Esther in great veneration; and as the feast of Purim (ix. 26—32,) is observed by them to this day, no reasonable doubt can be entertained concerning the authenticity of the narrative. It contains no prophecies, and it is not referred to in the New Testament. —It is also very remarkable, that there is no clear mention in it of any of the names, by which the God of Israel is distinguished in the sacred oracles: yet it is most evidently intended, as well as admirably calculated, to illustrate the doctrine of Providence; and the methods and instruments by which the great Ruler of the world accomplishes his purposes, both of mercy and of judgment. Perhaps this omission of the names of God was *designed*. Facts, well known, concerning the worshippers of JEHOVAH, the plot formed for their extirpation, and the wonderful deliverance vouchsafed them, were thus simply stated; in order that every reader might judge for himself, whether these facts did not demonstrate, that the God of the Jews was the great Ruler of the universe. Had this conclusion been urged on the Gentiles by a despised Jew, their prejudices might have been excited: let the simple narrative then speak for itself. —Several additional chapters are found in the Apocrypha; but they never were in the Hebrew text, and the Jews never received them: they principally contain repetitions, or additions, intended to decorate the history; but which in fact destroy its simple unity and beauty: and some things in them cannot be reconciled with the times to which the history must relate.—The preceding books form a specimen of the Lord's care of his church in Judea; this shews his favour to the nation in general. A large proportion of those, who continued in remote countries, were very blameable in so doing: yet he would not leave the nation in the hand of their enemies, or deprive them of his mercy and grace on that account.

B. C. 460.

CHAP. I.

Ahasuerus, king of Persia, makes a royal feast, 1—9. He sends for Vashti his queen, who refuses to come, 10—12. By the advice of his counsellors, he divorces her, and asserts, by a publick decree, the authority of men over their wives, 13—22.

[a] Ezra iv. 6. Dan. ix. 1.

NOW it came to pass in the days of [a] Ahasuerus, (this *is* Ahasuerus which reigned [b] from India even unto Ethiopia, *over* [c] an hundred and seven and twenty provinces;)

B. C. 460.
[b] viii. 9. Is. xviii. 1. xxxvii. 9.
[c] Dan. vi. 1.

2 *That* in those days, when the king Ahasuerus [d] sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in [e] Shushan the palace,

[d] 2 Sam. vii. 1. 1 Kings i. 46. Dan. iv. 4.
[e] ii. 3. iii. 15. iv. 16. ix. 12—15. Neh. i. 1. Dan. viii. 2.

3 In the third year of his reign, [f] he made a feast unto all his princes, and

[f] ii. 18. Gen. xl. 20. 1 Kings iii. 15. Dan. v. 1. Mark vi. 21.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. It is evident, that the events recorded in this book, took place, after the complete establishment of the Persian empire; for Shushan was the royal city of Persia. (*Note, Neh.* i. 1. *Dan.* viii. 2.) But various have been the opinions of learned men, concerning the Persian king, who is here called Ahasuerus. I am, however, fully satisfied with the arguments of Dean Prideaux: and consequently suppose Ahasuerus to have been Artaxerxes Longimanus, who commissioned both Ezra and Nehemiah. The extent of his dominions, his liberality, and his kindness to the Jews, favour the supposition. (*Notes, Ezra* vii. 1—5. 11—26. *Neh.* i. 1. ii. 5, 6, *v.* 6.) The Septuagint translation calls him Artaxerxes, and Josephus calls him Artaxerxes Longimanus. See *Prideaux's Connection, printed* 1749, v. i. p. 361—364.

V. 3—5. It is probable that the princes and nobles from the several parts of Ahasuerus's immense dominions, were entertained in rotation, during six months, with the most studied and ostentatious display of magnificence, of wealth, and liberality which could be conceived: and that

15 Now [t] the LORD had [*] told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,
16 To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and [u] thou shalt anoint him *to be* captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have [x] looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.
17 And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said unto him, [y] Behold the man whom I spake to thee of: this same shall [†] reign over my people.
18 Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house *is*.
19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I *am* the seer; go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let thee go, [z] and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart.
20 And as for thine asses that were lost [‡] three days ago, [a] set not thy mind on them, for they are found. And [b] on whom *is* all the desire of Israel? *is it* not on thee, and on all thy father's house.
21 And Saul answered and said, *Am* I not [c] a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and [d] my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou [§] so to me?
22 And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour, and made them sit [e] in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which *were* about thirty persons.
23 And Samuel said unto the cook, [f] Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee.
24 And the cook took up [g] the shoulder, and *that* which *was* upon it, and set *it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, Behold that which is [‖] left, set *it* before thee, *and* eat; for unto this time hath it been kept for thee, *since* I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.
25 And when they were come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* communed with Saul upon [h] the top of the house.
26 And they arose early: and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, [i] Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.
27 *And* as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, [k] Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still [*] a while, [l] that I may shew thee the word of God.

[t] 17. Ps. xxv. 14. Am. iii. 7. Mark xi. 2—4. xiv. 13—16.
[*] Heb. *revealed the ear of Samuel.* xx. 2. 2 Sam. vii. 27. Job xxxiii. 16. *Marg.*
[u] x. 1. xv. 1. xvi. 3. 1 Kings xix. 15, 16. 2 Kings ix. 3—6.
[x] Ex. ii. 25. iii. 7—9. Ps. xxv. 18.
[y] xvi. 6—12.
[†] Heb. *restrain in.* iii. 13. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7. Neh. xiii. 19. 25. Rom. xiii. 3, 4.
[z] John iv. 29. 1 Cor. xiv. 25.
[‡] Heb. *to-day three days.* 3.
[a] iv. 20. *Marg.* 1 Chr. xxix. 3. Ps. lxii. 10. Col. iii. 2.
[b] viii. 5. 19. xii. 15.
[c] Judg. xx. 46—48. Ps. lxviii. 27.
[d] x. 27. xv. 17. xviii. 18. 23. Judg. vi. 14, 15. Hos. xiii. 1. Luke xiv. 11. Eph. iii. 8.
[§] Heb. *according to this word.*
[e] Gen. xliii. 32. Luke xiv. 10.
[f] i. 5. Gen. xliii. 34.
[g] Lev. vii. 32, 33. Ez. xxiv. 4.
[‖] Or, *reserved.*
[h] Deut. xxii. 8. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Neh. viii. 16. Jer. xix. 13. Matt. x. 27. Acts x. 9.
[i] Gen. xix. 14. xliv. 4. Josh. vii. 18. Judg. xix. 26.
[k] xx. 38, 39. John xv. 14, 15.
[*] Heb. *to-day.*
[l] xv. 16. 2 Kings ix. 5, 6.

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generally selected: and from this circumstance, the subsequent pertinacious attachment of the Israelites to the "high places" seems to have been derived.—Samuel, having burned upon the altar the appointed portion of the peace-offerings, previously to the sacred feast upon the remainder, poured out fervent prayers to the Lord for acceptance, and for his blessing on the service, as a religious ordinance to the good of the souls, as well as on the food for the refreshment of the bodies of those present. The simple manner, in which these circumstances are stated to strangers by the young maidens, implies that this was Samuel's constant practice on these occasions, and doubtless it was the general observance, in all the sacrifices at the tabernacle and temple, when true religion flourished; though at other times it would degenerate into a mere ceremony.

V. 16. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Save*, &c.] When Israel grew slack in serving God, the Philistines recovered their authority: and though Saul did not reform the religion of Israel, yet in many instances he successfully fought their battles. (xiv. xvii.)

V. 17—24. (*Marg. Ref.*) Samuel, as superintending the sacred feast, seems to have allotted to each guest his portion; but he expected, according to the divine monition, other guests besides those who had been previously invited. He had therefore given orders that the *left* shoulder, as the prime portion, (for the *right* belonged to the priest,) should be reserved, in case these guests should not come in time.

V. 25—27. Samuel conferred with Saul, and shewed him the intentions of God concerning him, *privately*, on the top of the house, (*Marg. Ref.* h,) to prepare him for the time, when he would be *publickly*, by lot, appointed to the kingdom. (*Note*, x. 17—22.)—All the circumstances of these transactions were calculated to prepare Saul's mind for what followed, and to shew him the interposition of God in it. (*Notes, 2 Kings* ix. 1—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are never more likely to be unhappy, than when we have our outward portion or connexions, according to the choice of our own hearts: we ought therefore to beg of God in every thing to choose for us, and to teach us to

CHAP. X.

Samuel anoints Saul, and dismisses him with directions, and with tokens which came to pass accordingly, 1—13. Saul answers the enquiries of his uncle, but conceals the matter of the kingdom, 14—16. Samuel convenes the people at Mizpeh, where Saul is chosen king by lot, 17—25. A few honourably attend him, but others despise him, 26, 27.

THEN Samuel took [a] a vial of oil, and poured *it* upon his head, and [b] kissed him, and said, *Is it* not because the LORD hath anointed thee *to be* [c] captain over [d] his inheritance?

2 When thou art departed from me to-day, then thou shalt find two men by [f] Rachel's sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin, at [g] Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, [h] The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the * care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?

a ii. 10. ix. 16. xvi. 13. xxiv. 6. xxvi. 11. 2 Kings ix. 3—6. Acts xiii. 21. Rev. v. 8.
b 1 Kings xix. 18. Ps. ii. 12. Hos. xiii. 2.
c viii. 9. 19. xiii. 14. Josh. v. 14, 15. 2 Sam. v. 2. 2 Kings xx. 5. Heb. ii. 10.
d Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. xxxii. 9. Ps. lxxviii. 71. cxxxv. 4. Jer. x. 16.
f Gen. xxxv. 19, 20. Jer. xxxi. 15.
g Josh. xviii. 28.
h 16. ix. 3—5.
* Heb. *business.*

acquiesce in his appointment.—True excellence of character does not result from external accomplishments; nor true felicity, from prosperous circumstances and outward splendour: and inattention to these obvious truths occasions the most fatal mistakes.—Diligence in business, and good behaviour in relative life, are commendable, but no sure tokens of genuine piety, or acceptance with God.—We sensibly feel our temporal losses, and bestow much pains to retrieve them: but how little do we attempt the salvation of our souls, and how speedily are we weary in seeking it! Nay, if ministers could inform men how to secure their property, or recover it when lost, or to acquire wealth, they would be much more respected and consulted than they now are, when employed in teaching them how to escape eternal misery and to obtain eternal life! Indeed we all are naturally far more desirous to learn our *fortune*, than our *duty:* so that curiosity and worldly motives are frequently the *first* means of bringing men acquainted with the ministers and the word of God. And poor servants and mechanicks are often better acquainted, than the rich and great are, with *Seers*, the holy men of God, who teach the way of eternal salvation: nay, in general, they have more respect for them, as they have not so many things to occupy their thoughts, or prejudice their hearts against the truth. But many will speak of ministers as men of God, and honourable men whose words will certainly come to pass, who neither comply with their exhortations, nor imitate their examples: and, being conscious that they do not choose to be at any expense in religion, they suspect, that the servants of God teach for hire, and will do nothing without pay. Indeed there have always been so great a majority of this character, that inattentive observers cannot readily understand the difference between *mercenary diviners*, and those who "seek not their's but "them;" or between blind watchmen and guides, and those who are *Seers* indeed. But the *seeing eye* and the hearing ear are, in this sense also, from the Lord; and to those that wait on him he will communicate the truths, which he would have them communicate to the people. But how shall those who are *blind* themselves, be *seers* for other men; or point out to them that Saviour, of whom they have no knowledge? (*Notes, Is.* lvi. 9—12. *Matt.* xv. 12—14.)—True grace teaches us to honour those whom God has honoured, though their advancement be attended by our degradation; but that respect should be shewn in such a way, as may best tend to bring them acquainted with the truths and worship of God.—Without fervent prayer and praise, springing from a penitent, believing heart, a solemn sacrifice would have degenerated into a profane meal; and with them an ordinary meal becomes a spiritual sacrifice: but those who eat their food without thanking the Lord for it, or seeking his blessing on it, are scarcely distinguishable from brutes, or from Atheists; and the examples of eminent persons, in such matters as these, may have a salutary effect on those around them.—"Before honour is humility," and they who have well learned to obey, are most likely to be advanced to command, and to rule properly.—But how different are the Lord's purposes concerning us, from our intentions for ourselves! Perhaps Saul was the only man of the whole human race, who set out to seek asses, and literally found a kingdom: but many have taken long voyages and journeys, or moved their habitations, to seek riches and pleasures, who have been guided to places, where they have found the salvation of their souls; having met with those who addressed them, as if informed of the secrets of their lives and hearts; and having been thus led seriously to regard the message of the Lord delivered by them. If this has been our case, though our worldly projects have all been frustrated, let us cease caring about it; for the Lord has given us that which is infinitely better.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. In the conversation of the preceding evening and of that morning, Samuel had doubtless given Saul all needful information, preparatory to this significant ceremony; and he probably joined with it exhortations, counsels, and prayers. (*Marg. Ref.* a. *Notes*, ii. 35, 36. xvi. 13.)—The priests were anointed to their office, as types of Christ, and as implying their need of the communication of the Holy Spirit, to furnish them for their sacred work; and for the same reason the kings also were anointed. (*Note, Ex.* xxix. 1—7.) In performing this sacred rite, Samuel assured Saul of the Lord's choice of him to be king of Israel, and of his own hearty concurrence: and the *kiss* denoted affection and subjection, and loyalty to him, as the LORD's anointed. (*Note, Ps.* ii. 10—12.)—The law of Moses is silent as to the anointing of kings: but it seems to have been an ancient custom; (*Judg.* ix. 8;) and when prophets conformed to it by divine command, it obtained the force of a law.—It does not appear, that Samuel used the holy oil of the sanctuary on this occasion, or even when he anointed David, but rather common olive-oil: for he was at a distance from the tabernacle. (xvi. 1. 13.)

V. 2. We may suppose, that Saul was exceedingly surprised, and scarcely able to believe what Samuel had said to him: to convince him therefore that the matter was from the Lord, Samuel prophetically, and very particularly,

3 Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to
[l] the plain of [l] Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up to God
[k] to [k] Beth-el, one carrying [l] three kids, and another carrying three loaves of
bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine.

4 And they will [*] salute thee, and give thee two *loaves* of bread, which thou shalt receive of their hands.

5 After that, thou shalt come to the
[m] hill of God, where *is* the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to
[n] the city, that thou shalt meet [n] a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with [o] a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before
them; and they shall prophesy:

6 And the [p] Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into [q] another man.

7 And [†] let it be, when these [r] signs are come unto thee, [‡] *that* thou do as occasion shall serve thee; for [s] God *is* with thee.

8 And thou shalt go down before me [t] to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt-offerings, *and* to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings: [u] seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.

9 ¶ And it was *so*, that when he had turned his [§] back to go from Samuel, God [‖] gave him [x] another heart: and [y] all those signs came to pass that day.

l Josh. xix. 12. 22. Judg. iv. 6. 12. viii. 18. Ps. lxxxix. 12.
k Gen. xxviii. 19. 22. xxxv. 6, 7.
l Lev. i. 10. iii. 6. 12. vii. 13. xxiii. 13. Num. xv. 5—12.
* Heb. *ask thee of peace.* Judg. xviii. 15. *marg.*
m 10. xiii. 3.
n xix. 20. 2 Kings ii. 3, 5. 15. iv. 38. vi. 1.
o Ex. xv. 20, 21. 2 Kings iii. 15. 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xv. 19—21. 27. 28. xvi. 5. 42. xxv. 1—6. 2 Chr. xxix. 25—27. Ps. xlix. 4. cl. 3—6.
p xvi. 13. xix. 23. Num. xi. 25. Judg. iii. 10. Matt. vii. 22.
q 9—12.
† Heb. *it shall come to pass, that when.*
r Ex. iv. 8. Luke ii. 12. John xvi. 4.
‡ Heb. *do for thee as thine hand shall find.* Judg. ix. 33.
s Gen. xxi. 20. Deut. xx. 1. Judg. vi. 12. Is. vii. 14. xlv. 1, 2. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20.
t xi. 14, 15. xiii. 4. xv. 33.
u xiii. 8—15.
§ Heb. *shoulder.*
‖ Heb. *turned.*
x 6.
y 2—5. Judg. vi. 21. 36—40. vii. 11. Is. xxxviii. 7, 8. Mark xiv. 16.

informed him of some incidents which he would meet with in his return. (*Notes, Mark* xi. 1—11. xiv. 12—16.)

V. 3, 4. (*Note,* ix. 12—14.) There seems to have been a high place at Beth-el, where priests attended to receive oblations, and to minister in their office: and these three men were going thither, in order to present peace-offerings; but, meeting Saul, they were secretly disposed by the Lord, to give him two loaves of bread, as a present, or tribute paid him after he had been anointed king.

Plain of Tabor. (3) Tabor, in the lot of Zebulun, or Issachar, (*Marg. Ref.* i,) in the northern part of the land, lay so remote from Saul's journey from Ramah to Gibeah, (26. i. 1. ix. 5,) that it is most likely some place in the neighbourhood of these cities was called "the plain of "Tabor," from its resemblance to the vicinity of mount Tabor.

V. 5, 6. The hill of God, which was kept by a garrison of the Philistines, seems to have been at or near Gibeah, where Saul lived; and a high place for the worship of God was situated there (13).—From the time of Samuel, there appear to have been seminaries, where pious young men were educated, under the tuition of some approved prophets, in the knowledge of divine things; upon whom God was frequently pleased to bestow the Spirit of prophecy: and they were very useful in preserving some sense of true religion in the land, when the priests and Levites neglected their duty; as it must be concluded that they generally did at this time. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xix. 20, 21. 2 *Kings* ii. 1. 3. iv. 1.) The garrison of the Philistines did not, it seems, disturb them in their devout studies and exercises. —The prophets frequently used solemn musick, to compose their minds for the illapses of the Spirit of God; and many think, that they were immediately inspired to praise God in suitable hymns accompanying the musick. (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* iii. 15. 1 *Cor.* xiv. 26—33.) In these Saul was supernaturally enabled to join; as well as endued with extraordinary prudence and courage, qualifying him to govern the people of God. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14.)

V. 7. When Saul had by these signs been assured of his appointment to the kingdom, and especially when the Spirit of God had powerfully come upon him, and he was "turned into another man;" (*Note,* 9;) he must be left, without further particular directions, to act in general as circumstances required; depending on God for wisdom, assistance, and success. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. The deliverance of Israel from the Philistines, though one great end of Saul's appointment to the kingdom, was not attempted till the second year of his reign. And at that time, Saul at Gilgal neglected to wait for Samuel, according to directions given him, which in some respects correspond with these. (*Notes,* xiii. 8—15.)—Saul was confirmed in the kingdom at Gilgal, when Samuel was present: (xi. 14, 15:) and it is probable, that Samuel purposed to seek direction, and a blessing from God, by solemn sacrifices, before Saul made war upon the Philistines; but he was prevented by Saul's precipitancy.—Perhaps the instruction was intended as a general rule, on every great emergency. (*Note,* xv. 1—3.)

V. 9. *Another heart.*] Saul was inspired with fortitude and resolution; and his mind was enlarged to great designs of governing and delivering Israel, and subduing their enemies, and thus promoting the welfare of his people: he was also brought under religious impressions; and indeed his conduct, for a season, appeared very promising, though he afterwards became atrociously wicked. (*Notes, Matt.* xii. 43—45. 2 *Pet.* ii. 20—22.) He was "turned "into another man:" but it is not said, that he was made "partaker of a new heart, and a right spirit." The effects and nature of the change which took place in Saul at this time, will be viewed by readers in general according to their different sentiments on some points of doubtful dis putation; which after all can never be decided by this, or any other *example;* but from a comprehensive knowledge of the sacred oracles, and the nature and securities of God's everlasting covenant. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5. *Is.* lv. 4, 5. *Jer.* xxxii. 38—41.)

10 And when [z] they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

11 And it came to pass, [a] when all that knew him before-time saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said [*] one to another, [b] What *is* this *that* is come unto the son of Kish? [c] *Is* Saul also among the prophets?

12 And one [†] of the same place answered and said, But [d] who *is* their Father? Therefore it became a proverb, *Is* Saul also among the prophets?

13 And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.

14 And Saul's uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye? [e] And he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that *they were* [f] no where, we came to Samuel.

15 And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you?

16 And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But [g] of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.

17 ¶ And Samuel called the people together [h] unto the LORD to Mizpeh:

18 And said unto the children of Israel, [i] Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, *and* of them that oppressed you.

19 And [k] ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations: and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD [l] by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Samuel had [m] caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken, and when they sought him he could not be found.

22 Therefore they [n] enquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath [o] hid himself among the stuff.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, [p] he was higher than any of the people, from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, [q] See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, [‡] God save the king.

25 Then Samuel told the people [r] the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

z 1 Sam. xix. 20—24.
a John ix. 8, 9. Acts iii. 10.
* Heb. *a man to his neighbour.*
b Matt. xiii. 55. John vii. 15. Acts ii. 7, 8. iv. 13. ix. 21.
c xix. 24.
† Heb. *from thence.*
d Is. liv. 13. John vi. 45. vii. 16. Jam. i. 17.
e ix. 3—10.
f 2 Kings v. 25.
g ix. 27. Ex. iv. 18. Judg. xiv. 6. Prov. xxix. 11.
h vii. 5, 6. Judg. xx. 1.
i Judg. ii. 1. vi. 8, 9. Neh. ix. 9—12. 27, 28.
k viii. 7—9. 19. xii. 17—19.
l Num. xvii. 2. Josh. vii. 14. Mic. v. 2.
m xiv. 41, 42. Josh. vii. 16—18. Acts i. 24—26.
n xxiii. 2—4. M, 12. Num. xxvii. 21. Judg. i. 1. xx. 18. 23. 28.
o ix. 21. xv. 17. Luke xiv. 11.
p ix. 2. xvi. 7. xvii. 4.
q Deut. xvii. 15. 2 Sam. xxi. 6.
‡ Heb. *Let the king live.* 1 Kings i. 25. 31. 2 Kings xi. 12. Matt. xxi. 9.
r viii. 11—18. Deut. xvii. 14—20. Ez. xlv. 9, 10. xlvi. 16—18. Rom. xiii. 1—7. 1 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.

V. 10—13. When Saul came among the prophets, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he spake so pertinently and fluently in divine things, or so earnestly joined in their adorations and hymns of sacred praise, that those who before had known him were astonished to hear him: and one said, "But who is their Father?" 'Is not God the Father of prophets? Why need you then be surprised to see Saul, though before an unlikely person, become one of them?' Or, 'Is not Samuel the father or institutor of this seminary? and Saul has been all night with him, and is thus become one of them.' (*Note*, xix. 19—24.)—It caused far greater astonishment many ages afterwards to see another Saul among the apostles of Jesus. (*Note*, *Acts* ix. 17—22.)—When Saul had prophesied for a time, he seems to have gone to the high place, to perform his devotions before he returned home.

V. 16. This may be ascribed to a commendable modesty and prudence, by which Saul would avoid ostentation, shun envy, and patiently wait the event. (*Note*, *Judg.* xiv. 5, 6.)

V. 17—22. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, viii. 1—9.)—This determination seems to have been made by casting lots. The appointment of a king was thus referred to God, by the interposition of his prophet, and not to a popular election. (*Notes*, viii. 19. 22. *Deut.* xvii. 14, 15.) Yet the narrative implies, that the elders enquired of the Lord, either by the high priest, or by Samuel; and that they received an express answer (22).—Saul hid himself, probably from criminal diffidence and distrust of God; yet some suppose, he was alarmed by hearing, that the Lord was displeased with the people for asking a king.

V. 25. *The manner of the kingdom.*] Probably this writing contained the rules of the government; or, in

s xi. 4. xv. 34. Josh. xviii. 28. Judg. xix. 12—16. xx. 2 Sam. xxi. 6.
t Ezra i. 5. Ps. cx. 3. Acts vii. 10. xiii. 48.
u ii. 12. xi. 12. Deut. xiii. 13. 2 Sam. xx. 1. Acts vii. 35. 51, 52.
x 2 Sam. viii. 2. 1 Kings iv. 21. x. 25. 2 Chr. xvii. 5. Ps. lxxii. 10. Matt. ii. 11.
* Or, *he was as though he had been deaf.* Ps. xxxviii. 13. Is. xxxvi. 21. Matt. xxvii. 12—14.

26 And Saul also went home to [s]Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, [t]whose hearts God had touched.

27 But the [u]children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? and they despised him, and [x]brought him no presents: but [*] he held his peace.

CHAP. XI.

Nahash, the Ammonite, encamps against Jabesh-gilead, and offers the inhabitants most cruel and disgraceful terms; who obtain seven days' respite, 1—3 They send messengers to Gibeah, and Saul delivers them, and smites the Ammonites, 4—11. Saul will not allow his despisers to be punished, 12, 13. He is made king in Gilgal, 14, 15.

a xii. 12. Judg. x. 7. xi. 8, &c.
b xxxi. 11—13. Judg. xxi. 8. 10.
c Gen. xxvi. 28. Ex. xxiii. 32. Deut. xxiii. 3. 1 Kings xx. 34. Job xli. 4. Ez. xvii. 13.

THEN [a]Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against [b]Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, [c]Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

2 And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.

3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

4 Then came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and spake the words in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voices, and wept.

5 And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

6 And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.

7 And he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.

8 And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To-morrow, by [d]the time the sun be hot, ye shall have help. And the messengers came and showed it to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

11 And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.

12 And the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.

13 And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to-day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.

14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.

15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they sacred peace offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

d Or, *when the sun is hot.*

modern language, the prerogatives of the prince, and the privileges of the people. "The manner of the kingdom" would differ considerably from "the manner of the king," before mentioned: the one being the appointment of God, and the other the effect of human depravity, when entrusted with absolute authority. (*Notes*, viii. 10—18. *Deut.* xvii. 14—18.)

V. 26, 27. The people in general seem to have treated the matter with great indifference, notwithstanding the earnestness with which they had demanded a king. And Saul modestly went home to his own house, leaving for the present Samuel to manage publick affairs, as he had before done. Yet he was attended by a band of men whose hearts God disposed to support his authority; while others contemptuously rejected him, and would not acknowledge him as king. But he prudently held his peace, and did not resent their affronts; and thus civil discords and unpopular measures were prevented. (*Notes, Judg.* viii. 1—3. xii. 1—7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

Many are employed in outward services to the Lord's people, who have not the unction of his sanctifying grace: yet the most eminent Christians and ministers must honour and obey God's authority in them.—The attentive believer, comparing the dispensations of Providence with the word of God, will perceive his hand in the most ordinary concerns of life, as fulfilments of the Scripture, answers of prayer, and evidences of the Lord's peculiar kindness.—A superior *care*, in common life, swallows up an inferior one: and the tender parent ceases from anxiety about his property, when solicitous for the welfare of his son. Children therefore should take heed not to distress such kind friends: but we are especially reminded, that a due concern about eternal things would moderate our care about the interests of this life.—Many changes may take place in the language, conduct, and disposition of him, who is not born of God: another man he may become, and yet not *a new creature;* another heart he may have, but not a *holy* heart: he may be qualified for ruling or preaching, and yet not be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints "in light;" nay, he may prophesy and work miracles, and yet be a child of the devil.—Sudden changes are generally to be suspected: but when we consider who makes the Christian and the prophet, we need not be offended, should we number among professors and even preachers of the gospel, some Saul who was one of our former ungodly acquaintance: for true conversion makes so great a change in a man's character, that former friends can scarcely believe him to be the same; whether they admire and love, or despise and hate it.—When we depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we may regulate our general conduct as circumstances require, and act with humble confidence in perplexing situations, being assured that "God is with "us:" but we should enter on every enterprize, with reference to his authority and worship, and carefully observe his directions, and wait his time.—We may freely speak of those things which are honourable to others; but in general it is best to be silent, as to those transactions which tend to our own reputation.

V. 17—27.

The Lord will bring to a seasonable determination those affairs, which are referred to him: but the gratification of inordinate desires is short-lived and expires in disappointment and vexation. It is good to be conscious of our unworthiness and insufficiency for the services to which we are called; and to avoid ostentation, and whatever may excite envy and opposition: but we should be careful not to run into the opposite extreme, by refusing the employments to which the Lord calls us, through meanness of spirit and unbelief. Indeed, high stations are heavy burdens, when the duties of them are conscientiously attended on: and the comfort of them is but small; for the heart of man is prone to envy all who are preferred. (*Notes*, xviii. 6—9. *Ec.* iv. 4—6.) Our natural enmity to God disposes us to despise and oppose the instruments which he selects for the government of states, and for promoting his cause: and if some approve, honour, and help them, they will be reviled and contemned by others. But we should wait his will with patience, and without discouragement; bear scorn and malice in silent meekness; and attend to the duties of our station, according to the manner of it: thus the fatal effects of discord will be prevented, and in due season the Lord will plead our cause, and all opposition will fall before us.—Men seldom receive that with thankfulness, which they sought with too great eagerness: for their expectations are not exactly answered, and this occasions dissatisfaction and sullen discontent. And when any welcome with gratitude the appointments of God, and set themselves cordially to promote his cause; (even the cause of Christ our anointed King, whom so many "chil-"dren of Belial" despise;) they are those alone, whose hearts he has touched by his grace; and to him all the praise belongs. (*Notes, Ezra* i. 1—4. *John* vi. 41—46.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—3. Jabesh-gilead had been desolated by the Israelites some time before: (*Note, Judg.* xxi. 9—

swered them, [d] On this *condition* will I make *a covenant* with you, that [e] I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it *for* [f] a reproach upon all Israel.

3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, [*] Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if *there be* no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

4 Then came the messengers to [g] Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people; and all the people [h] lifted up their voices and wept.

5 And, behold, Saul came [i] after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, [j] What *aileth* the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

6 And the [k] Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and [l] his anger was kindled greatly.

7 And he took a yoke of oxen, and [m] hewed them in pieces, and sent *them* throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, [n] Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And [o] the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out [†] with one consent.

8 And when he numbered them in [p] Bezek, [q] the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To-morrow, by *that time* the sun be hot, ye shall have [‡] help. And the messengers came and shewed *it* to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, [r] To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

11 And it was *so* [s] on the morrow, that Saul put the people [t] in three companies, and they came into the midst of the host in the [u] morning-watch, and [x] slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, [y] so that two of them were not left together.

12 ¶ And the people said unto Samuel, [z] Who *is* he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.

13 And Saul said, [a] There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to-day [b] the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel.

14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and [c] let us go to Gilgal, and [d] renew the kingdom there.

d 2 Kings xviii. 31.
e Judg. xvi. 21. Esth. iii. 6. Prov. xii. 10. Jer. xxxix. 7.
f xvii. 26. Gen. xxxiv. 14.
* Heb. *Forbear us.*
g x. 26. xiv. 2. xv. 34. 2 Sam. xxi. 6
h xxx. 4. Judg. ii. 4. xxi. 2. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. Gal. vi. 2. Heb. xiii. 3.
i ix. 1. 1 Kings xix. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 71.
j Gen. xxi. 17. Judg. xviii. 23. Is. xxii. 1.
k x. 10. xvi. 13. Judg. iii. 10. vi. 34. xi. 29. xiii. 25. xiv. 6
l Ex. xxxii. 19. Num. xii. 3. Mark iii. 5. Eph. iv. 26.
m Judg. xix. 29.
n Judg. xxi. 5, 8—11.
o Gen. xxxv. 5 2 Chr. xiv. 14. xvii. 10.
† Heb. *as one man.* Judg. xx. 1.
p Judg. i. 4, 5.
q xiii. 15. xv. 4 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. 2 Chr. xvii. 12—19.
‡ Or, *deliverance.* Ps. xviii. 17.
r 2.
s Gen. xxii. 14. Ps. xlvi. 1.
t Judg. vii. 16. ix. 43.
u Ex. xiv. 24.
x 2. Judg. i. 7. Matt. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 13.
y Gen. xxx. 17, 18. Judg. iv. 16.
z x. 27. Ps. xxi. 8. Luke xix. 27.
a 2 Sam. xix. 22.
b xix. 5. Ex. xiv. 13. 30. Ps. xliv. 4—8. 1 Cor. xv. 10.
c vii. 16. x. 8.
d x. 24. 2 Sam. v. 3. 1 Chr. xii. 38, 39.

12:) but being now replenished, it was assaulted by the Ammonites on whose borders it was situated; who, it is probable, renewed the claims which had been made in the days of Jephthah. (*Notes, Judg.* xi. 12—23.) And the inhabitants, when they offered to capitulate, could obtain no better terms, than for every man to have his right eye put out.—It is probable, that their enemies would not have consented to the respite even of a few days, but in confidence that they would not be helped, and that in consequence the nation of Israel would be the more deeply disgraced. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* x. 2—4.) Some apprehension of this war had induced the Israelites to desire a king: (*Note,* xii. 11—13:) but the unsettled state of affairs both encouraged the Ammonites, and disheartened the men of Jabesh-gilead.

V. 4, 5. Saul, finding himself despised by some of the Israelites, and neglected by others, returned quietly to his former occupations, and left the matter entirely to Providence. (*Note,* x. 26, 27.)—In this chapter he looks as great as the much celebrated Roman dictator from the plough, and indeed greater. For Saul followed his herds, after he was appointed to the kingdom by God himself; yet when called forth to action, his vigour and success were not at all inferior to those of the renowned Roman.

V. 6—11. Saul, excited by the Spirit of God, and fired with a generous indignation at the indignity offered to Israel, in a very spirited, yet modest and clement manner, summoned the attendance of the people; assuming regal authority, yet adding the name of Samuel, doubtless to avoid needless offence: and, through the immediate influence of God upon their hearts, a very great multitude assembled with surprising celerity. Upon this they undertook and performed a march perhaps of forty or fifty miles, within the space of about twenty-four hours; and by this dispatch arrived in time to rescue their trembling brethren at Jabesh, and unexpectedly to destroy or totally scatter their insulting enemies. In this publick service, it is said, that "the Spirit of God came on Saul," and in this alone. (*Notes,* x. 5—7. xvi. 13, 14.)

V. 12—15. Saul's extraordinary success went further with the people, than either the Lord's appointment, or Samuel's anointing of him, or his personal accomplishments; so that they received him as their king, with sacrifices and great joy. And now "the sons of Belial" were saved from death, as well as Israel from the Ammonites,

15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king [e] before the LORD in Gilgal; and [f] there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel [g] rejoiced greatly.

[e] x. 17.
[f] Ex. xxiv. 5. 1 Chr. xxix. 21—24.
[g] viii. 19. xii. 18—15. 17. Hos. xiii. 10, 11. Jam. iv. 16.

CHAP. XII.

Samuel, before Israel, avows his integrity, and the people fully justify him, 1—5. He expostulates with them, for their ingratitude, in rejecting the government of God, and warns them against disobedience, 6—15. To shew their guilt in asking a king, he calls for thunder and rain in time of harvest, which greatly dismays them, 16—19. He promises to instruct and pray for them, and encourages them to cleave to the service of God, and to trust in his mercy, 20—25.

AND Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, [a] I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and [b] have made a king over you.

[a] viii. 5—8 19—22.
[b] x. 1. 24. xi. 14, 15.

2 And now, behold, the king [c] walketh before you: and [d] I am old and grey-headed; and, behold, [e] my sons *are* with you: and [f] I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

[c] viii. 20. Num. xxvii. 17.
[d] viii. 1. 5. Ps. lxxi. 18. Is. xlvi. 3, 4. 2 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 14.
[e] ii. 22. 29. iii. 13. viii. 3.
[f] iii. 19, 20.

3 Behold, here I *am*: witness against me before the LORD, and before [g] his anointed: [h] whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received *any* [*] bribe to [†] blind mine eyes therewith? and [i] I will restore it you.

[g] 5. x. 1. xxiv. 6. 2 Sam. i. 14—16. Matt. xxii. 21. Rom. xiii. 1—7.
[h] Num. xvi. 15. Acts xx. 33. 1 Thes. ii. 5. 10. 1 Pet. v. 2.
[*] Heb. *ransom.*
[†] Or, *that I should hide mine eyes at him.* Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19.
[i] Lev. vi. 4. Luke xix. 8.

4 And they said, [k] Thou hast not

[k] Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6. Dan. vi. 4. 3 John 12.

by him whom they despised as unable to save them. (*Note*, x. 26, 27.) Saul's answer likewise gave the glory of the victory to God, who alone had saved his people. In all this, his conduct was unexceptionable; and the whole concludes with such humanity and apparent piety, as promised far better effects than those which followed. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Ps.* xxxvi. 3, 4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Hasty settlements among bad neighbours often produce multiplied calamities: (*Note*, *Num.* xxxii. 29:) and when professed Christians act inconsistently with the covenant of God, they will probably be forced to the basest subjection to man; for God will disgrace those who dishonour him, and make them a reproach to their enemies.—To save their lives men often part with their liberty, and will even consent to lose their eyes: how much more then is it our wisdom, to part with our right eye, rather than to be cast into hell-fire! (*Notes*, *Matt.* v. 29, 30. *Mark* ix. 43—50. *P. O.* 30—50.) Indulgences or interests most dear to our carnal hearts, must be crucified, if we would covenant with God for the life of our souls; and, whatever respite he may give, none can save us out of his hand: we must consent to his proposals or perish for ever. But tender mercy is couched under this apparently severe requisition; the dreaded operation will not be so painful as men suppose, the advantages are immense, and the service of God is perfect freedom.—The Lord, in providence, will make way for those, whom he has designed and prepared for usefulness: nor shall any repent of humbly waiting in obscurity and honest industry, till he is pleased to call them forth; for pride and impatience alone can conclude, that the only wise God has lighted a candle to leave it under a bushel.—The reproach of the gospel, the distresses of the Lord's people, and the insulting triumphs of their enemies, should not only excite our sympathizing sorrows, but our most decisive exertions in our several stations, yea, our warm and generous indignation. But magistrates in all cases should be sparing of the lives of their subjects, and only punish them in their property, where that can be made effectual.—When zeal for the glory of God, and love for their brethren, prompt men to earnest and vigorous efforts, and when he is pleased to concur, great effects are speedily produced; but in critical junctures ordinary measures of dispatch are insufficient.—Deliverance in extreme distress is doubly welcome, and it is often vouchsafed to the true Christian: but the destruction, which commonly overtakes the wicked in the height of their triumphs and security, is inexpressibly dreadful.—Humility and clemency add superior lustre to the most splendid actions; he who forgives his enemies, when he has them in his power, obtains the noblest victory; (*Note*, *Prov.* xvi. 32;) and by giving the praise of illustrious exploits to God, a man acquires the most solid honour.—The Lord delights to plead the cause of those, who are dumb under injuries, and who do not plead for themselves; to put to silence those who contend with his servants; and to work by instruments which man contemns.—Thus the despised Saviour will at length be universally acknowledged as the Lord's anointed King, with songs of triumph and praise: at present, before the mercy-seat, he receives the submissions and pleads the cause of rebels, who are willing that he should reign over and save them; but shortly from his righteous tribunal he will condemn to everlasting ruin all those, who persist in contempt of him and opposition to him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. The elders of Israel, being convened at Gilgal, where they had celebrated the late victory with sacrifices, and confirmed the kingdom to Saul; (*Note*, xi. 12—15;) Samuel embraced the opportunity of appealing to the people, and to their king, concerning his integrity and disinterested conduct, as their judge, when about to divest himself of his authority. By this he doubtless means not only to clear his own character, but likewise to set before Saul an instructive example; and especially to convince the people of their ingratitude to God, as well as to him. (*Notes*, *Acts* xx. 18—35.)

V. 2—7. Samuel might be about eighteen years of age when Eli was slain, and thirty-eight when he assembled the people at Mizpeh, (*Notes*, vii. 1—12,) and perhaps

defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, [l]The LORD *is* witness against you, and [m] his anointed *is* witness this day, that [n] ye have not found ought [o] in my hand. And they answered, *He is* witness.

6 And Samuel said unto the people, [p] *It is* the LORD that [*] advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

7 Now therefore stand still, that I may [q] reason with you before the LORD, of all the [†] righteous acts of the LORD, which he did [‡] to you and to your fathers.

8 When [r] Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers [s] cried unto the LORD, then the LORD [t] sent Moses and Aaron, which [u] brought forth your fathers out of Egypt and [x] made them dwell in this place.

9 And when they [y] forgat the LORD their God, [z] he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand [a] of the Philistines, and [b] into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

10 And [c] they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served [d] Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now [e] deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

11 And the LORD sent [f] Jerubbaal, and [g] Bedan, and [h] Jephthah, and [i] Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

12 And when ye saw that [k] Nahash, the king of the children of Ammon, came against you, ye said unto me, [l] Nay, but a king shall reign over us; [m] when the LORD your God *was* your King.

13 Now therefore [n] behold the king [o] whom ye have chosen, *and* whom ye [p] have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

14 If [q] ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the [§] commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye, and also the king that reigneth over you, [‖] continue following the LORD your God.

15 But if [r] ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD; then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as *it was* [s] against your fathers.

l Job xxxi. 35—40. xlii. 7.
m xxvi. 9.
n John xviii. 38. Acts xxiii. 9. 1 Cor. iv. 4. 2 Cor. i. 12.
o Ex. xxii. 4. Ps. xvii. 3.
p Ex. vi. 26. Neh. ix. 9—14. Ps. lxxvii. 19, 20. lxxviii. 12, &c. xcix. 6. cv. 26. 41. Is. lxiii. 7—14. Hos. xii. 13.
* Or, *made.*
q Is. i. 18. v. 3, 4. Ez. xviii. 25—30. Mic. vi. 2—4. Acts xvii. 3.
† Heb. *righteousnesses*, or, *benefits.* Judg. v. 11.
‡ Heb. *with.*
r Gen. xlvi. 5—7. Num. xx. 15. Acts vii. 15.
s Ex. ii. 23, 24. iii. 9.
t *See on* 6.—Ex. iii. 10. iv. 14—16. 27—31. vi. 26.
u Ex. xii. 51. xiv. 30, 31.
x Josh. i. 2—4. 6. iii. 10—13. Ps. xliv. 1—3. lxxviii. 54, 55. cv. 44.
y Deut. xxxii. 18. Judg. iii. 7. Ps. cvi. 21. Jer. ii. 32.
z Deut. xxxii. 30. Judg. ii. 14. iii. 8. iv. 2. Is. l. 1, 2.
a Judg. x. 7. xiii. 1.
b Judg. iii. 12. Is. lxiii. 10.
c vii. 2. Judg. iii. 9 15. iv. 3. vi. 7. x. 10. 15. Ps. lxxviii. 34, 35. cvi. 44. Is. xxvi. 16.
d Judg. ii. 13. iii. 7.
e Judg. x. 15, 16. Is. xxxiii. 22. Luke i. 74, 75. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.
f Judg. vi. 14. 32. viii. 29. 35.
g Judg. xiii—xvi.
h Judg. xi. 1, &c.
i vii. 13.
k xi. 1.
l viii. 5, 6. 19, 20. Judg. ix. 18. 56, 57.
m viii. 7. x. 19. Gen. xvii. 7. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Num. xxiii. 21. Ps. lxxiv. 12. Is. xxxiii. 22. Hos. xiii. 10.
n x. 24. xi. 15.
o viii. 5. ix. 20.
p Ps. lxxviii. 29—31. Hos. xiii. 11. Acts xiii. 21.
q Lev. xxvi. 1—13. Deut. xxviii. 1—14. Josh. xxiv. 14. Ps. lxxxi. 13, 14. Is. iii. 10. Rom. ii. 7.
§ Heb. *mouth.*
‖ Heb. *be after.*
r Lev. xxvi. 14—39. Deut. xxviii 15—68. Josh xxiv. 20. Is. i. 20. iii. 11. Rom. ii. 8, 9.
s *See on* 9.

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sixty at this time.—From a child he had been labouring assiduously for the good of his people, and was grown grey in their service; yet they had at last rejected him! His sons had indeed misbehaved; and, having been reduced to a private station, they were there present, if the people chose to call them to an account: but for himself he could appeal to the Lord, and to their consciences, and was even willing that their anointed king should decide, whether he had not acted with entire equity, impartiality, and disinterestedness, during his whole administration. (*Notes, Num.* xvi. 15. 2 *Cor.* i. 12—14. xii. 14—21. 1 *Thes.* ii. 1—8.) When they had in consequence fully attested his integrity, he expostulated no further with them concerning their conduct towards him; but endeavoured to convince them of their wickedness in the sight of God; who had brought their fathers out of Egypt by a prophet and a priest, and not by a king like those of the surrounding nations. (*Notes,* viii. 1—5. *Deut.* xvii. 14. *Hos.* xii. 12—14. xiii. 10, 11. *Acts.* vii. 30—36.)

V. 8—10. Jacob, by going down into Egypt, made way for that oppression, which caused his posterity to cry unto the Lord; and the deliverance from Egypt by Moses and Aaron, made way for the settlement of Israel in Canaan: and their subsequent rebellions, and chastisements prepared the way for renewed deliverances, not by kings, but by judges, raised up by the Lord for that gracious purpose, as Samuel himself had been. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Ex.* iii. 7. iv, v. *Judg.* ii. 11—14. iii. 12—30. iv, v.)

V. 11—13. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Judg.* vi—xi.) Bedan may be considered as a contraction of *Ben-dan*, or *the son of Dan;* and it is probable that Samson is intended. (*Notes, Judg.* xiii—xvi.) The Septuagint has Barak.—Samuel joins himself to the number of those, by whom the Lord had delivered the people; to impress more deeply on their minds the conviction, that in rejecting him, they had refused to continue any longer under the immediate government of God, by judges of his appointment, which had been their honour and happiness.—When Nahash prepared to war against them, it seems Samuel gave them some intimations that God would raise them up a deliverer, or he offered to lead them to battle; but they refused his proposals, saying, "Nay, but a king shall reign over us:" and accordingly God had appointed a king over them. (*Notes,* viii. x. 17—27. xi.)

V. 14, 15. The Israelites might perhaps suppose, that under a king, who would always be at hand to succour them, and fight against their enemies, their affairs would not be exposed to such vicissitudes as before. But Samuel assured them, that there would be no difference in that respect: for their privileges as the Lord's peculiar people

t 7. xv. 16. Ex. xiv. 13. 31.

16 Now therefore t stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.

u Prov. xxvi. 1.

17 *Is it* u not wheat-harvest to-day? x vii. 9, 10. Josh. x. 12. Ps. xcix. 6. Jer. xv. 1. Jam. v. 16—18. x I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may y See on viii. 7. perceive and see that y your wickedness *is* great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

18 So Samuel called unto the LORD; z Ex. ix. 23—25. Rev. xi. 5, 6. and the LORD z sent thunder and rain that day and all the people greatly a Ex. xiv. 31. Ezra x. 9. Ps. cvi. 12, 13. a feared the LORD and Samuel.

19 And all the people said unto b vii. 5. 8. Gen. xx. 7. Ex. ix. 28. x. 17. Job xlii. 8. Ps. lxxviii. 34, 35. Mal. i. 9. Acts viii. 24. 1 John v. 16. Samuel, b Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, c Ex. xx. 19, 20. 1 Pet. iii. 6. c Fear not: (ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

21 And d turn ye not aside: for *then* d Deut. xi. 16. xxxi. 29. Josh. xxiii. 6. Ps. xl. 4. ci. 3. cxxv. 5. *should ye go* after e vain *things*, which e Deut. xxxii. 21. Jer. ii 5. 13. x. 8, 15. xiv. 22. xvi. 19. Jon. ii. 8. Hab. ii. 18. 1 Cor. viii. 4. f cannot profit nor deliver; for they *are* vain:)

22 For g the LORD will not forsake f Ps. cxv. 4—8. Is. xli. 23, 24. xliv. 9, 10 xlv. 20. xlvi. 7. Jer. x. 5. his people h for his great name's sake; g Deut. xxxi. 17. 2 Kings xxi. 14. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. xv. 2. Ps. xciv. 14. Is. xli. 17. xlii. 16. Jer. xxxiii. 24—26. Lam. v. 20. Heb. xiii. 5. because i it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.

23 Moreover, as for me, k God forbid h Ex. xxxii. 12. Num. xiv. 13—19. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. Josh. vii. 9. Is. xxxvii. 35. xliii. 25. xlviii. 11. Jer. xiv. 7. 21. Ex. xx. 9. 14. Eph. i. 6. 12. that I should sin against the LORD * in ceasing to pray for you: but l I will teach you m the good and the right way.

24 Only n fear the LORD, and serve him o in truth with all your heart: for p consider † how great *things* he hath done for you.

25 But q if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both r ye and your king.

i Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. vii. 7, 8. ix. 5. xiv. 2. Mal. i. 2. Matt. xi. 26. John xv. 16. Rom. ix. 13—18. xi. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 7. Phil. i. 6.

k Acts xii. 5. Rom. i. 9. Col. i. 9. 1 Thes. iii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 3.

* Heb. *from ceasing.*

l Ps. xxxiv. 11. Prov. iv. 11. Ec. xii. 10. Acts xx. 20. Col. i. 28.

m 1 Kings viii. 36. 2 Chr. vi. 27. Jer. vi. 16. n Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7. Ec. xii. 13. Heb. xii. 29. o Ps. cxix. 80. John i. 47. p Ezra ix. 13, 14. Is. v. 12. Rom. xii. 1. † Or, *what a great* thing, &c. Deut. x. 21. Ps. cxxvi. 2, 3. q Deut. xxxii. 15, &c. Josh. xxiv. 20. Is. iii. 11. r xxxi. 1—3. Deut. xxviii. 36. Hos. x. 3.

would still be continued to them, while they adhered to his service, and withdrawn, if they forsook it, even as in times past. (*Marg. Ref.*)

Following, &c. (14) Depending on God, adhering to his worship and service, and protected by him; and so, a holy and happy people. (*Notes*, xv. 11. *Num.* xiv. 24. *Hos.* vi. 1—3.)

V. 16—19. Even rain was uncommon during the wheat-harvest, and doubtless this thunder-storm was very violent. Having likewise been predicted and called for, it formed a useful attestation of Samuel's word, and was entirely suited to produce conviction and alarm in the consciences of the people.—Being, therefore, terrified with the displays of the divine power, which were made in answer to Samuel's prayer, and perceiving how much he was honoured by God, they were afraid of some immediate judgments, such as were inflicted on their forefathers for rebelling against Moses and Aaron; and they earnestly begged of him to pray for them. (*Notes, Num.* xi. 1—3. xvi. 28—35. 41—50. xxi. 4—9.) They likewise acknowledged that, in addition to all their other rebellions, they had heinously sinned in desiring a king.—It should here be observed, that their guilt did not consist in preferring the authority of kings to any other kind of government; but in rebelliously and ungratefully determining to be governed in a different manner, from that which God himself had chosen for them. And if afterwards, when God had expressly appointed David to rule over them, the people had required a change of government, and wanted again to be ruled by judges as their fathers had been, they would have been guilty of a similar rebellion. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xii. 16.)

V. 20. *Fear not*, &c.] Samuel repeatedly exhorted the people to "fear the LORD;" (14. 24:) yet here he exhorted them *not to fear*; that is, not to be dismayed by the dread of immediate destruction. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 18—20.)—Reverence of the majesty and authority of God, and fear of his displeasure, when counterpoised by the hope of his favour, quicken men in seeking and serving him: but such a fear of wrath, as occasions despondency and hard thoughts of him, drives men from their duty, and exposes them to manifold temptations. (*Notes, Gen.* xlv. 5. *Ps.* cxxx. 3, 4. 2 *Tim.* i. 6—8. 1 *John* iv. 18.)

V. 22. In preferring the seed of Jacob to other families, to be his people, the Lord acted as a Sovereign, who is not bound, and does not deign, to assign his reasons: but having made them his people, the honour of his perfections required, that he should not entirely forsake them till the promised Seed arose, however severely he corrected them; nor even then, finally and absolutely: and this consideration was suited to excite and encourage their obedience. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps.* xciv. 12—14. *Is.* xli. 8, 9. *Jer.* xxxiii. 23—26. *Rom.* xi, 1—10. 25—32.)

V. 23. The people had no occasion to fear Samuel's resentment: for he deemed himself bound in duty to persevere in praying for them, notwithstanding the affront which they had put upon him. And though he was no longer their chief magistrate; yet he promised still to devote the remnant of his life to their service, as their instructor in religion, and in promoting their peace and happiness. In these respects he judged them all the days of his life. (*Note*, vii. 15.)—Nothing can be well imagined, more expressive of genuine excellency of character, and a right state of heart, than this simple but solemn declaration. Though ungratefully rejected by Israel, and degraded from his high station; he would yet think himself most criminal before God, should he decline any service, which he was in his inferior station capable of ren-

CHAP. XIII.

Saul chooses a select band, and dismisses the people, 1, 2. Jonathan, his son, smites a garrison of the Philistines, and Saul summons the people to Gilgal, 3, 4. The Philistines gather a great army; and Israel is distressed and scattered, 5—7. Saul, weary of waiting for Samuel, sacrifices, 8, 9. Samuel comes and reproves him, and shews that God has rejected him; while Saul in vain excuses himself, 10—14. A small company attend Saul; and three bands of Philistines waste the land, 15—18 The policy of the Philistines, who suffer no smith in Israel, 19—23.

SAUL [a] reigned one year: and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

2 Saul [b] chose him three thousand *men* of Israel, *whereof* two thousand were with Saul in [c] Michmash, and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were

[a] Heb. *the son of one year in his reigning.* Ex. xii 3. Mic. vi. 6. *Marg.*

[b] 5 28. xiv. 5. 31.

[c] Is. x. 28.

dering them. This entirely coincides with St. Paul's avowal to the Corinthians. (*Note, 2 Cor.* xii. 14, 15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The favoured few, who have walked before God from childhood to old age, while they look back on their past lives with gratitude, as the sure evidence of acceptance, and as confirming their expectation of eternal glory; may receive this satisfaction, and the "rejoicing in the testi- "mony of their consciences," as a gracious recompence from the Lord; and may speak of them, in order to induce young persons to seek and serve him without delay. —There are seasons, when we are called on to vindicate our own characters and conduct before men, and to shew them how conscientiously we have acted towards them: but it should be always done in subserviency to their conviction and edification. We may very properly touch on this subject, when we can thus convey useful instructions to our juniors or successors: and men may recede from publick stations with comfort, when they can extort even from their opposers and despisers a testimony to their integrity.—The honour, rendered to those who are concluding their course, differs widely from the applause and congratulation which many receive, when they first step forth before the publick eye. This indeed often terminates in disgrace and contempt: it is therefore unworthy of our wishes, and ought surely never to move a wise man's envy or discontent, though rendered to others at his expense. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xv. 1—6. xviii. 9—18. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 20. 26—28.)—Prosperity in sin is no proof of impunity; and sinners never more need to be warned, than when successful in their undertakings.—But the servants of God, though ill treated, should be careful not to expostulate too much with those by whom they have been injured; but to "reason with them of the righteous acts of "the LORD," of his truth and mercy, and of their conduct towards him, for their humiliation.—Our safe and happy state consists in a willing dependence on God, and subjection to him: but we are apt to affect independence, and to refuse obedience, by which we exchange substantial good for an empty shadow: for the greatest outward prosperity contributes nothing to our felicity, except when it induces us to fear and serve God, and to obey his voice; and is improved as a talent in doing good to men.—Disobedience ensures misery from generation to generation, whatever be our station or circumstances in life: and to continue "following the LORD," as his accepted servants, is the highest privilege we can enjoy.—The most useful benefactors of mankind, who have spent their lives, and worn out their constitutions, in unceasing labours for the good of others, must not be surprised, if they are at length cast off with neglect and ingratitude: but when the perverseness of their brethren prevents them from doing all that good which they desired to do, they should still do all the good they can. This is a general rule for all: those who cannot rule may teach, and those who cannot teach may pray, and set an edifying example; and no provocations should tempt us to sin against God in ceasing to pray for our children, relations, friends, people, fellow-sinners, or even our inveterate enemies. Yet the prayers of the church, and the intercession of Christ, will in the event appear to have been united against impenitent sinners; yea, the elements and the whole creation will shortly be armed against them to their destruction. The belief of this alarming truth should "warn them to flee from the "wrath to come," to confess their sins, to obey the gospel, and to desire the prayers and counsels of its ministers. But when sinners are deeply convinced of their guilt and danger, they need encouragement, lest their fear should lead to despondency. (*Note, 2 Cor.* ii. 5—11.)—In the day of judgment all those things which men have inordinately loved, and for which they have forsaken God, will be found "*vain*, and such as cannot profit or deliver," even though they were "the kingdoms of the world and "the glory of them." Happy then are they, whom the Lord has pleased to make his people! "he will never leave "nor forsake them," but will glorify his great name in their eternal salvation. None, however, can know assuredly, that these blessings belong to them, except they attend to "the good and the right way, and fear the LORD, and "serve him with all their heart:" (*Notes, Jer.* xxxii. 38—41. *John* x. 26—31. 1 *Pet.* i. 3—5:) and if "we consider "what great things he hath done for us," especially in the work of our redemption and regeneration, we cannot want motive, or encouragement, or assistance for so doing.

NOTES

CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. The language in the original, "Saul was the son of one year in his reigning; and "when he had reigned two years over Israel," (*marg.*) is differently interpreted: but probably it only means, according to the Hebrew idiom, that during the first year nothing remarkable occurred; but after two years, (or in the second year of his reign,) the subsequent events took place. The passage seems to refer to the transactions at Gilgal recorded in the former chapters. Perhaps those events did not take place, till the second year after he had been first appointed by the Lord to be king over Israel. (*Notes,* x. 1. 17—27. xi. 6—15. xii. 1.) When he dismissed the rest of the multitude, he retained three thousand chosen men, for his own defence and that of his

with Jonathan [c] in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

3 And Jonathan smote [d] the garrison of the Philistines that *was* in [*] Geba: and the Philistines heard *of it:* and Saul [e] blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.

4 And all Israel heard say *that* Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and *that* Israel also [†] was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul [f] to Gilgal.

5 And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people [g] as the sand which *is* on the sea-shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from [h] Bethaven.

6 When the men of Israel saw that they were [i] in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves [k] in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

7 And *some of* [l] the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of [m] Gad and Gilead: as for Saul, he *was* yet in Gilgal, and all the people [‡] followed him trembling.

8 And he [n] tarried seven days according to the set time that Samuel *had appointed:* but Samuel came not to Gilgal, and the people were scattered from him.

9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt-offering to me, and peace-offerings. And [o] he offered the burnt-offering.

10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came; and [p] Saul went out to meet him, that he might [§] salute him.

11 And Samuel said, [q] What hast

c x. 26. xv. 34. Josh. xviii. 28. Judg. xix. 12. 2 Sam. xxi. 6. Is. x. 29.

d x. 5. xiv. 1—6. 2 Sam. xxiii. 14.

* Or, *the hill.* Josh. xviii. 24. *Gaba.* xxi. 17. Is. x. 29. Zech xiv. 10.

e Judg. iii 27. vi. 34. 2 Sam. ii. 28. xx. 1.

† Heb. *did stink.* Gen. xxxiv. 30. xlvi. 34. Ex. v. 21. Zech. xi. 8.

f x. 8. xi. 14, 15. Josh. v. 9.

g Gen. xxii. 17. Josh. xi. 4. Judg. vii. 12. 2 Chr. i. 9. Is. xlviii. 19. Jer. xv. 8. Rom. ix. 27.

h xiv. 23. Josh. vii. 2. xviii. 12. Hos. iv. 15. v. 8. x. 5.

i Ex. xiv. 10—12. Josh. viii. 20. Judg. x. 9. xx 41. 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. Phil. i. 23

k xiv. 11. xxiii. 19 xxiv. 3. Judg. vi 2. Is. xlii. 22. Heb. xi. 38.

l Lev. xxvi. 17. 36 37. Deut. xxviii 25.

m Num. xxxii. 1—5. 33—42. Deut. iii. 12. Josh. xiii. 24—31.

‡ Heb. *trembled after him.* Deut. xx. 8. Judg. vii. 3. Hos. xi. 10, 11.

n x. 8.

o 12, 13. xiv. 18. xv. 21, 22. Deut. xii. 6. 1 Kings iii. 4. Ps. xxxvii. 7. Prov. xv. 8. xx. 22. xxi. 3. 27. Is. lxvi. 3.

p xv. 13.

§ Heb. *bless him.* xv. 13. Ruth ii. 4. Ps. cxxix. 8.

q Gen. iii. 13. iv. 10 Josh. vii. 19. 2 Sam. iii. 24. 2 Kings v. 25.

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country; which he divided between himself and his son Jonathan.

V. 3, 4. After Saul had defeated Nahash, and had been confirmed in the kingdom; and after he had joined with Samuel in offering sacrifices, and had obtained the benefit of his prayers; it must be concluded that he ought to have marched directly with his victorious army against the Philistines, who possessed strong-holds in the land, and had become very formidable; and that true policy required this of him. (*Notes*, ix. 16. xi. 12—15.) But it is probable, that he was elated with success, pleased with the shew of royalty, and disposed to ease and indulgence. Thus the favourable opportunity was lost, the ardour of his followers was suffered to abate, and perhaps some of them were disgusted: and the Philistines, doubtless learning that a king had been chosen, with a view to deliver Israel from their power; assiduously employed the time given them, in preparing for war, and in weakening and disarming the Israelites. In the mean while Jonathan, probably by Saul's command, smote a garrison of the Philistines; so that "Israel was had in abomination by the "Philistines," who resented it as an indignity, and probably regarded it as an act of rebellion against their authority: thus they were exceedingly exasperated; and when Saul at length sounded the alarm, the people either did not come to him, or they speedily deserted him.—In all these measures Saul seems to have been very impolitick: (*Note*, xi. 12—15:) but the Lord interded to chastise the people for their sins, to expose their folly in expecting that a king could save them, and to prepare the way for a glorious deliverance which he intended to effect for them. (*Notes*, xii. 14, 15. xiv. 11—23.)

V. 5. *Thirty thousand chariots.*] The Philistines had doubtless collected troops on this emergency from all the surrounding nations; but the number of chariots of war here stated is immensely large beyond all example, (*Ex.* xiv. 7. *Judg.* iv. 3. 2 *Sam.* x. 18. 1 *Kings* x. 26. *Ps.* lxviii. 17;) and wholly disproportioned to the number of their horsemen. Commentators therefore conjecture, that their carriages for baggage and all other uses are included.

V. 6, 7. The numerous and well appointed army of the Philistines so terrified the people, that most of them deserted, and either hid themselves, or passed over Jordan, to be out of the reach of the enemy; while the few who remained with Saul, trembled as they followed him. (*Notes*, *Deut.* xx. 5—9. *Judg.* vi. 2, 3. vii. 2, 3. *Is.* xlii. 22—25.)

V. 8, 9. (*Note*, x. 8.) According to the direction before given, and perhaps since repeated, Saul waited for Samuel till the close of the seventh day: but, being impatient of his situation; displeased perhaps with Samuel for not coming sooner, and attributing the people's terror and desertion to his absence, and the want of some token of the Lord's presence; and fearing lest the others also should leave him; he proceeded to offer sacrifices. This was contrary to the express injunctions, which had been laid upon him to wait for Samuel; who, having presented burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, with solemn prayers and supplications, would have shewn him how he ought to proceed, in the present difficult emergency, that he might ensure success.—As no priest is mentioned, it has been thought that Saul, presuming on his kingly authority, usurped the priesthood also: but this is doubtful. It is certain, however, that he took too much upon him, 'and thought it was fit the prophet should wait for the 'king, rather than the king for the prophet.—He en-'trenched upon the priest's office, or upon the prophet's, 'or upon both.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 10—12. When Samuel came, Saul went out to

thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* thou camest not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered themselves together at [r] Michmash;

12 Therefore [s] said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not [*] made supplication unto the LORD: [t] I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering.

13 And Samuel said to Saul, [u] Thou hast done foolishly: [x] thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

14 But [y] now thy kingdom shall not continue; [z] the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* [a] captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee.

15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people *that were* [†] present with him, [b] about six hundred men.

16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people *that were* present with them, abode in [‡] Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

17 ¶ And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines, [c] in three companies: one company turned unto the way *that leadeth to* [d] Ophrah, unto the land of [e] Shual:

18 And another company turned the way *to* [f] Beth-horon: and another company turned *to* the way of the border, that looketh to the valley of [g] Zeboim toward the wilderness.

19 Now [h] there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make *them* swords or spears:

20 But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

21 Yet they had [§] a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to [‖] sharpen the goads.

r 2. 5. 16. 23. xiv. 5. Is. x. 28.
s 1 Kings xii. 26, 27.
* Heb. *intreated the face of, &c.*
t xxi. 7. Ps. lxvi. 3. Am. viii. 5. 2 Cor. ix. 7.
u 2 Sam. xii. 7—9. 1 Kings xviii. 18. xxi. 20. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. xix. 2. xxv. 15, 16. Job xxxiv. 18. Prov. xix. 3. Matt. xiv. 3, 4.
x xv. 11. 22. Ps. l. 8—15.
y ii. 30. xv. 28.
z xvi. 1. 12. 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. Ps. lxxviii. 70. lxxxix. 19, 20, &c. Acts xiii. 22.
a ix. 16. 2 Sam. v. 2. 2 Kings xx. 5. Heb. ii. 10.
† Heb. *found.* b 2. 6, 7. xiv. 2
‡ Heb. *Geba.* on 3.
c xi. 11.
d Josh. xviii. 23.
e Josh. xix. 3.
f Josh. x. 11. xvi. 3. 5. xviii. 13. 1 Chr. vi. 68. 2 Chr. viii. 5.
g Gen. xiv. 2. Neh. xi. 34. Hos. xi. 8.
h Judg. v. 8. 2 Kings xxiv. 14. Jer. xxiv. 1.
§ Heb. *a file with mouths.*
‖ Heb. *set.*

"salute" or *bless* him, as one well satisfied with what he had done. (*Notes*, xv. 13, 14. *Ps.* xxxvi. 2.) But when he perceived by Samuel's pointed question, that he disapproved of his conduct, (*Marg. Ref.* q. *Notes*, *Gen.* iii. 9—13. iv. 10—12,) he attempted to excuse himself by the plea of necessity; and stated that being in such circumstances of extreme peril and distress, he had, with much reluctance proceeded to offer sacrifice, lest the Philistines should attack him before he had performed his devotions. —He might, however, without blame and with great propriety, have poured out his prayers to God, and thus have waited for Samuel.

V. 13—15. This commandment of the Lord by Samuel, was probably intended as a test of Saul's disposition: and his transgression proved, that he did not regard the word of God, when it greatly interfered with his own inclinations or sentiments; by which it appeared that he was unfit to rule as the vicegerent of the Lord over his people. He was "weighed in this balance, and found wanting." Had he behaved properly, the kingdom would have been permanently confirmed in his family; and it is probable that Samuel came to Gilgal, expecting to make this settlement of the kingdom by divine authority: but now, Saul was sentenced to be removed, to make way for one of a more obedient disposition. This the omniscient God foresaw: but his secret purpose was not the motive of Saul's conduct; which to the Searcher of hearts doubtless appeared much more aggravated than it does to us. (*Notes*, *Gen.* ii. 16, 17. iii. 6.)—Samuel on this occasion departed from Saul; yet, as he went to Gibeah of Saul and not to Ramah, and as he came to him afterwards, (xv. 1. 13. 34, 35;) it is conjectured that the sentence was not irreversible; but that, if Saul had repented of this sin, and been more obedient in future, he might notwithstanding have been continued in the kingdom.—When no more than six hundred men remained with Saul, and even these "followed him trembling," he must have been greatly affected with the alteration which had taken place, since he was followed by three hundred thousand men of Israel, and thirty thousand of Judah, in warring against Nahash. (*Note*, xi. 6—11.)—*A man after his own heart.* (14) *Marg. Ref.* z.

V. 17, 18. (*Marg. Ref.*) These invaders and plunderers, going in three different directions, would exceedingly harass and distress all the towns and villages of Israel, now left open to their incursions, without the least defence; so that the miseries, which the people endured, must have been much greater than at first glance it may appear.

V. 19—21. During all the forty years' oppression by the Philistines, they seem to have used the policy of forbidding the Israelites to practise the trade of smiths; (*Note*, *Judg.* v. 8:) as the Chaldeans afterwards carried the smiths captive out of the land. (2 *Kings* xxiv. 14. *Jer.* xxiv. 1.) And after the termination of that entire slavery, the Israelites did not readily re-assume the trade; but, as

22 So it came to pass in the day of
i xvii. 47. 50. Judg. v. 8. Zech. iv. 6. 1 Cor. i. 27—29. 2 Cor. iv. 7. battle, that [i] there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that *were* with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.

* Or, *standing camp.* 3. xiv. 4. k 2. 5. xiv. 1. 4, 5. 23 And the * garrison of the Philistines went out to the [k] passage of Michmash.

CHAP. XIV.

Jonathan, attended only by his armour-bearer, smites the garrison of the Philistines, 1—14; who are seized with terror, and destroy one another, 15, 16. Saul, seeing the tumult, enquires of God: but without waiting for an answer, he assaults the Philistines; being joined by he Hebrews who had deserted or hid themselves, 17—23. His rash curse, against such as ate that day, hinders the completion of the victory; and Jonathan not knowing what had passed,

the Philistines had garrisons in many parts of the land, they were accustomed to go to the smiths resident in them, for such work as needed to be done: and these would doubtless exact an exorbitant price for their labour, and also exert themselves in preventing the Israelites from learning or practising their trade. Thus the Philistines had artfully obtained a most important advantage: and, it is probable, they had been more assiduous than common, while they expected that Saul would make war on them; so that at the important crisis, the Israelites were almost destitute of armour.—The impolicy of Saul, and the abject spirit of the people, were thus manifested: but the Lord over-ruled it, to shew the greatness of his power in the deliverance and victory of his people, when thus circumstanced.—Many parts of the land were too distant from Philistia for the Israelites to go thither on every occasion, and the Philistines had garrisons in the land: so that the interpretation above given is most natural, as well as generally adopted.

V. 22. The Israelites used bows, slings, and javelins in war, and with these it is probable the people were armed. Perhaps the Philistines had seized the armour which they had used against Nahash, after they were dispersed: (*Notes*, xi. 6—11:) and it is probable, that many who had armour had deserted. However, it was so ordered in providence, that none in the remaining little company, except Saul and Jonathan, had either sword or spear.—Thus the Israelites, who expected to look formidable under kingly government, were made to appear very contemptible: (*Notes*, viii. 1—5:) not that the Lord had forsaken his people; but because he would humble them, and shew them, that the victory did not depend upon swords and spears, but upon the favour and assistance of the Almighty. (*Notes*, xiv. 1—15. *Judg.* vii. 2—22.)

V. 23. It is supposed, that between Michmash and Gibeah, each situated on a hill, there was a valley, called "the passage of Michmash;" into which the garrison of the Philistines "went out," either to challenge the Israelites to battle, or in order to make an assault upon Gibeah. (15, 16. xiv. 4, 5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our sanguine expectations from creatures are sure to end in disappointment; and when we resolve to choose for ourselves, we shall certainly have cause to repent of our choice: indeed, when men are lifted up in self-sufficiency, they are often left to the most unaccountable infatuation.—The chief advantages of the enemies of the church are derived from the misconduct of its professed friends: for when these act inconsistently with justice and fidelity, religious people, without discrimination, are looked upon with abhorrence and contempt. Yet, while sinners are meditating revenge, the Lord often restrains their malice by invisible hindrances, and uses their machinations for the chastisement of his people.—Deep resentment and great power united, occasion much consternation; and men thus terrified, flee or hide themselves from their fellow-creatures, and for a time, and on some occasions, with success. How then will the terror of the Almighty appal the wicked, in the approaching day of his inevitable and intolerable wrath, when no way of concealment or escape will remain for them! (*Notes*, *Rev.* vi. 15—17.)—Those who in trouble are actuated by pride and impatience, involve themselves in still deeper guilt and misery, by their foolish expedients to extricate themselves.—Our observance of the Lord's directions, will always be proportioned to our simplicity of dependence on his promises, and submission to his will: and those who are most dilatory in doing their duty, are commonly the most impatient of delay in waiting his time of deliverance.—Our disposition to obey or disobey will often be decisively proved by our behaviour in apparently small things: (*Note*, *Gen.* iii. 6:) and such as most neglect the duties of their own station, are most forward to censure the supposed negligence of others. Men destitute of inward piety, are frequently most scrupulously attached to the forms of godliness: nay, they fancy that the Lord will accept them, because they force themselves to act contrary to their own inclinations, or even to the dictates of their natural conscience! —We are commanded not to "speak evil of rulers;" yet those who are called to address them in the name of God, must point out very plainly the folly and evil of their conduct, and remind them of his anger against the workers of iniquity, without respect of persons: for though a prince may not in this life forfeit his throne or his dignity, by his offences against God; yet if he die impenitent, he will certainly lose his soul in the world to come. How empty then are those distinctions, from which so many are hurried into everlasting misery!—We have, by sin, forfeited felicity; but unbelief and impenitence ratify that forfeiture: and those who have undeniably broken the commandments of God, and yet persist in excusing and justifying themselves, are evidently both impenitent and unbelieving. The trouble of all such as continue in this spirit, must certainly increase; and, as they refuse to submit to God, they must be reduced to the most abject misery in the slavery of sin. But, while the Lord "pours contempt upon "princes, and brings to nought all the honourable of the "earth," he will deliver his people by his own power: and while he shames such as trust in man, and aspire to greatness and pre-eminence in outward things; he will honour those who humbly and in faith expect help from him alone.

violates it, 24—30. The people fly upon the spoil, and are hardly restrained from eating with the blood, 31—34. Saul builds an altar; and asks counsel of God, but is not answered, 35—37. Jonathan, taken by lot and sentenced to die, is rescued by the people, 38—46. Saul's victories and family, 47—52.

* Or, *there was a day.*

NOW * it came to pass upon a day, that [a] Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison that *is* on the other side: but [b] he told not his father.

2 And Saul tarried [c] in the uttermost part of Gibeah, under a pomegranate-tree, which *is* in Migron: and the people that *were* with him *were* about six hundred men;

3 And [d] Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, [e] I-chabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD's priest in Shiloh, [f] wearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.

4 And between [g] the passages by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines' garrison, *there was* a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one *was* Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh.

5 The † fore-front of the one *was* situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah.

6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these [h] uncircumcised: [i] it may be that the LORD will work for us; [j] for *there is* no restraint to the LORD, to save by many or by few.

7 And his armour-bearer said unto him, [k] Do all that *is* in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I *am* with thee according to thy heart.

8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, [l] we will pass over unto *these* men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

9 If [m] they say thus unto us, ‡ Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and [n] this *shall be* a sign unto us.

a 39—45. xiii. 2. 22. xviii. 1—4. 2 Sam. i. 4, 5. 25, 26.
b xxv. 19. Judg. vi. 27. xiv. 6. Mic. vii. 5.
c xiii. 15, 16. Is. x. 28, 29.
d xxii. 9—12. 20. *Ahimelech.*
e iv. 21.
f ii. 28. Ex. xxviii. 26—32.
g xiii. 23.
† Heb. *tooth.*
h xvii. 26. 36. Gen. xvii. 7—11. Judg. xv. 18. 2 Sam. i. 20. Jer. ix. 23—26. Eph. ii. 11, 12. Phil. iii. 3.
i 2 Sam. xvi. 12. 2 Kings xix. 4. Am. v. 15. Zeph. ii. 3.
j Deut. xxxii. 30. Judg. vii. 4—7. 2 Chr. xiv. 11. Ps. cxv. 1—3. Zech. iv. 6. Matt. xix. 26. Rom. viii. 31
k x. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 3. Ps. xlvi. 7. Zech. viii. 23.
l Judg. vii. 9—14.
m Gen. xxiv. 13, 14. Judg. vi. 36—40.
‡ Heb. *Be still.*
n x. 7. Is. vii. 11—14.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. No doubt, Jonathan in this critical state of affairs in Israel was excited, by an immediate divine impulse, to assault the formidable oppressors of his people: and by the same admonition he was kept from informing the soldiers; and even from consulting his father, who might have opposed his design. Indeed Saul's transgression excluded him from sharing the honour of that deliverance, which God intended to vouchsafe to his afflicted people. (*Notes*, xiii. 13—15. 22.)

V. 2, 3. (xiii. 15, 16. *Note*, 22.) After Samuel had left Saul, it seems that the latter sent for Ahiah, or Ahimelech, the great grandson of Eli, the LORD's priest in Shiloh. Ahitub was the elder brother of I-chabod; (*Note*, iv. 19—22;) and his son was at this time high priest, and so wore the ephod, and the breast-plate of judgment with Urim and Thummim. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Ex.* xxviii. 30. *Num.* xxvii. 21.) Saul therefore having him in the camp, with his priestly garments; and, as it is probable, having fetched the ark thither also (18); appeared to himself and to the people, to have abundant tokens of God's presence with him: and he could now enquire of the Lord, without being liable to Samuel's sharp reproofs; hoping perhaps, that Ahiah would be more compliant to his inclinations. (*Notes*, xxii. 13—16.)—The fate of Eli's sons, and the total defeat of Israel, when presumptuous measures of the same kind were resorted to, should have convinced him that this confidence of the favour of God was foolish and delusory. (*Notes*, iv. 3—11.)

V. 4, 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) The hand of God was very visible, in restraining the very numerous army of the Philistines from assaulting the small company of the Israelites; (xiii. 5;) so that they generally kept themselves entrenched in a fortified camp, in an almost inaccessible situation, as still fearing their enfeebled enemies.

V. 6—10. The faith of Jonathan was doubtless in general very strong, and his armour-bearer was a man of the same spirit as himself: but the thought of thus attacking this immense army was doubtless suggested to Jonathan's mind immediately from God, and his faith and expectation increased in proportion. He was enabled, *with reference to his own conduct*, to view the almighty power of God, as sufficient for his safeguard in the midst of the Philistines; and also to save Israel by him and his armour-bearer, as well as by the most numerous and powerful army. (*Deut.* xxxii. 30, 31. *Notes*, *Judg.* iii. 31. xv. 14—17. *Is.* xxx. 15—17.)—Considering the Israelites as the covenant-people of God, who were oppressed by the *uncircumcised* Philistines; he expected that the Lord would appear for them in the same wonderful manner, as he had done for their fathers in former times. (*Note*, xvii. 25, 26.) But, for fuller satisfaction in this matter, he and his armour-bearer agreed upon a token, according to which their proceedings were to be determined: if warned by the Philistines to wait till they were attacked, they would consider it as a divine monition, to act only upon the defensive; but if they called to them to come up, they would take it as a signal to climb the steep rock and attack them.

11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth [o] out of the holes, where they had hid themselves.

12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and said, [p] Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armour-bearer, [q] Come up after me, for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.

13 And Jonathan [r] climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him: and they [s] fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer slew after him.

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were [*] an half acre of land, *which* a yoke *of oxen might plow.*

15 And [t] there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people; the garrison, and [u] the spoilers, they also trembled; and [x] the earth quaked: so it was a [†] very great trembling.

16 ¶ And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked: and behold the multitude [y] melted away, and they went on [z] beating down *one another.*

17 Then said Saul unto the people that *were* with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold Jonathan and his armour-bearer *were* not *there.*

18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, [a] Bring hither the ark of God. For [b] the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.

19 And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, that the [‡] noise that *was* in the host of the Philistines went on and increased; and Saul said unto the priest, [c] Withdraw thine hand.

20 And Saul and all the people that *were* with him [§] assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and behold [d] every man's sword was against his fellow, *and there was* a very great discomfiture.

21 Moreover, [e] the Hebrews *that* were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp, *from the country* round about, even they also *turned* to be with the Israelites that *were* with Saul and Jonathan.

22 Likewise all the men of Israel which had [f] hid themselves in mount Ephraim, *when* they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.

o 22. xiii. 6. Judg. vi. 2.
p 10. xvii. 43, 44. 2 Sam. ii. 14—17. 2 Kings xiv. 8.
q Gen. xxiv. 26, 27. 42. 48. Judg. iv. 14. vii. 15. 2 Sam. v. 24.
r Ps. xviii. 29. Heb. xi. 34.
s Lev. xxvi. 7, 8. Deut. xxviii. 7. xxxii. 30. Josh. xxiii. 10. Rom. viii. 31.
* Or, *half a furrow of an acre.*
t Josh. ii. 9. Judg. vii. 21. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. Job xviii. 11. Ps. xiv. 5.
u xiii. 17. 23.
x Ex. xix. 18. Matt. xxiv. 7. xxvii. 50, 51.
† Heb. *trembling of God.* Gen. xxxv. 5. Lev. xxvi. 36, 37. 2 Sam. v. 24. Dan. v. 6.
y Ps. lviii. 7. lxviii. 2.
z 20. Judg. vii. 22. 2 Chr. xx. 22—25. Is. xix. 2.
a iv. 3—5. xxx. 9. Num. xxvii. 21. Judg. xx. 18. 23. 27, 28. 2 Sam. xi. 11. xv. 24—26.
b v. 2. vii. 1.
‡ Or, *tumult.*
c 24. xiii. 11. Josh. ix. 14. Ps. cvi. 13. Is. xxviii. 16.
§ Heb. *were cried together.*
d 16. Judg. vii. 22. Is. ix. 19—21.
e xxix. 4. Judg. vii. 23.
f xiii. 6. xxxi. 7.

(*Notes, Gen.* xxiv. 11—14. *Judg.* vii. 13—15.)—Such extraordinary attempts and triumphs of faith, directed by immediate divine monition, are recorded for our admiration, and our encouragement in more ordinary services; and not for our imitation.

V. 11—15. It is probable, that Jonathan and his armour-bearer left the camp of Saul, unobserved, during the night (3); and that early in the morning, they placed themselves in the view of the Philistines, who in contempt challenged them to "come up, and they would shew them "a thing," meaning that they would cause them to repent of their audacity. This being the expected token from God, Jonathan assured his armour-bearer, that the Lord would deliver the Philistines by their means into the hands of Israel. Thus they both, without hesitation, climbed up the rock into the enemy's camp, apparently rushing into the jaws of destruction. 'Not in the view of the Philis-'tines, but by some difficult way, which none was ever 'known to go. And so perhaps they came behind them and 'surprised them.' *Bp. Patrick.* This might be the case; but the sacred historian does not mention it. However, by the immediate interposition of God, the Philistines were so confounded at the daring assault, that they fell down before Jonathan, and were killed by his armour-bearer; till twenty were slain in a small space, as it seems without attempting either to fight or to flee. Upon which the whole army was seized with trembling and consternation; and an earthquake which took place at the same moment, increased their terror: so that it was "a trembling of God," (*marg.*) the whole being, not only very great, but altogether miraculous. In consequence of this terror, they supposed the Israelites to be in the midst of the camp, and began to kill one another in every part of it. The army being constituted, as it is supposed, of different nations; (20. *Note,* xiii. 5;) the confusion might excite mutual jealousies and suspicions, which proved the occasion of their common destruction. (*Notes, Judg.* vii. 16—22. 1 *Kings* xx. 14—21. 2 *Chr.* xiv. 9—15. xx. 20—25.)

V. 16—22. This confusion in the camp of the Philistines being observed by the centinels of Saul's army; and it being found on enquiry that none were absent from the camp of Israel, but Jonathan and his armour-bearer; the people were no doubt greatly astonished: and Saul prepared to consult the Lord, whether he ought to attack the Philistines or no. His impatient spirit, however, could

23 So [g] the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto [h] Beth-aven.

24 ¶ And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, [i] Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food until evening, that [k] I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted *any* food.

25 And [l] all *they of* the land came to a wood; and there was [m] honey upon the ground.

26 And when the people were come into the wood, behold the honey dropped: but no man put his hand to his mouth; for [n] the people feared the oath.

27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that *was* in his hand, and dipped it in an honey-comb, and put his hand to his mouth; and [o] his eyes were enlightened.

28 Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, [p] Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food this day. And the people were [*] faint.

29 Then said Jonathan, [q] My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.

30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to-day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for [r] had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to [s] Aijalon: and the people were very faint.

32 And the people [t] flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew *them* on the ground: and the people [u] did eat *them* with the blood.

33 Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the LORD, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have [†] transgressed: roll a great stone unto me this day.

34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay *them* here, and eat; and sin not against the LORD in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox [‡] with him that night, and slew *them* there.

[g] Ex. xiv. 30. Judg. ii. 18. 2 Kings xiv. 27. Ps. xliv. 6—8. Hos. i. 7.
[h] xiii. 5.
[i] 27—30. Lev. xxvii. 29. Num. xxi. 2. Deut. xxvii. 15—26. Josh. vi. 17—19. 26. Judg. xi. 30, 31. xxi. 1—5. Prov. xi. 9. Rom. x. 2. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.
[k] Judg. v. 2. xvi. 28. Ps. xviii. 47.
[l] Deut. ix. 28. Matt. iii. 5.
[m] Ex. iii. 8. Num. xiii. 27. Matt. iii. 4.
[n] Ec. ix. 2.
[o] 29. xxx. 12.
[p] *See on* 24. 43.
[*] Or, *weary*.
[q] 1 Kings xviii. 18.
[r] Ec. ix. 18.
[s] Josh. x. 12. xix. 42.
[t] xv. 19.
[u] Gen. ix. 4. Lev. iii. 17. vii. 26, 27. xvii. 10—14. xix. 26. Deut. xii. 16. 23, 24. Acts xv. 20. 29.
[†] Or, *dealt treacherously*. Matt. vii. 5. Rom. ii. 1.
[‡] Heb. *in his hand*.

no more wait for Ahiah's answer, than for Samuel's arrival: (*Note*, xiii. 8, 9:) and perceiving the commotion still increasing, he hastily determined to march against the enemy; though he might justly have questioned, whether the Lord, who had begun the work without him, would accept of his assistance. At least there could be no need of such haste. (*Note*, xxx. 7—10.) It pleased the Lord indeed to employ Saul's army, as well as the deserters and fugitives, who joined in crushing the Philistines: (*Note*, *Judg.* vii. 23—25:) yet Saul himself met with a very humiliating proof, that the divine interposition was not vouchsafed on his account. (*Notes*, 36—46.)—Probably the ark of the covenant was brought into the field on this occasion. Yet some think, that the coffer, or chest, in which the ephod and breast-plate were kept, is meant. (*Notes*, iv. 4, 5. 2 *Sam.* xi. 10, 11.)

V. 23. *The battle passed*, &c.] 'The fight continued till they came to this place, which lay westward from Michmash;' (and nearer to Philistia;) 'and there the Philistines threw down their arms, and fled as fast as they could towards their own country.' *Bp. Patrick.* —Thus the Israelites would at once be supplied with arms in abundance. (*Note*, xiii. 22.)

V. 24—34. "The people were distressed," when they should have been full of joy and triumph. The absolute prohibition of all food to the soldiers, for the whole day, was very impolitick; though Saul might properly have cautioned them not to waste their time about food, on penalty of his displeasure. But to accompany this prohibition with that awful curse, by which the enemies of God were devoted to utter destruction, was profane and rash in the extreme; (*Marg. Ref.* i. *Note*, *Lev.* xxvii. 28, 29;) and it was the more inexcusable, in that he did not say, 'that the LORD may avenge Israel on *his* enemies,' but "that I may be avenged on *mine* enemies."—The people, fearing the curse, abstained, not only from the spoil of the Philistines, but likewise from the honey which was abundantly laid in their way, and with which they might have refreshed themselves without loss of time, and thus have been enabled to make a much greater slaughter of the Philistines: and in the evening, being almost fainting with labour and hunger, some were induced hastily to kill the cattle which they had taken, and to eat the flesh with the blood, directly contrary to the law; until they were restrained by Saul's authority. As Saul's precaution could do nothing to prevent the people eating the flesh raw, or only *half roasted*, as some explain it; "eating with the "blood," must refer to the manner of slaughtering the cattle, without properly separating the blood. (*Marg. Ref.* u.) In the mean while, Jonathan, being ignorant of the curse, and almost ready to faint with fatigue, had eaten a little honey, by which he was sensibly and visibly

35 And Saul [v] built an altar unto the LORD: [*] the same was the first altar that he built unto the LORD.

36 ¶ And Saul said, [x] Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning-light, and [y] let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then [z] said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.

37 And Saul asked counsel of God, [a] Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But [b] he answered him not that day.

38 And Saul said, [c] Draw ye near hither all the [†] chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day.

39 For *as* [d] the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But *there was* not a man among all the people *that* answered him.

40 Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, [e] Do what seemeth good unto thee.

41 Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God of Israel, [‡] Give a perfect *lot*. [f] And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people [§] escaped.

42 And Saul said, Cast *lots* between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, [g] Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, [h] I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in mine hand, *and*, lo, I must die.

44 And Saul answered, [i] God do so, and more also: for [k] thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.

45 And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, [l] who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: *as* the LORD liveth, [m] there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for [n] he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

46 Then Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place.

v vii. 9 17. Judg. xxi. 4. Hos. viii. 14. 2 Tim. iii. 5.
* Heb *that altar he began to build.*
x Josh. x. 9—14. 19. Jer. vi. 5.
y xi. 11. Josh. xi. 14.
z Num. xxvii. 21. Ps. lxxiii. 28. Is. xlviii. 1, 2. lviii. 2. Mal. ii. 7. Jam. iv. 8.
a xxiii. 4. 9—12. xxx. 7, 8. Judg. i. 1. xx. 18. 28. 2 Sam. v. 19. 23. 1 Kings xxii. 5, 6. 15.
b xxviii. 6. Ez. xiv. 3—5. xx. 3.
c x. 19, 20. Josh. vii. 14.
† Heb. *corners.* Num. xxiv. 17. Judg. xx. 2. 2 Sam. xviii. 3. Ps. xlvii. 9. Zech. x. 4. Matt. xxi. 42. Eph. ii. 20.
d 24. 44. xix. 6. xx. 31. xxii. 16. xxviii. 10. 2 Sam. xii. 5. Ec. ix. 2.
e 7. 36. 2 Sam. xv. 15.
‡ Or, *Shew the innocent.* Prov. xvi. 33. Acts i. 24.
f x. 20, 21. Josh. vii. 16—18. Jon. i. 7.
§ Heb. *went forth.*
g Josh. vii. 19. Jon. i. 8—10.
h 27.
i xxv. 22. Ruth i. 17. 2 Sam. iii. 9. xix. 13.
k *See on* 39.—Gen. xxxviii. 24. 2 Sam. xii. 5. 31.
l 23. xix. 5. Neh. ix. 27.
m 2 Sam. xiv. 11. 1 Kings i. 52. Matt. x. 30. Luke xxi. 18 Acts xxvii. 34.
n Is. xiii. 3. Acts xiv. 27. xv. 12. xxi. 19. Rom. xv. 18. 1 Cor. iii. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 1. Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 14.

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revived; so that his eyes, which had been dim and languishing, were enlightened and looked lively. He however, thus found himself caught in a snare, and exposed to the most imminent danger of being put to death. He had therefore reason to complain, that his "father had trou- "bled the land," (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xviii. 17—20,) as his conduct in every way obstructed the complete success of Israel.

V. 35. It is probable that Saul converted the great stone, on which the cattle had been slaughtered, into an altar on which sacrifices were offered, before the people attempted to proceed any further.—He built this his *first* altar, when, disregarding Samuel, he had begun to apostatize from God! (*Notes, Num.* xxiii. 1, 2. 2 *Kings* xviii. 22, *Hos.* viii. 13, 14.)

V. 36—44. When the people had refreshed themselves, Saul proposed to them to pursue the army of the Philistines, in order to destroy it entirely; to which they readily consented. But Ahiah, having been before interrupted by Saul's impatience, very properly counselled them to enquire of the Lord; and when no answer was returned, Saul justly concluded that the Lord was offended, and desired to discover the cause. (*Marg. Ref.* x—b.) But, if he had been humbly sensible of the evil of his own past conduct, he would have concluded himself to be the culprit. (*Notes*, xxviii. 6. *Ez.* xiv. 1—5. xx. 1—3.) The Lord, however, was pleased, that the conduct of Jonathan, who had unwarily exposed himself to the curse denounced by his father, should be discovered, as the cause why he did not answer the high priest's enquiries: that the people might understand how much they were interested in the conduct of their king; and be convinced of their folly in rejecting the government of a pious prophet whose prayers brought down blessings, for that of a king whose curses brought down wrath upon them. (*Notes*, vii. viii.) In the same rash and profane spirit as in the former instance, Saul, before the lots were cast, sware by the Lord, that even if Jonathan were the offender, he should surely die; without knowing whether the crime committed deserved death, or whether it might not be expiated by a sin-offering. And after the lots had been cast, (with prayer, as probably was the constant practice,) and Jonathan was taken; Saul, with affected sternness, without any humiliation for his own sin in thus rashly troubling Israel; as one who appeared zealous for the glory of God, and the obligation of an oath, while in reality tenacious of his own will and authority; and with execrations on himself, proceeded to denounce the sentence of death upon his own pious son! (*Notes*, xv. 15. *Gen.* xxxviii. 24—26. 2 *Sam.* xii. 26—31.)

Give a perfect lot. (41) "Shew the innocent." (*Marg.*)

V. 45, 46. The people judged rightly, that the guilt was contracted by Saul, and that the rebuke was intended for him, and not for Jonathan; and therefore they rescued him, by whom God had given them this extraordinary deliverance, from the hands of his severe father. Saul could not but desire the life of his son: yet considering him as decidedly preferred before himself, both by the Lord and by Israel; knowing that Jonathan's deliverance was a severe

o xiii. 1. 47 ¶ So Saul °took the kingdom
p 2 Kings xiv 27. over Israel, and ᵖ fought against all his
enemies on every side, against Moab,
q xi. 11. xii. 2. and against the children of ᵠ Ammon,
and against Edom, and against the kings
r 2 Sam. x. 6. 1 Kings xi. 23. of ʳ Zobah, and against the Philistines,
and whithersoever he turned himself
he vexed *them*.

* Or, *wrought mightily.* s xv. 3—7. Ex. xvii. 14. Deut. xxv. 19. 48 And he * gathered an host, and
ˢ smote the Amalekites, and delivered
Israel out of the hands of them that
spoiled them.

t xxxi. 2. 1 Chr. viii. 33. ix. 39. 49 Now the sons of Saul were ᵗ Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchi-shua:
and the names of his two daughters
were these; the ᵘ name of the first-
u xviii. 17—2. xxv. 44. 2 Sam. iii. 13—16. vi. 20—23. born Merab, and the name of the
younger Michal:

50 And the name of Saul's wife *was*
Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz;
and ˣ the name of the captain of his
x xvii. 55. 2 Sam. ii. 8. iii. 27. host *was* † Abner the son of Ner, Saul's
† Heb. *Abiner.* uncle.

51 And ʸ Kish *was* the father of
y ix. 1. Saul; and Ner the father of Abner *was*
the son of Abiel.

52 And there was sore war against
the Philistines all the days of Saul:
and ᶻ when Saul saw any strong man, or
z viii. 1. any valiant man, he took him unto him.

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reproof of his rashness; and perhaps apprehending, as he had abundant cause to do, that his repeated curses would light on his own head; he returned home apparently dissatisfied and displeased. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xx. 38—43.) Thus the opportunity of completing the destruction of the Philistines was lost: nor could it be expected, that an expedition, which was begun and conducted so very ill, should terminate without some evident tokens of the divine displeasure against Saul; though the Lord's love to Israel was displayed in an unparalleled manner, by means of the faith and courage of his pious son Jonathan.—Through Saul's misconduct, and as if in answer to his imprecations, Jonathan was excluded from the kingdom, and slain with him by the Philistines, when "the LORD did unto him," as he intended to do to his son, "and more also;" having indeed devoted him to utter destruction. (44. *Notes*, xxxi. 2—6.)

V. 47—52. After the decided victory gained over the Philistines, Saul's authority as king of Israel was re-established: and though the Lord was displeased with him, and purposed to set aside his family; yet he prospered him in the wars which he carried on against the several nations which oppressed Israel.—It is evident that many important transactions of his reign are passed over in silence; and that in general it was more active and successful, (in the former part of it especially,) than it appears at first sight to have been. But, to the end of his life, Saul was unable to prevail against the Philistines, having missed the opportunity which God had afforded him: so that, after having had sore war with him all his days, the three sons here mentioned fell at last by their hands, and he was driven to murder himself. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Saul seems to have had only one wife, and Rizpah his concubine. (2 *Sam.* xxi. 8—10.)

The sons of Saul. (49) Jonathan, Ishui, (called *Abinadab*, xxxi. 2,) and Melchi-shua, the sons of Saul, 'were '...fit to accompany him in his wars, and upon that ac-'count are only mentioned here; ...though he had ano-'ther son (Ish-bosheth) who is mentioned 1 *Chr.* viii. 33, 'under the name of Eth-baal.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—23.

The same principle, as induces men to seek relief from the accusations of conscience, by abounding in the externals of religion, will lead them to seek refuge from the warnings and reproofs of faithful ministers, by paying court to others, who, either out of mistake, timidity, or unfaithfulness, give them less disturbance in sin: but God will shew a marked disapprobation of such attendance on his own ordinances, or profession of his truths, as is intended to quiet the conscience, or support the credit, of sinners, who persist in disobeying the plain precepts of his holy word.—Hypocrites often detect their indifference, even about the religion which they professedly choose; for as it has no practical energy upon them, a small matter induces them to dispense with the useless form.—No warnings nor examples are sufficient to convince men of the folly and danger of trusting in the forms of godliness, while they neglect the power of it; but from age to age multitudes proceed in the same destructive path. (*Note*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 1—5.) Yet, blessed be God, every age also produces illustrious instances of those, who being strong in faith give glory to God; and its triumphs are proportioned to its strength.—While we are obeying the commands of God, trusting his protection, and seeking his glory, neither the sense of our own weakness, nor the power of our enemies should dismay us; "for there is no restraint to "the LORD to save by many or by few." We are not indeed warranted at present to expect *miraculous* interpositions: yet the feeblest instrument, who sincerely and in faith uses the appointed means, in order to subvert Satan's kingdom of ignorance, error, and wickedness, is authorised to expect considerable success; for "it may be that "the LORD will work with him:" and then the weapons of his warfare will prove mighty, and no force of the enemies of our God and his Christ can stand before him. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* i. 20—25. 2 *Cor.* iv. 7. x. 1—6.) At his frown the mightiest armies melt away, or prove instruments of each other's destruction: what then will be the consternation and horror, when the whole world shall be assembled before his tribunal, and "the wicked shall be cast into hell, "and all the nations that forget God!"

V. 24—52.

In the midst of the most glorious success, "one sinner." often "destroyeth much good:" and rash zeal is as hurtful as timid inaction. It indeed becomes an Israelite to be

CHAP. XV.

Saul is sent to destroy Amalek, 1—3. He gathers a large army, favours the Kenites, and smites the Amalekites, 4—7. He spares Agag and the best of the spoil, 8, 9. Samuel is sent to declare unto him, that God has rejected him for his disobedience; and Saul in vain attempts to excuse himself, 10—21. He is convicted of rebellion; and partially humbles himself, but cannot get the sentence reversed, 22—31. Samuel kills Agag, and finally leaves Saul, 32—35.

a 17, 18. ix. 16. x. 1. SAMUEL also said unto Saul, [a] The LORD sent me to anoint thee *to be* king over his people, over Israel: now therefore b 16. xii. 14. xiii. 13. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. 1 Chr. xxii. 12, 13. Ps. ii. 10, 11. [b] hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, [c] I remember *that* which [d] Amalek did to Israel, how he laid *wait* for him in the way when he came up from Egypt.

c Jer. xxxi. 34. Hos. vii. 2. Am. viii. 7.
d Ex. xvii. 8—16. Num. xxiv. 20. Deut. xxv. 17. 19.

3 Now go, and smite Amalek, and [e] utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but [f] slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, [g] ox and sheep, camel and ass.

e Lev. xxvii. 28, 29. Deut. xiii. 15, 16. xx. 16—18. Josh. vi. 17—21.
f Ex. xx. 5. Num. xxxi. 17. Is. xiv. 21, 22.
g Gen. iii. 17, 18. Rom. viii. 20—22.

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in [h] Telaim, [i] two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

h Josh. xv. 24. *Telem.*
i xi. 8. xiii. 15.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and [*] laid wait in the valley.

* Or, *fought.*

superior to the cravings of his appetites: but there is neither prudence nor piety in restraining men from partaking of the bounty of Providence, when placed honestly within their reach; and when it is so used as to prepare them for his service, and encourage rather than hinder them in it. They are indeed "troublers of Israel," who prohibit such use of those good things which "God giveth "us richly to enjoy:" the curses, with which they sanction their antichristian mandates, will fall on their own heads; and they will be answerable for all the consequences: for restraints from things lawful generally prove temptations to forbidden indulgences, and a superstitious zeal about externals has often hindered men from performing essential services to the church. (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 1—5.) —When rulers, by authority, would withhold men from transgression, while they set them an example of disobedience to God, they cannot reasonably expect success.—We are too much in haste in our most important employments, if we do not allow ourselves time to consult the Lord and seek his blessing; and ministers should plainly remind those, who are running into this common mistake. —When our prayers are not answered, we may safely conclude that iniquity withholds good from us, and we should make diligent search for it: but we should always first suspect and examine ourselves; whereas an unhumbled heart suspects every other person, and looks every where but to himself, for the sinful cause of calamity!—Those who are indulgent to their own sins, are generally severe in animadverting on the faults of others: and such as most disregard God's authority, are most impatient when their own commands appear to be slighted, or their reputation eclipsed; and, by severity against minute deviations, real or supposed, they frequently endeavour to varnish over their own enormous transgressions.—Those who delight in cursing, are in extreme danger of falling under the awful curse of God: (*Note*, *Ps.* cix. 6—20:) and the habit of swearing will certainly involve a man in the guilt of perjury, as well as of profaneness; for though now concealed, his iniquity will be "sure to find him out."—No oath can bind us to commit injustice: but the rash swearer should repent of his iniquity, and not add one crime to another; and all men should join to rescue the innocent from punishment.—In this world, if they who have "wrought "with God," and have been remarkably useful to his people, escape persecution and death as their recompence; they are more favoured than those who have gone before them; and need not expect much advantage to themselves from their usefulness, till they get to heaven.—In the midst of mercy the Lord will rebuke his people for their sins; and by mismanagement men lose the comfort of their successes, and are discontented, and filled with vexation, in the midst of blessings.—But the Lord employs even wicked men as instruments of providential good to his people: in temporal prosperity they forget their sins and the threatened wrath of God: and thus they blaze for a moment, like a meteor, and then are put out in utter darkness. O Lord, let us rather be chastened here, than thus prosper and be condemned with the world!

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—3. It is probable, that for some years Saul scarcely took any notice of Samuel, in his wars and successes; perhaps resenting the sharp rebuke which he had before given him: and Samuel did not intrude himself. But now, he was sent to Saul with an express command, to go and utterly destroy the Amalekites. (xiv. 48.) In delivering his message the prophet reminded him, that he had been commissioned by the Lord to anoint him king, and that now he spake by the same authority: he seemed also to intimate, that unless Saul "hearkened to "the voice of the words of the LORD," he should be authorized to denounce the sentence of rejection against him; and he gave him his instructions in the most explicit and particular manner. The Amalekites had long before been condemned; (*Notes*, *Ex.* xvii. 8—16. *Deut.* xxv. 17—19:) but the nation had been spared, till it had filled up the measure of its iniquities.—The righteous Lord certainly did no injustice to individuals; and the example was of a salutary tendency, to deter others in future ages from "meddling to their hurt" with the servants of the living God. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Num.* xxxi. 2. *Josh.* vi. 21.)

V. 4. The large army, which was collected when Samuel directed the enterprize, shews that the people had much more confidence in their rejected prophet, than in the king whom they had so inordinately desired. (xiii. 5—15.) The disproportionate number of Judah, might perhaps be the effect of their dissatisfaction with a king of another tribe. —The armies of Israel at that time had no cavalry.

6 And Saul said unto [k] the Kenites, [l] Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for [m] ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

7 And Saul [n] smote the Amalekites from [o] Havilah *until* thou comest to [p] Shur, that *is* over against Egypt.

8 And he took [q] Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and [r] utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and [s] the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of [*] the fatlings, and the lambs, and all *that was* good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing *that was* vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

10 ¶ Then came the word of the [t] LORD unto Samuel, saying,

11 It [t] repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he is [u] turned back from following me, and [x] hath not performed my commandments. And [y] it grieved Samuel; and [z] he cried unto the LORD all night.

12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to [a] Carmel, and, behold, [b] he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul; and Saul said unto him, [c] Blessed *be* thou of the LORD: [d] I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14 And Samuel said, [e] What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: [f] for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, [g] to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

k xxvii. 10. Num. xxiv. 21, 22. Judg. i. 16. iv. 11. v. 24. 1 Chr. ii. 55.
l Gen. xviii. 25. xix. 12—16. Num. xvi. 26, 27. 34. Prov. ix. 6. Acts ii. 40. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Rev. xviii. 4.
m Ex. xviii. 9, 10. 19. Num. x. 29—32.
n xiv. 48. Job xxi. 30. Ec. viii. 13.
o Gen. ii. 11. xxv. 18.
p xxvii. 8. Gen. xvi. 7.
q 3. Num. xxiv. 7. 1 Kings xx. 34—42. Esth. iii. 1.
r xxvii. 8. xxx. 1. Josh. x. 39. xi. 12.
s 3. 15. 19. Josh. vii. 21.
* Or, *the second sort.* 2 Sam. vi. 13.
t 35. Gen. vi. 6. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Ps. cx. 4. Jer. xviii. 7—10. Am. vii. 3. Jon. iii. 10. iv. 2.
u Josh. xxii. 16. 1 Kings ix. 6. Ps. xxxvi. 3. lxxviii. 41. 57. cxxv. 5. Zeph. i. 6. Matt. xxiv. 13. Heb. x. 38.
x 3. 9. xiii. 13.
y 35. xvi. 1. Ps. cxix. 136. Jer. ix. 1. 18. xiii. 17. Luke xix. 41—44. Rom. ix. 1—3.
z xii. 23. Ps. cix. 4. Matt. v. 44. Luke vi. 12.
a xxv. 2. Josh. xv. 55.
b vii. 12. Josh. iv. 8, 9. 2 Sam. xviii. 18.
c xiii. 10. Gen. xiv. 19. Judg. xvii. 2. Ruth iii. 10.
d 9. 11. Prov. xxvii. 2. xxxi. 31. Luke xvii. 10. xviii. 11.
e Ps. xxxvi. 2. l. 16—21. Jer. ii. 18, 19. 22, 23. 34—37. Mal. iii. 13—15. Luke xix. 22. Rom. iii. 19. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
f 9. 21. Gen. iii. 12, 13. Ex. xxxii. 22, 23. Job xxxi. 33. Prov. xxviii. 13.
g Matt. ii. 8. Luke x. 29.

V. 6. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num.* x. 29—32. *Judg.* i. 16. iv. 11.

V. 7. The region occupied by the Amalekites, lay between Havilah on the north-east, and Shur on the south-west: and Saul carried his victorious arms through the whole extent of this district. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8, 9. The Lord had devoted all the Amalekites, together with their substance, to utter destruction, as a solemn sacrifice to his justice: and the commandment given to Saul, concerning the execution of this sentence, was express and particular (3); and probably intended as a test of his disposition to obey or disobey God. (*Notes,* xiii. 13—15. *Deut.* vii. 25, 26. *Josh.* vi. 17—19. vii. 1. 10—26.)—But, while neither he nor his soldiers were induced to mitigate the severity of the injunction, by sparing any of the women or children; he, perhaps in complaisance to royalty, or to grace his victory, spared the king of Amalek; (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xx. 28—43:) and the people, doubtless by his concurrence, covetously reserved the best of the cattle and substance, destroying only the refuse which was of little value. Saul's conduct was evidently the effect of a proud rebellious spirit.—Many Amalekites escaped at this time, probably without his fault; and we read of them afterwards as a numerous people. (*Notes,* xxvii. 8—12. xxx. 1—3.)

V. 11. (*Note, Gen.* vi. 6, 7.) The Lord's change of conduct towards Saul was similar to that change in our conduct, which springs from repentance; though by means of all he accomplished his own wise and righteous purposes.—Samuel had been soon reconciled to the people's rejection of him and his family, and had cheerfully anointed Saul: (*Notes,* viii—x:) and from his first actions he had framed a favourable opinion of him. When he therefore was rejected, Samuel was exceedingly grieved; and he interceded all night for the reversal of the sentence. (*Notes, Jer.* xiii. 15—17. xviii. 19, 20. *Luke* xix. 41—44. *Rom.* ix. 1—3.)

V. 12. *Set him up a place.*] Probably this was a trophy, or monument of the victory. The whole implies, that Saul took great state upon himself, and was not a little elated with his success. (*Note,* 2 *Sam.* xviii. 17, 18.)

V. 13, 14. Perhaps Saul was in some degree conscious of having done wrong; and he therefore addressed Samuel in this respectful language, in order to conciliate his good-will, and to ward off the rebuke which he feared. Some however think he was so insensible of having committed any fault, that he was disposed to boast of his obedience, and expected to be congratulated and commended by the prophet. But Samuel's answer shewed him at once that the very herds and flocks, which were driven along with him, fully convicted him of inexcusable disobedience. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. It is not probable, that either Saul or the people had fully purposed to sacrifice all the cattle which they had reserved: but even in that case, they opposed their own will and wisdom to the express command of God; and no doubt they intended to save their own cattle by means of them.—Saul took the merit of his obedience to himself; but he threw the blame of the disobedience on the people. Yet had he exerted his authority, with as much decision, in support of God's command, as he had done before in enforcing his own prohibition; and had he been as determined in the execution of Agag, as he was disposed to be in putting his son to death; it is not likely that any

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, [h] Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, [i] When thou *wast* little in thine own sight, *wast* thou not *made* the head of the tribes of Israel, and [j] the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go, and utterly destroy [k] the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until [*] they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst [l] fly upon the spoil, and [m] didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, [n] Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and [o] have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But [p] the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, [q] Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to [r] obey *is* better than sacrifice; *and* to hearken, than the fat of rams.

23 For [s] rebellion *is as* the sin of [†] witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry: because [t] thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, [u] I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words; because [x] I feared the people, and [y] obeyed their voice.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, [z] pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

h ix. 27. xii. 7. 1 Kings xxii. 16.
i ix. 21. x. 22. Judg. vi. 15. Hos. xiii. 1. Matt. xviii. 4.
j 1—3. x. 1.
k Gen. xiii. 13. xv. 16. Num. xvi. 38. Job xxxi. 3. Prov. x. 29. xiii. 21.
* Heb. *they consume them.*
l Prov. xv. 27. Jer. vii. 11. Hab. ii. 9—12. 2 Tim. iv. 10.
m 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. 6. xxxvi. 12.
n 13. Job xxxiii. 9. xxxiv. 5. xxxv. 2. xl. 8. Matt. xix. 20. Luke x. 29. xviii. 11. Rom. x. 3.
o 3. 8.
p *See on* 15.—Gen. iii. 13. Ex. xxxii. 22, 23.
q Ps. l. 8, 9. Prov. xxi. 3. Is. i. 11—17. Jer. vii. 22, 23. Hos. vi. 6. Am. v. 21—24. Mic. vi. 6—8. Matt. ix. 13. xii. 7. xxiii. 23. Heb. x. 6—9.
r Ex. xix. 5. Jer. vii. 23. xi. 4. 7. xxvi. 13.
s xii. 14, 15. Num. xiv. 9. Deut. ix. 7. 24. Josh. xxii. 16—19. Job xxxiv. 37. Ps. cvii. 11. Jer. xxviii. 16. xxix. 32. Ez. ii. 5—8.
† Heb. *divination.* Ex. xxii. 18. Lev. xx. 6. 27. Deut. xviii. 10, 11. Is. viii. 19. xix. 3.
t ii. 30. xiii. 14. xvi. 1. 2 Kings xvii. 15—20. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9.
u 30. Ex. ix. 27. x. 16. Num. xxii. 34. 2 Sam. xii. 13. Matt. xxvii. 4.
x 9. 15. Ex. xxiii. 2. Job xxxi. 34. Prov. xxix. 25. Is. li. 12, 13. Luke xxiii. 20—25. Rev. xxi. 8.
y ii. 29. Gen. iii. 12. 17. Jer. xxxviii. 5.
z Ex. x. 17.

opposition would have been made to his orders. (*Note*, xiv. 36—44.)

V. 16—18. *Marg. Ref.—A journey.* (18) The expedition had been so prosperous, that it was more like a safe and easy journey, than a laborious and perilous warfare.

V. 19. *Fly*, &c.] 'With great greediness, as a hungry 'bird or beast upon his prey.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 20, 21. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen.* iii. 12, 13. *Ex.* xxxii. 21—24. *Luke* x. 25—29.

V. 22. Submission to the authority of God, must be essential to true religion under every dispensation: but there is a great difference between the submission of a *holy*, and that of a *sinful* creature. External obedience, even to moral precepts, is good in the sight of God, only when it springs from a willing submission of the soul to the divine authority. To profess a belief of the gospel is good, only when it arises from submission to the divine teaching, to the justice of the condemnation under which sinners are concluded, and to the wisdom, suitableness, and grace of the method of salvation there revealed. All instituted worship derives its obligation from the express appointment of God, from the honour which it renders to his name, from the disposition of the worshipper, and from the grace and spiritual blessings which are communicated by it. Sacrifices especially declared the desert of the offender, and typified the sufferings of the Saviour: their value resulted entirely from the appointment of God; and they were not acceptable, except offered in *obedience* to him, and with a penitent, believing, and pious mind. (*Note, Jer.* vii. 21—23.) When therefore they were substituted in the place of true piety, or trusted in as meritorious; when the *means* were used to compensate for the neglect of the *end*, and the *sign* was exalted into the place of the thing *signified*; they became an abomination, however costly and numerous they were.—Had Saul offered thousands of bullocks and rams, not of the spoils of Amalek, but from his own herds and flocks, exactly according to the divine ritual, in an impenitent and self-confident disposition, God would have abhorred them: how much more then, when the animals to be sacrificed were spared, in direct disobedience to his express command!—Samuel did not therefore mean to exalt one part of *external* religion by depreciating another, as many seem to suppose; but to shew that a right state of the heart is essential to the acceptable performance of every service. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps.* l. 7—15. *Prov.* xv. 8, 9. *Is.* i. 10—15. *Am.* v. 21—24.)

V. 23. The heinousness of any sin is not to be judged of, by the magnitude of the object about which it is committed, or the grossness of the outward action; but from the deliberate and determined disobedience of the will, whence it arises. (*Note, Gen.* iii. 6.) When the Lord expressly says, 'Thou shalt;' and his rational creature dares to persist in saying, 'I will not;' whether the contest be about an apple or a kingdom, it is *stubbornness* and *rebellion*, a contempt of the commandment of God, and a daring insult to his majesty and authority; and has in it all the essential malignity, which constitutes idolatry or witchcraft, or crimes punishable by death according to the divine law. Therefore Saul for this rebellion was condemned to lose his kingdom. (*Note*, xiii. 13—15.)

Witchcraft.] Probably Saul had before this shewn much zeal against those who practised witchcraft; (*Note*, xxviii. 3:) and this circumstance would add poignancy to Samuel's reproof.

V. 24, 25. Saul could no longer deny his offence, or entirely excuse it; and therefore he confessed it, yet in such a manner as detected an unhumbled heart. He per-

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, [a] I will not return with thee: for [b] thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28 And Samuel said unto him, [c] The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and [d] hath given it to [e] a neighbour of thine, *that is* better than thou.

29 And also [f] the * Strength of Israel [g] will not lie, nor repent: for he *is* not a man, that he should repent.

30 Then he said, I have sinned; *yet* [h] honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, [i] that I may worship the LORD thy God.

31 So Samuel turned again after Saul, and Saul worshipped the LORD.

32 ¶ Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag, the king of the Amalekites: and Agag came unto him delicately. And [k] Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

33 And Samuel said, [l] As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel [m] hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to [n] Gibeah of Saul.

35 And [o] Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death; nevertheless, [p] Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD [q] repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

a 31. Gen. xlii. 38. xliii. 11—14. Luke xxiv. 28, 29.
b *See on* 23.—xiii. 14. xvi. 1. Jer. vi. 19. Hos. iv. 6.
c xxviii. 17, 18. 1 Kings xi. 30, 31.
d ii. 7, 8. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6. Dan. iv. 17. 32. John xix. 11. Rom. xiii. 1.
e xiii. 14. xvi. 12. Acts xiii. 22.
f Ps. xxix. 11. lxviii. 35. Is. xlv. 24. Joel iii. 16. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Phil. iv. 13.
* Or, *Eternity*, or, *Victory*. Deut. xxxiii. 27.
g Num. xiv. 28, 29. xxiii. 19. Ps. xcv. 11. Ez. xxiv. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18.
h Hab. ii. 4. John v. 44. xii. 43.
i Is. xxix. 13. Luke xviii. 9—14. 2 Tim. iii. 5.
k Jer. xlviii. 44. 1 Thes. v. 3. Rev. xviii. 7.
l Gen. ix. 6. Judg. i. 7. Matt. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 13. Rev. xvi. 6. xviii. 6.
m Num. xxv. 7, 8. 1 Kings xviii. 40. Is. xxxiv. 6. Jer. xlviii. 10.
n xi. 4.
o xix. 24.
p 11. xvi. 1. Ps. cxix. 136. Jer. ix. 1, 2. Rom. ix. 2, 3. Phil. iii. 18.
q *See on* 11. Gen. vi. 6.

sisted in transferring the blame to the people; "for he "feared them, and obeyed their voice:" yet he was not so timid, or *obedient* to them, when his own interest or authority were concerned. (*Notes, Ex.* xxxii. 21—24. *Matt.* xiv. 8—11.) He seems to have been more disquieted because Samuel was offended, than because the Lord was angry with him: and he intreated Samuel to pardon his sin, as if he had possessed authority to reverse the sentence which God had denounced. (23, *Note, Ex.* x. 16, 17.)

V. 26—28. (*Marg. Ref.—Note,* xxviii. 12—19.) It does not appear that Saul had any real attachment to Samuel; but he doubtless respected his character: and, aware of his influence with the people, he perhaps feared, lest departing in displeasure, and anointing another king, he should stir up the people to revolt, and thus immediately execute the sentence against him. He therefore earnestly opposed his departure; and, by rending Samuel's mantle, afforded a significant token of the kingdom being rent from him, and given to a more worthy person. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xi. 9—13. 29—31.)

V. 29. *The Strength of Israel.*] Or, "*The victory of* "*Israel.*" (*Marg.*) Saul took the honour of the victory and of Israel's protection to himself, and raised a trophy of it (12): but Samuel seems to have indirectly rebuked his vanity, and reminded him that the eternal God, was indeed "Israel's Strength and Victory."—"The LORD re-"pented of having set up Saul to be king;" (*Note,* 11;) for not having confirmed his promise of the kingdom to him by an oath, an opening was left for the change of measures intended by this expression. But Saul had now provoked him to pass sentence against him, and as with a solemn oath to declare that it was irreversible. In that case, God is never said to *repent;* nay, it is spoken of as an impossibility that he should. (*Notes, Num.* xiv. 27—30. *Ps.* xcv. 9—11. cx. 4. *Heb.* iii. 14—19. vi. 13—20. vii. 20—22.)

V. 30, 31. When Saul ought to have *publickly* confessed his sin, and taken shame to himself; he was very solicitous, that Samuel should honour him before the elders and people, probably for fear of an insurrection. (*Note, Ps.* li. *title.*) Perhaps he also thought that God would accept his worship, if Samuel was present, but not otherwise.—Samuel however, perhaps by divine direction, changed his mind and delayed his departure; that he might not *occasion* any disturbance among the people, and that he might execute the justice of God upon Agag. Thus he was present at Saul's worship, but it does not appear that he took any part in it.

V. 32, 33. Agag affected the stateliness and dignity of a monarch even in his degraded and perilous circumstances, as if he would over-awe the aged prophet: and he spake, either as one who deemed himself in no danger of death, seeing he had escaped the sword of a conquering king, and could have nothing to fear from Samuel; or, as having got over the fear of death, and as determined to meet it with intrepidity. He was indeed the chief person who ought to have been slain, both as the head of the devoted nation, and for his own cruelties; and therefore "Samuel hewed "him to pieces before the LORD," as a sacrifice to his justice. (*Notes, Josh.* viii. 29. *Judg.* viii. 18—21.) Thus the prophet, who was of a lenient spirit, and prayed all night for Saul, did not hesitate to execute that sentence of God upon this condemned criminal, which Saul, who afterwards proved himself exceedingly cruel, had not done.

V. 34, 35. From this time, Samuel withdrew entirely from Saul, as one rejected by God; and though Saul once came to him, (xix. 23, 24,) he never went to Saul any more: yet he continued to mourn over him. (*Notes,* 11. xvi. 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

Those who have not learned to obey God, are not well qualified to rule over others, especially over the Lord's people.—The righteous vengeance of God may be long

CHAP. XVI.

God sends Samuel to Beth-lehem, to anoint a king out of Jesse's sons, and directs him to conceal his business by a sacrifice, 1—5. Seven of Jesse's sons pass by, and are not approved, 6—10. David is called from the flock, and anointed, 11—13. An evil spirit troubles Saul; who, counselled by his servants, sends for David, and is relieved by his musick, 14—23.

delayed; but it will certainly be executed, according to his most tremendous threatenings, upon all impenitent sinners; yet with the most marked severity upon the ring-leaders in persecution, and on such as endeavour to hinder those who are setting out in the ways of piety.—When he calls us to our work, and his time is come, he will provide us helpers and give us success; but he will at the same time make trial of our spirits. We must not *avenge* ourselves without express command; but we may at any time *requite* the kindness of our benefactors: and those who do good to the worshippers and servants of God for his sake, treasure up blessings for their posterity.—It is dangerous to live among wicked people; and if we would not perish with them, we must keep separate from them, as far as consists with our various duties.—The pride of man's heart can admit the blasphemous idea of being *more merciful than God*, and of censuring the threatened punishment of sinners as too severe! while covetousness deems the "vile "and refuse" good enough to be spent wholly in religion; (*Note, Mal.* i. 12—14;) and hypocrisy is detected by partiality in obedience, and paying more honour to wicked great men, than to the command of God.—Many go far in the external appearance of religion, who turn back from following the Lord, and are given up to be hardened, and to perish. Over such persons faithful ministers are often constrained to grieve. They must and will, however, deliver the message of God to them, though their hearts be pained by so doing: and if sinners knew their secret sorrow, and fervent and multiplied prayers for them, and considered that they speak no more than God has required them to say, they could hardly so much resent their most faithful reproofs.—When men are solicitous to publish and perpetuate the memory of their religious services, they shew that they only sought human applause; and "verily "they have their reward:" (*Notes, Matt.* vi. 1—4. xxiii. 5—7:) and when they boast of their obedience, and by fair speeches would extort commendation from the servants of God, we may be sure their conduct will not endure a strict scrutiny.—Many observable circumstances betray the hypocrisy of some confident professors of godliness. If indeed you are true disciples of Christ; what mean these evil tempers, this covetousness, this luxury and pride of life, this conformity to the world, this contempt and neglect of the poor? Was this the mind and life of Christ? Is this the scriptural character of a Christian? "The "bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen," did not more fully detect Saul's disobedience, than things of this kind do the hypocrisy of numbers, who seem to be religious. But, by self-examination and circumspection, men should render it unnecessary for ministers to press home upon their consciences such convincing questions. The unhumbled heart, however, will never be at a loss to excuse or palliate the most evident criminality; and it will always be necessary for preachers to drive sinners from their subterfuges, to shew them the malignity and aggravation of their offences, to silence their objections and excuses, and to urge conviction upon their hearts: though the convincing Spirit of God alone can render the means effectual. (*Note, John* xvi. 8—11.)

V. 22—35.

In exercising the sacred ministry, nothing is of more importance, than an accurate knowledge of the relative and comparative value of the truths, precepts, and ordinances of religion; about which hypocrites greatly mistake, and thus impose upon themselves. An obedient heart is essential to all religion: and, in a sinner, implies a ready obedience to the command given to all men to repent, an obedient reliance on the Saviour's merits; an obedient attendance on all instituted ordinances as means of grace; and a cheerful obedience to the commands of Christ, from love to his name, and a desire to adorn his gospel. The expression of this temper even in the most minute concerns, and with much infirmity and many mistakes, is accepted by a merciful God: but a proud, stubborn, rebellious will renders the most splendid services, and the most specious profession, abominable in his sight, and ranks them with the most atrocious crimes.—The impenitent sinner may be detected even in his confessions and the behaviour which accompanies them. He has always some reserve; he throws the blame off from himself; he shews an anxiety about the esteem of man, and a fear of temporal loss, shame, and suffering, more than of the future wrath of an offended God; and he attempts to quiet his conscience with external forms and a partial reformation. In vain do such men endeavour to prevail with the faithful ministers of Christ to countenance them. The more they attempt it, the more awful warnings will they receive of approaching ruin: and when the servants of God despair of doing them good, they will withdraw, and leave them to themselves, whatever be their rank in life, that they may interpret their silence and absence into a constant reproof.—The fear of men is no excuse for disobeying God; and moreover it is often a mere pretence; for many will plead it for neglecting self-denying duties, who dread no man's displeasure in gratifying their own passions!—When the sentence of final rejection is irreversibly denounced, repentance will be unavailing: and though our God is now ready to forgive, he will neither repent nor change his purposes of vengeance hereafter; for the "Strength "of Israel" will be *eternally* engaged to punish his stoutest and proudest foes.—If those who were regarded when little in their own eyes, are elated by prosperity and forget the Lord, he will contemn them: and when one instrument is rejected, another more suitable shall be sought out.—The mighty of the earth are so accustomed to flattery and distinction, that they can scarcely suppose any will dare to withhold it from them: but "with God there is no re-"spect of persons;" and, while he requires his servants to honour those who are in authority, he teaches them to be of his judgment concerning comparative excellency. Neither dignity, nor delicacy, nor vain confidence, gives sinners any security: "the bitterness of death" may meet them when and where they least expect it; but the bitter-

AND the LORD said unto Samuel, [a] How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, [b] seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine [c] horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to [d] Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Samuel said, [e] How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer [*] with thee, and say, [f] I am come to sacrifice to the LORD;

3 And [g] call Jesse to the sacrifice, [h] and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt [i] anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee.

4 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Beth-lehem: and the elders of the town [j] trembled at his [†] coming, and said, [k] Comest thou peaceably?

5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord; [l] sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass when they were come, that he looked on [m] Eliab, and said, [n] Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before him.

7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, [o] Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD* [p] *seeth* not as man seeth; for man [q] looketh on the [‡] outward appearance, but the LORD looketh [r] on the heart.

8 Then Jesse called [s] Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

9 Then Jesse made [t] Shammah to pass by: and he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

10 Again, Jesse made [u] seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, [x] There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep.

a xv. 11. 35.
b xiii. 13, 14. xv. 23. 26. Jer. vi. 30. xiv. 11, 12. xv. 1. 1 John v. 16.
c ix. 16. x. 1. 2 Kings ix. 1. 3. 6.
d xiii. 14. Gen. xlix. 8—10. Ruth iv. 18—22. 1 Chr. ii. 10—15. Ps. lxxviii. 68—71. lxxxix. 19, 20. Is. xi. 1. 10. Acts xiii. 21, 22. Rom. xv. 12.
e Ex. iii. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 9—14. Matt. x. 16. Luke i. 34.
* Heb. *in thine hand.* ix. 12.
f Jer. xxxviii. 26, 27.
g ix. 12, 13. 2 Sam. xv. 11. Matt. xxii. 1—4.
h Ex. iv. 15. Acts ix. 6.
i 12, 13. ix. 16.
j xxi. 1. 2 Sam. vi. 9. 1 Kings xvii. 18. Hos. vi. 5. xi. 10. Luke v. 8. viii. 37.
† Heb. *meeting.*
k 1 Kings ii. 13. 2 Kings ix. 22. 1 Chr. xii. 17, 18.
l Ex. xix. 10. 14, 15. Lev. xx. 7, 8. Num. xi. 18. Josh. iii. 5. vii. 13. 2 Chr. xxx. 17—20. Job i. 5. Ps. xxvi. 2—6. Joel ii. 16. 1 Cor. xi. 28.
m xvii. 13. 28. 1 Chr. ii. 13—xxvii. 18. *Elihu.*
n Judg. viii. 18.
o ix. 2. x. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xiv. 25. Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11. Prov. xxxi. 30.
p Job x. 4. Is. lv. 8. Luke xvi. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 4. iii. 4.
q John vii. 24. 2 Cor. x. 7. 10.
‡ Heb. *eyes.*
r 1 Kings viii. 39. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. vii. 9. cxxxix. 2. Prov. xv. 11. xvi. 2. Jer. xi. 20. xvii. 10. xx. 12. Acts i. 24. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
s xvii. 13. 1 Chr. ii. 13.
t xvii. 13.—2 Sam. xiii. 3. *Shimeah.* 1 Chr. ii. 13. *Shimma.*
u 1 Chr. ii. 13—15.
x xvii. 12—15. 28. 2 Sam. vii. 8. 1 Chr. xvii. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71.

ness of future misery is the most to be feared.—Our warfare indeed is of a different nature from Saul's: but if we spare one domineering lust, or profitable iniquity, we shall forfeit the promised kingdom with deep disgrace; as our sincerity must be approved by devoting every sin to utter destruction, by the power of God's grace, and for the glory of his name. For this, in all ages and nations, is the line of distinction between Samuel and Saul, between the Christian and the hypocrite; that the one levels his whole force against Agag, against that sinful propensity, which, by constitution and custom, has the greatest ascendancy, that he may hew it in pieces before the Lord; while the other is anxious to preserve his master-sin, however willing he may appear to mortify or refrain from those sins, to which he has been less addicted, and to which he feels less temptation.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. It is probable, that the events recorded in this chapter happened some time after those before related; yet Samuel still continued to mourn for Saul: but at length God expostulated with him, and ordered him to go and anoint one to succeed Saul.—It may be supposed, that in the mean while Saul had become very suspicious and tyrannical, and enraged against Samuel. The question therefore, which he proposed, might not result from unbelief, but from a desire of instruction, for the prudent management of the affair. (*Notes, Judg.* xiii. 8. *Luke* i. 34—38.) Accordingly, he was directed to go to Beth-lehem to *sacrifice*, as he probably did from time to time in many different places: (*Notes*, vii. 9. 17. ix. 12—14:) and the answer, which he was instructed to return, was the truth; nor was he bound to divulge all his intentions. (*Note, Jer.* xxxviii. 24—28.)

V. 4. It is probable, that these elders were conscious of iniquity committed among them, and feared lest Samuel was sent to denounce the wrath of God upon them. (*Marg. Ref.* j. *Note, Matt.* viii. 33, 34.) Some however think that they feared the anger of Saul, in case they entertained Samuel. (*Notes*, xxi. 1, 2. xxii. 13—19.)

V. 5. *He sanctified*, &c.] Samuel instructed Jesse and his sons in the nature of the sacred ordinance, and, by his counsels and prayers, assisted them in preparing to attend on it acceptably and profitably. (*Notes, Ex.* xix. 10—15. *Josh.* iii. 5. *Job* i. 5.)

V. 6, 7. Samuel had, it is probable, informed none except Jesse of his principal object in coming to Bethlehem; and he and Jesse alone were present, while the sons of Jesse, one after another, passed before them.—It is evident, that the Lord revealed himself to Samuel, on this and other occasions, by direct and immediate suggestion.—Samuel did not yet fully understand, that the Lord in anger gave Israel their first king, after '*their* own heart;' but that he now intended in mercy to give them one after "*his* own heart," being chiefly remarkable for his strong faith and fervent piety. It is however wonderful, that the aged prophet should regard the height of Eliab's stature: when Saul who was "taller than all the people from his "shoulders and upwards," had proved so worthless a king! (*Notes*, ix. 1, 2. xvii. 28.) *The Lord seeth not*, &c. (7) *Marg. Ref.* o, p, q.

V. 10, 11. Jesse's sons were seven in all. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.*

And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit * down till he come hither.

* Heb. round.

12 And he sent and brought him in. Now he *was* [y] ruddy, *and* withal † of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, [z] anoint him: for this *is* he.

y xvii. 42. Cant. v. 10. Lam. iv. 7. Acts vii. 20. Heb. xi. 23.
† Heb. *fair of eyes.*
z Ps. ii. 2. 6. lxxxix. 19, 20. Acts iv. 27.

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and [a] anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and [b] the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

a x. 1. 2 Kings ix. 6.
b 18. x. 6. 10. Num. xi. 17. xxvii. 18. Judg. iii. 10. xi. 29 xiii. 25. xiv. 6. Is. xi. 1—3. John iii. 34. Heb. i. 9.

14 ¶ But [c] the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and [d] an evil spirit from the LORD ‡ troubled him.

c xviii. 12. xxviii. 15. Judg. xvi. 20. Ps. li. 11. Hos. ix. 12.
d xviii. 10. xix. 9. 10. Judg. ix. 23. 1 Kings xxii. 22. Acts xix. 15, 16.
‡ Or, *terrified.*

15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.

16 Let our lord now command thy servants, *which are* [e] before thee, to seek out a man *who is* a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall [f] play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.

e 21, 22. Gen. xli. 46. 1 Kings x. 8.
f 23. x. 5. 2 Kings iii. 15.

17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me.

18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, and [g] a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in [§] matters, and a comely person, and [h] the LORD *is* with him.

g xvii. 32—36. 2 Sam. xvii. 8.
§ Or, *speech.*
h iii. 19. x. 7. xviii. 12—14. Gen. xxxix. 2. 23. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20.

19 Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which *is* [i] with the sheep.

i 11. xvii. 15. 33, 34. Ex. iii. 1—10. 1 Kings xix. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. cxiii. 8. Am. i. 1. vii. 14, 15. Matt. iv. 18—22.

20 And Jesse took [k] an ass *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent *them* by David his son unto Saul.

k x. 27. xvii. 18. xxv. 18. Gen. xliii. 11. 2 Sam. xvi. 1, 2. Prov. xviii. 16.

21 And David came to Saul, and [l] stood before him: and he [m] loved him greatly; and he became his armour-bearer.

l Gen. xli. 46. Deut. i. 38. x. 8. Prov. xxii. 29.
m Ps. lxii. 9. cxviii. 9. cxlvi. 3.

22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me: for he hath found favour in my sight.

23 And it came to pass, when [n] the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so [o] Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

n *See on* 14. 16.
o xviii. 10, 11. Matt. xii. 43—45. Luke xi. 24—26.

ii. 15.)—David being young, (not more than eighteen or twenty years of age,) and being of a contemplative disposition, was perhaps thought by Jesse to be less capable of publick business than his other sons, and so was not kept at home on this occasion. (*Marg. Ref.*)—His name signifies *Beloved*, and he was an eminent type of the beloved Son of God. (*Notes, Jer.* xxx. 5—9. *Ez.* xxxiv. 23—31. xxxvii. 25. *Hos.* iii. 4, 5.)—These transactions seem to have occurred, between the offering of the sacrifice, and the feast on it which followed.

V. 12. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 13. The original words seem to denote, that David was anointed in the presence of his brethren, though the transaction was kept secret from others. If this were the case, it is worthy of notice, that none of them rivalled or opposed him; though it appears that they were not free from envy and prejudice.—Some expositors however think the words only imply, that David was selected from among his brethren; but that he was anointed *privately*.—This anointing did not invest him with kingly authority, but merely marked him out as Saul's successor: and thus David himself understood it.—From this time he was evidently endowed with the Spirit of the Lord, qualifying him for great things, and inspiring him with noble purposes: yet he was satisfied in his humble and laborious occupation, waiting the Lord's time for being called to action. (*Notes*, x. 19—16. xi. 6—15.)

V. 14. When the Spirit of God came on David, it became evident that he had departed from Saul, and that he was deprived of his capacity for publick business, and performed nothing prudently or successfully: nay, that an evil spirit was *judicially* permitted to impel him to the most furious sallies of rage or jealousy; to oppress his spirits with a deep melancholy; to excite distressing terrors, alarms and suspicions; and to render him at times distracted. (*Marg. Ref.* d.)

V. 15—23. Saul's courtiers evidently perceived the change which had taken place, and ascribed it to the right cause: though their language seems less accurate than that of the historian; the original words being, "an evil spirit "of God," meaning one whom God permitted to trouble Saul.—The device proposed by them might be very proper for soothing the melancholy of Saul, and calming his passions: (*Note, 2 Kings* iii. 15:) but the cause of his malady lay much deeper; and it would have been better counsel, if they had persuaded him to send for Samuel to converse with him and pray for him.—However, the hand of the Lord was manifest in thus bringing David to court. After his anointing he had in a little time by various ways signalized himself, so that he was much noticed; (*Note*, xvii. 34—37:) and especially his peculiar skill in playing on the harp, was remarked by some person who attended on Saul. Thus he was introduced to him, and his solemn sacred musick was far more suitable to the case, than more

CHAP. XVII.

The armies of Israel and of the Philistines are drawn out to battle, 1—3. Goliath challenges, defies, and dismays the Israelites, 4—11. David is sent to the army to visit his brethren, 12—19. He hears the challenge of Goliath and expresses indignation at it, 20—27. Eliab rebukes him, and he answers mildly, 28—30. He is brought before Saul, accepts the challenge, and states the grounds of his confidence, 31—37. He refuses Saul's armour; and takes only his staff, a sling, and stones, 38—40. Goliath disdains and curses him, 41—44. David answers, expressing his assured confidence in God, 45—47. He kills Goliath and cuts off his head, 48—51. The Philistines are routed, 52, 53. David returns with Goliath's head in his hand; and answers Saul's enquiries concerning him, 54—58.

NOW the Philistines [a] gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at [b] Shochoh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and [c] Azekah, in [*] Ephes-dammim.

2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by [d] the valley of Elah, and [†] set the battle in array against the Philistines.

3 And the Philistines stood on a

[a] vii. 7. xiii. 5. xiv. 46. 52. Judg. iii. 3.
[b] Josh. xv. 35. *Socoh.* 2 Chr. xi. 7. *Shoco.* xxviii. 18. *Shocho.*
[c] Josh. x. 11. Jer. xxxiv. 7.
[*] Or, *the coast of Dammim.* 1 Chr. xi. 13 *Pas-dammim.*
[d] 19. xxi. 9.
[†] Heb. *ranged the battle.*

amusing strains would have been. He came to Saul with a very high character, which he did not disgrace; he was useful to him, and for a time beloved by him: and yet, when Saul no longer wanted him, he returned back to his flocks as contented as ever, and was soon forgotten at court. (*Notes*, xvii. 15. 55—58.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our most reasonable and disinterested sorrow may be so excessive, as to imply rebellion against the righteous will of God; and he will then rebuke us, as well as encourage us under our distresses.—We ought not inconsolably to mourn for such as the Lord has rejected; but should rather rejoice in those whom he is calling forth to usefulness: and no partial affection should interfere with present duty.—The most eminent believers are not entirely superior to the fear of man, when dangerous services are assigned them. But the Lord will inwardly strengthen and outwardly protect them: and, without immediate revelation, he can, by his word and Spirit, shew them step by step what they ought to do.—The guilty conscience trembles at a message from heaven: yet the ministers of Christ come peaceably, proposing salvation through the sacrifice of a Redeemer, and speaking terror to none, except to those who neglect so great salvation. (*Note*, *Matt.* x. 11—15. *P. O.* 7—15.)—There is a preparation of heart required for receiving this atonement and reconciliation, as well as for attending on divine ordinances; the instruction, converse, and prayers of faithful ministers are very useful in both cases, to those who desire to profit by them; and parents ought not needlessly to permit their children to be absent on such favourable opportunities.—It is difficult wholly to divest ourselves of partiality for those, who are recommended by external accomplishments; and we often frame an erroneous judgment of characters: but the Lord values nothing, in comparison with that holy faith, fear, and love, which are implanted in the heart beyond the reach of human penetration. Nor does he favour our children according to our fond partialities; but often most honours and blesses those who have been the least regarded.—His method of educating men for important stations of usefulness, differs much from those which human wisdom has devised. For humble industry and obedient attention to obscure duties, contemplation, retired devotion, and a patient self-denying assiduity, constitute the best preparation for serving the cause of God and his church.—When sinners, by resisting the Holy Spirit, have provoked him finally to depart, they are exposed to every incursion of Satan, and are likely to become tormentors of themselves and of others; nay, their friends may perceive, that they are given up by God in his righteous displeasure, without taking warning by their awful case. Indeed we none of us have the least security, either for our bodies or souls, against the malignity of evil spirits, except in the protection of that God, whom, alas! we are continually provoking. (*P. O. Job* i. 6—12.)—When conscious guilt, and fears of divine vengeance, disorder the minds of men, those who perceive their distress, but understand neither the cause nor the cure, are apt to propose very *fatal* methods of relief: and musick, diversion, company, or business, have *for a season* been frequently employed, as a successful quietus for a wounded conscience. Yet nothing can effect a real cure, except the blood of Christ applied in faith, and the sanctifying Spirit sealing the pardon by his holy comforts: all other expedients to dispel religious melancholy, are sure methods of increasing distress, either in this world or in the next, and perhaps in both.—Every endowment, which may be usefully exercised in subserviency to godliness, is to be ascribed to the energy of the divine Spirit: opportunities will be afforded for its being displayed; and if the Lord be graciously with us, they will be suitably improved: while good behaviour in inferior stations is the best introduction to higher advancement.—Thus Jesus was obedient unto death, before he was exalted to his glorious throne: and thus he trains up his people, by obedience, in the midst of temptation and trouble, for their future inheritance in the regions of purity and felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. (*Marg. Ref.*) Saul had repeatedly allowed the Philistines time to recover strength and courage; and probably the report of the disordered state of his mind emboldened them to this invasion: yet the Lord so ordered it, that he was in some measure recovered before the war began. It is uncertain how long this was after the transactions before recorded; but probably three or four years had elapsed.—To suppose, as many have done, that this invasion preceded David's first appearance at court, gives a needless and inadmissible disturbance to the narrative. (*Notes*, 15. 55—58.)

mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and *there was* a valley between them.

4 And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named [e] Goliath [f] of Gath, [g] whose height *was* six cubits and a span.

5 And *he had* an helmet of brass upon his head, and he *was* [*] armed with a coat of mail: and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of brass.

6 And *he had* greaves of brass upon his legs, and a [†] target of brass between his shoulders.

7 And [h] the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head *weighed* six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set *your* battle in array? *am* not I a Philistine, and ye [i] servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

9 If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and [k] serve us.

10 And the Philistine said, [l] I defy the armies of Israel this day; [m] give me a man that we may fight together.

11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine they were [n] dismayed, and greatly afraid.

12 ¶ Now [o] David *was* the son of that [p] Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah, whose name *was* Jesse; and he had [q] eight sons: and the man went among men *for* an old man in the days of Saul.

13 And the three eldest sons of Jesse went *and* followed Saul to the battle: and [r] the names of his three sons that went to the battle *were* Eliab the first born, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third [s] Shammah.

14 And David *was* [t] the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.

15 But David went, and [u] returned from Saul, to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.

16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself [v] forty days.

e 23. xxi. 9, 10. 2 Sam. xxi. 19. 1 Chr. xx. 5.
f xxvii. 4. Josh. xi. 22. 2 Sam. xxi. 16—22. 1 Chr. xx. 4—8.
g Deut. iii. 11. 1 Chr. xi. 23. Am. ii. 9.
* Heb. *clothed.*
† Or, *gorget.* 1 Kings x. 16. 2 Chr. ix. 15.
h 2 Sam. xxi. 19. 1 Chr. xi. 23. xx. 5.
i 26. viii. 17. 2 Sam. xi. 11. 1 Chr. xxi. 3.
k xi. 1.
l 25, 26. 36. 45. Num. xxiii. 7 8. 2 Sam. xxi. 21. xxiii. 9. Neh. ii. 19.
m Job xl. 9—12. Ps. ix. 4, 5. Prov. xvi. 18. Jer. ix. 23. Dan. iv. 37.
n Deut. xxxi. 8. Josh. i. 9. Ps. xxvii. 1. Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. li. 12, 13. lvii. 11.
o 58. xvi. 1. 18. Ruth iv. 22. Matt. i. 6. Luke iii. 31, 32.
p Gen. xxxv. 19. Ps. cxxxii. 6. Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 1. 6.
q xvi. 10, 11. 1 Chr. ii. 13—16.
r 28. xvi. 6—9.
s 2 Sam. xiii. 3. 32. xxi. 21. *Shimeah.*
t xvi. 11, 12. Gen. xxv. 23.
u xvi. 19—23.
v Matt. iv. 2. Luke iv. 2.

V. 4—7. (*Marg. Ref.*) *A champion.* (4) Or, *a dueller;* one who *came between the two armies,* as wishing to distinguish himself in single combat. (*Note, Ps.* ix. *title.*) —Goliath was of the race of Anak. (*Notes, Josh.* xi. 21—23. xv. 14. *Judg.* i. 10—15. 2 *Sam.* xxi. 15—22.) On the *most moderate computation* he was above ten feet high: and the weight of his armour shews that his bulk and strength were proportionable. For his coat of mail weighed above 200 pounds troy weight, and his spear's head in proportion. (*Tables.*)—Some indeed suppose, that the price or value was meant: but the value of any thing is generally, if not always, computed by shekels of silver or gold, not of brass. Probably, men in general were about the same size as at present; for such giants then caused as much surprise as they would now. (*Note, Num.* xiii. 33.)

V. 8—10. This challenge of Goliath greatly increased the consternation of the Israelites; as if they must needs become slaves to the Philistines, unless some one of them could overcome the champion: but no nation ever did, or ever will, suffer its liberties and interests to be disposed of in such a manner.—It is probable that Goliath was one of the *lords* of the Philistines; and that he deemed it a kind of condescension in him, to fight with one of Saul's *servants.*

V. 11. When the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, he lost much of his former courage; otherwise, depending on the God of Israel, he might have assaulted the army of the Philistines, and at once have silenced the proud boastings of Goliath. (*Notes,* xi. 6—15. xvi. 14.) His timidity disheartened the army likewise; for faith and piety were evidently at a low ebb among them. Nor had Jonathan the same inward intimation to engage in this service, as he formerly had to undertake one at least equally perilous; the Lord having reserved it for David. (*Notes,* xiv. 1—15.)

V. 12, 13. Jesse, being far advanced in years, was himself exempted from war; but he sent three of his sons with Saul.—*Eight sons.* (12) xvi. 10. *Note,* 1 *Chr.* ii. 15.

V. 15. Saul's disorder having been relieved, and his mind engaged in publick business, David's musick was not wanted; and he "returned from Saul" to his former laborious and obscure occupation. Probably he had been appointed Saul's armour-bearer, merely as an honorary distinction, and had never been employed in actual service. (*Note,* xvi. 15—23.)—Josephus says, that Saul sent David home in the beginning of this war, being contented with the three sons of Jesse who followed him; but it seems more probable, that he had returned home some time before the war began: and Josephus had no other authentick information, as to the history of Israel, than we at present possess; so that neither his *opinions,* nor the traditions which he had received from those who lived before him, are of any authority, except when they accord with the sacred scriptures.

V. 16. Had the Philistines thought themselves able to force the camp of Israel, they would not have spent so

17 And Jesse said unto David his
x Matt. vii. 11. Luke xi. 13.
y xxv. 18. Ruth ii. 14. 2 Sam. xvii. 28.
son, x Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this y parched *corn*, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren:

z xvi. 20.
* Heb. *cheeses of milk.* 2 Sam. xvii. 29. Job x. 10.
† Heb. *a thousand.*
a Gen. xxxvii. 14. Acts xv. 36. 1 Thes. iii. 5, 6.
18 And z carry these ten * cheeses unto the captain of † *their* thousand, and a look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, *were* in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

b 28. Eph. vi. 1, 2.
20 ¶ And David rose up early in the morning, and b left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him: and he came to the ‡ trench as the host was going forth to the § fight, and shouted for the battle.

‡ Or, *place of the carriage.* xxvi. 5. Luke xix. 43.
§ Or, *battle-array, or, place of fight.*
21 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.

‖ Heb. *the vessels from upon him.*
22 And David left ‖ his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and * saluted his brethren.

* Heb. *asked his brethren of peace.* Gen. xxxvii. 14. Judg. xviii. 15. Matt. x. 12, 13. Luke x. 5, 6.
23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name,) out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake c according to the same words: and David heard *them.*

c 4—10.
24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from † him, and were d sore afraid.

† Heb. *his face.* xii. 6, 7.
d *See on* 11.—Lev. xxvi. 36. Num. xiii. 33. Deut. xxxii. 30. Is. vii. 2. xxx. 17.
25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, *that* the man who killeth him, e the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house f free in Israel.

e xviii. 17—27. Josh. xv. 16. Rev. ii. 7, 17. iii. 5, 12, 21.
f Ezra vii. 24. Matt. xvii. 26.
26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the g reproach from Israel? for who *is* this h uncircumcised Philistine, that he should i defy the armies of the living God?

g xi. 2. Josh vii. 8, 9. 2 Kings xix. 4. Neh. v. 9. Ps. xliv. 13. lxxiv. 18. lxxix. 12. Dan. ix. 16. Joel ii. 19.
h 36. xiv. 6.
i 10. Deut. v. 26. Jer. x. 10. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 John v. 20.
27 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, k So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

k 25.
28 And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and l Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and m with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? n I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down, that thou mightest see the battle.

l xvi. 13. Gen. xxxvii. 4, 8, 11. Prov. xviii. 19. xxvii. 4. Ec. iv. 4. Matt. x. 36. xxvii. 18. Mark iii. 21.
m 20.
n xvi. 7. Ps. xxxv. 11. Jude 10.

much time in this manner.—*Forty days.*] *Note, Matt.* iv. 1, 2.

V. 17. As Jesse had several other sons, it must be ascribed to a special interposition of Providence, that David was sent on this occasion. (*Note*, xvi. 10, 11.)

V. 18. *Pledge.*] This, it is probable, was some concerted token of welfare, according to the custom of those times, while epistolary correspondence was infrequent.

V. 19. *Fighting.*] There might be frequent skirmishes between the two armies, though they did not come to a general engagement.

V. 22. *His carriage.*] Or, the provisions which he *carried*, or had brought, for his brethren and their captain. (*Marg.—Acts* xxi. 15.)—"The keeper of the carriage" seems to mean the person, who was appointed over those, who guarded the baggage: and who would take the charge of what David had brought, till he returned.—'With his servant.' *Bp. Patrick.* It does not however appear, that David was attended by a servant.

V. 23, 24. (*Note*, 4—7.) When the two armies were on the point of engaging, Goliath's renewed challenge strangely disconcerted the Israelites. They could face the whole army of the Philistines, though they knew Goliath was among them; and yet were dismayed by the sight of him alone! (*Notes, Num.* xiii. 30, 31. xiv. 2—9.)

V. 25, 26. It does not appear, that Saul consulted the Lord, or offered sacrifice, or even made supplications, on this occasion: but he offered great rewards to him, who should kill Goliath. (*Notes, Josh.* xv. 16, 17. 1 *Chr.* xi. 4—8.)—To this conduct, David's speech, glowing with confidence in God, zeal for his glory, and indignant resentment of Israel's disgrace, formed a noble contrast. However terrible the gigantick Goliath might appear, he was "an *uncircumcised* Philistine;" and those whom he defied were not merely "servants to Saul" (8), but "the "armies of the living God." (*Note, Num.* xxiii. 7, 8.) And in this view, who was Goliath, that any Israelite should fear him? The very enquiry implied the most pointed reproof of the unbelief and cowardice of Saul, and indeed of the whole army.—*Free in Israel.* (25) *Note, Ezra* vii. 24—26.

V. 28. It can hardly be supposed, that Eliab was entirely ignorant of David's having been anointed by Samuel; and he must have understood this transaction, as at least an indication of his future superiority. (*Note*, xvi. 13.) No doubt, therefore, he was in part excited by envy on

29 And David said, [o] What have I now done? *Is there* not a cause?

30 And he turned from him towards another, and spake after the same [*] manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

31 ¶ And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed *them* before Saul; and he [†] sent for him.

32 And David said to Saul, [p] Let no man's heart fail because of him: [q] thy servant will go, and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, [r] Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: [s] for thou *art but* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a [‡] lamb out of the flock;

35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught *him* by his beard, and [t] smote him, and slew him.

36 Thy servant slew both the lion, and the bear: and [u] this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing [x] he hath defied the armies of the living God.

37 David said moreover, [y] The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, [z] Go, and the LORD be with thee.

38 ¶ And Saul [§] armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved *it*. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved *them*. And David [a] put them off him.

40 And he took his [b] staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the [‖] brook, and put them in a shepherd's [*] bag which he had, even in a scrip, and his sling *was* in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine came on, and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him.

42 And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, [c] he disdained

[o] 17. 32. Prov. xv. 1. Acts xi. 2—4. 1 Cor. ii. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 9.
[*] Heb. *word.* 26, 27.
[†] Heb. *took him.* Prov. xxii. 29.
[p] Num. xiii. 30. xiv. 9. Deut. xx. 1—3. Is. xxxv. 3. Heb. xii. 12.
[q] xiv. 6. xvi. 18. Josh. xiv. 12. Ps. iii. 6. xxvii. 1—3.
[r] Num. xiii. 31. Deut. ix. 2. Ps. xi. 1. Rev. xiii. 4.
[s] 42. 56.
[‡] *Or, kid.*
[t] Judg. xiv. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. Ps. xci. 13. Dan. vi. 22. Am. iii. 12. Acts xxviii. 4—6. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.
[u] 26. Ez. xxxii. 19. 27—32. Rom. ii. 28, 29.
[x] *See on* 10.—Is. x. 15. xxxvi. 8—10. 15. 18. xxxvii. 22, 23. 28, 29. Zech. ii. 8 xii. 3. Acts v. 38, 39. ix 4, 5. xii. 1, 2. 22, 23.
[y] vii. 12. Ps. lxiii. 7. cxxxviii. 3. 7, 8. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.
[z] xx. 13. xxiv. 19. xxvi. 25. 2 Sam. x. 12.
[§] Heb. *clothed David with his clothes.* 5.
[a] Hos. i. 7. Zech. iv. 6. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5
[b] Judg. iii. 31. vii. 16—20. xv. 15, 16. xx. 16. 1 Cor. i. 27—29.
[‖] Or, *valley.*
[*] Heb. *vessel.* Matt. x. 10.
[c] 1 Kings xx. 18. 2 Kings xviii. 23, 24. Neh. iv. 2—4.

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this occasion: but he might also consider the spirit of his younger and neglected brother, as a tacit reproach of his own timidity. He therefore rashly and falsely accused him of leaving his flock without a keeper, and of coming without being sent, out of curiosity or ambition (17—20): and intimated that he was notoriously of a proud, aspiring, and even wicked disposition. These insinuations tended both to discourage David, and to prejudice those who heard them against him, in order that he might be disregarded. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xxxvii. 2—10. *John* vii. 3—10.)

V. 29. This answer was as admirable for the "meek-"ness of wisdom," as the former question was for the 'courage of faith.' David took no notice of the reproach cast on his character; nor of the false accusation laid against him; nor of the selfish motives, to which his coming to the army was ascribed. But he merely replied, by asking, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Ought not every Israelite to feel a holy indignation, when he hears an uncircumcised Philistine defy the armies of the living God? And ought not some Israelite to step forward and venture his life, to take away this reproach? Yet no Israelite had hitherto appeared who would attempt it. (*Notes*, *Judg.* viii. 1—3. *Prov.* xv. 1.)

V. 31, 32. *Marg. Ref.* p, q.

V. 34—37. In defence of his flock, David had been enabled, at different times, to slay a lion and a bear: and he looked upon this as an earnest of victory over the "un-"circumcised Philistine," whom he meant to attack out of zeal for the glory of God, and the interests of Israel. Goliath could not be more terrible to any Israelitish soldier, than a lion or a bear, bereaved of its prey, would be to an unarmed shepherd; and David's deliverance from these savage beasts was the effect of the Lord's special favour, who would also deliver him from the Philistine. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* i. 8—11.)—Thus, when the Spirit of the Lord was upon Samson, he rent the lion before he destroyed the Philistines. (*Note*, *Judg.* xiv. 5, 6.)—Several extraordinary actions of this kind, no doubt, obtained David that great character, with which he had first been introduced to Saul. (xvi. 18.)—*Go*, &c. (37) *Notes*, xxiv. 16—22. xxvi. 21—25.

V. 38—40. David had not been accustomed to such armour as Saul put upon him, and he was not satisfied to go forth in that manner.—This was likewise from the Lord, who would have it made manifest that his servant fought and conquered by faith, and that the victory was from him, who works by the most despised means and instruments. (*Notes*, *Josh.* vi. 3—5. *Judg.* iii. 31. vii. 16—22. xv. 14—17. *Zech.* iv. 4—7. 1 *Cor.* i. 20—31. 2 *Cor.* iv. 7.)

V. 42—44. Perhaps David might at this time be

him; for he was *but* [d] a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

43 And the Philistine said unto David, [e] *Am* I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine [f] cursed David by his gods.

44 And the Philistine said to David, [g] Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

45 Then said David to the Philistine, [h] Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee [i] in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast [k] defied.

46 This day [l] will the LORD [*] deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the [m] carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that [n] all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD [o] saveth not with sword and spear: for [p] the battle *is* the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands.

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that [q] David hasted and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and [r] smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; [s] but *there was* no sword in the hand of David.

51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took [t] his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they [u] fled.

52 And [x] the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the [y] valley, and to the gates of Ekron: and the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron.

53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and [z] they spoiled their tents.

d 33. xvi. 12.
e xxiv. 14. 2 Sam. iii. 8. ix. 8. xvi. 9. 2 Kings viii. 13.
f Gen. xxvii. 29. Num. xxii. 6. 11, 12. Judg. ix. 27. Prov. xxvi. 2.
g 1 Kings xx. 10, 11. Prov. xviii. 12. Ec. ix. 11, 12. Jer. ix. 23. Ez. xxviii. 2. 9, 10. xxxix. 17—20.
h Ps. xliv. 6.
i 2 Sam. xxii. 33—35. 2 Chr. xxxii. 8. Ps. iii. 8. xviii. 2. xx. 5—7. cxviii. 10, 11. cxxiv. 8. Prov. xviii. 10. Phil. iv. 13. Heb. xi. 33, 34.
k 10. 26. 36. Is. xxxvii. 23. 28.
l Deut. vii. 2. 23. ix. 2, 3. Josh. x. 8.
* Heb. *shut thee up.* Ps. xxxi. 8.
m 44. Deut. xxviii. 26. Is. lvi. 9. Rev. xix. 17, 18.
n Ex. ix. 16. xv. 14, 15. Josh. iv. 24. 1 Kings viii. 43. xviii. 36, 37. 2 Kings xix. 19. Is. lii. 10. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 29. vi. 26, 27.
o Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17. xliv. 6, 7. Prov. xxi. 30, 31. Hos. i. 7.
p xiv. 6. 2 Chr. xx. 15—17. Ps. xlvi. 11. Is. ix. 7. Zech. iv. 6. Rom. viii. 31. 37.
q Ps xxvii. 1. Prov. xxviii. 1.
r 1 Kings xxii. 34. 2 Kings ix. 24. 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.
s 39. xiii. 22.
t xxi. 9. 2 Sam. xxiii. 21. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 15, 16. Heb. ii. 14.
u Heb. xi. 34.
x xiv. 21, 22. Judg. vii. 23. 2 Sam. xxiii. 10.
y Josh. xv. 33—36. 45, 46.
z 2 Kings vii. 7—16. Jer. iv. 20.

twenty-two or twenty-three years of age; (33. *Note*, xvi. 10, 11;) and his unwarlike appearance in all respects excited contempt and disdain in Goliath's breast; nay, he was greatly affronted to be opposed by a stripling, accoutred in so unwarlike a manner. But though he cursed David by his gods, he evidently trusted not in them, but in the might of his own arm. The Romans used thus to curse their enemies: 'All the gods and goddesses destroy 'thee!' (*Note*, *Num.* xxii. 6.)

V. 45—47. Nothing can exceed the modesty, the faith, the piety, and the zeal for the glory of God, and the cause of Israel and of true religion, which glow in this most beautiful speech. David expressed, with peculiar animation, his assured expectation of success, of which doubtless some immediate intimations had been communicated to him; satisfying him, that the zeal of the Lord for his own glory would engage him in the cause: he even gloried in his own contemptible appearance and armour, that the victory might the more unquestionably be ascribed to JEHOVAH; and he anticipated the effects of this transaction. He even conceived a hope of its producing a salutary conviction in the minds of the Philistines, that the God of Israel was the only true God; and he predicted that his power and glory would by means of it be made known to all the earth. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xviii. 36, 37. 2 *Kings* xix. 14—19.)

V. 48, 49. The courage of David appears illustrious in the whole narrative. Goliath understood that his challenge was accepted, by David's boldly marching out to meet him; and at this crisis, David with great activity at once struck the fatal blow. Either Goliath, in fearless presumption and contempt of his opponent, had neglected to fasten on his helmet; or the stone, directed and impelled by the power of the Almighty, penetrated both the helmet and his skull, and sunk into his forehead, as a stone sinks into the water. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 32—35.)

V. 50—53. Perhaps the sword of Goliath was not so large and unwieldy in proportion, as the other parts of his armour; for we find that David afterwards used it, as well as on this occasion. (*Note*, xxi. 8, 9.)—When the Philistines saw that their *champion*, or *mighty man*, was dead; they were so convinced of the power and presence of the God of Israel, that they had no courage to fight, but yielded Israel a complete victory: and the Israelites pursued them even to their own cities, and plundered their camp. (*Marg. Ref.*)

Champion. (51) The original word is not the same here as in the fourth verse.

54 ¶ And David [a] took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem: but he put his armour in his tent.

55 And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, [b] Whose son *is* this youth? And Abner said, *As* thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.

56 And the king said, Enquire thou whose son the stripling *is*.

57 And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul, [c] with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

58 And Saul said to him, Whose son *art* thou, *thou* young man? And David answered, [d] *I am* the son of thy servant Jesse, the Beth-lehemite.

[a] xxi. 9. Ex. xvi. 39. Josh. iv. 7, 8.

[b] 58. xvi. 21, 22.

[c] 54.

[d] 12. xvi. 18, 19.

V. 54. Either David, after a time, carried the head of Goliath to Jerusalem, as a terror to the Jebusites; and put his armour in his own tent, until it was removed to the tabernacle of God: (xxi. 8, 9:) or this is spoken by anticipation; and means, that afterwards Goliath's skull and armour were preserved at Jerusalem, as a monument of the victory, and to the glory of God, in the tent which David there formed for the ark. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 17.)

V. 55—58. It has been argued, from the circumstance of Saul's not recollecting David, that the history is inconsistent: and to answer this objection many learned men, by a very unnatural transposition, place this chapter, in order of time, before the preceding. But it should be considered that David was young when he went to the court of Saul: and a few years, with change of dress, (from that of a *courtier*, to that of a *shepherd*,) make a very great alteration in the appearance of young persons. Abner had no acquaintance with David, that we know of. Saul's mind was disordered, and his affairs in perplexity. Kings, especially such kings as Saul, are served by so many fresh faces, that they often *literally* forget their old acquaintance. Yet it is evident, that Saul had some confused and imperfect recollection of David; though he could not certainly remember whose son he was. (*Notes*, 1. 15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS
V. 1—30.

When those, to whom it *officially* belongs to defend the cause of God and his church, are destitute of his Spirit, and given up to ambition, covetousness, envy, malice, or lust; no wonder if open enemies are encouraged, and friends dispirited: and as the fear of God declines, the fear of man, in one form or other, will gather strength. But when one instrument is thrown aside, another is prepared, and produced for the work of the Lord: and though Israel be cast down, and his enemies for a season triumph; yet shall *he* be raised up again, and *their* success terminate in deeper disgrace and ruin.—Every gift of God to fallen man, instead of inspiring gratitude, naturally increases proud self-admiration and confidence, and a disposition to despise and insult over others. But what are human wisdom, strength, and courage, unless preserved and prospered by him who gave them? When confidence in these endowments withdraws men from their dependence on God, and when they are employed in rebellion against him; the haughty possessor becomes more expressly the enemy and rival of the Almighty, and is prepared to be a more distinguished monument of his righteous vengeance. (*Notes*, *Job* xl. 9—14. *Jer.* ix. 23, 24. *Dan.* iv. 34—37. v. 18—24.)—Degenerate professors of religion often receive just rebukes from most decided enemies: and indeed no persecutor or heresiarch needs fear defying the *disciples of man*, any more than Goliath feared defying "the servants "of Saul," were they only such, as the names which they assume, as well as their conduct on some occasions, *seem* to imply. For in human accomplishments the opposers of the truth of God have frequently possessed an undisputed superiority: (*Note*, *Ez.* xv. 6—8. *P. O.*:) confiding in this, they have defied, and still do defy, the advocates of spiritual truth to engage with them; and they dream of a total and decided victory. But they have "the armies of "the living God," and their invincible Captain himself, to contend with; and "who are these uncircumcised Philis-"tines," that a true Israelite should fear them? Any believer in the divine Saviour may predict that their triumphing will be short: and, if fairly called to it, we need not fear to go forth with the despised sling and stone, with plain testimonies of holy Scripture, unadorned by eloquence, and unsupported by human learning, against the most formidable of them; trusting in him who has all power in heaven and earth.—Those who would serve God must be endued with patience, meekness, and self-denial; and they must learn to bear neglect, contempt, and ingratitude; to be laborious, faithful, and obedient; to shun observation and ostentation; to walk by faith, and to wait the Lord's time for every promised or expected mercy; not putting themselves forward, till it be undeniably evident that there is a cause.—In times of general formality and lukewarmness, every degree of zeal, which implies a readiness to go further, or venture more in the cause of God, than others do, will be censured as pride and ambition; and by none more than near relations and negligent superiors: and such censures will seldom be unmingled with unjust insinuations, slanders, and attempts to blacken a man's character. But conscious integrity, and confidence in God, united with meekness, wisdom, and perseverance, will carry the believer through such discouraging opposition, and raise him above them: and those who would do good, should not multiply words in defence of their own characters; but avoid whatever may needlessly exasperate, prolong contention, or foment envy; and be satisfied with appealing to the consciences and common sense of impartial persons, that time and circumstances require their exertions.—The hope of being an instrument of good, and of being accepted by the Lord, will animate the faithful servant of God in every undertaking; and the expectation of a reward from man, or the fear of human censure, will be with him a very inferior consideration.

CHAP. XVIII.

Jonathan loves David, and covenants with him, 1—4. David gains favour with the people and the servants of Saul, 5. The praises bestowed on David excite Saul's envy, 6—9. Saul attempts to kill him, 10, 11. David's prudence and success make Saul afraid of him, 12—16. He offers to give him his elder daughter, hoping to ensnare him; but gives her to another, 17—19. He promises him Michal, his younger daughter, finding that she loved him; and David brings two hundred foreskins of the Philistines, being double the stipulated dowry, and marries her, 20—27. Saul's hatred and David's reputation increase, 28—30.

[a] xiv. 1—14. 45. Gen. xliv. 30. Judg. xx. 11. 1 Chr. xii. 17. Ps. lxxxvi. 11. Col. ii. 2. [b] xix. 2. xx. 17. Deut. xiii. 6. 2 Sam. i. 26. Prov. xviii. 24.

AND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that [a] the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan [b] loved him as his own soul.

2 And Saul [c] took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

[c] xvi. 21—23. xvii. 15.

3 Then Jonathan and David [d] made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

[d] xx. 8—17. 42. xxiii. 18. 2 Sam. ix. 1—3. xxi. 7.

4 And Jonathan [e] stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

[e] Gen. xli. 42. Esth. vi. 8, 9. Is. lxi. 10. Luke xv. 22. 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil. ii. 7, 8.

5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, *and* [*] behaved himself [f] wisely: and Saul set him over [g] the men of war; and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

[*] Or, *prospered.* [f] 14, 15. 30. Gen. xxxix. 2, 3. 23. Ps i. 3. Acts vii. 10. [g] Matt. x. 16. Eph. v. 17. Col. iv. 5. xiii. 2. xiv. 52.

V. 31—58.

If we improve our experience of the Lord's faithfulness, love, and power, in former seasons of danger and difficulty, it will inspire confidence in the prospect of future conflicts; and on some occasions it may be referred to for the satisfaction of others: and to be engaged against the avowed and haughty enemies of God and his church, is in all cases a proper ground of encouragement.—In the service of our common Lord we are not all qualified to handle the same weapons, or to fill up the same stations: none should therefore be set up in all things as models, nor ought any of us *indiscriminately* to imitate the most approved characters. Rules and methods, which are useful and natural to one man, may prove encumbrances to another: and we do best, when we cultivate our own peculiar talent, taking hints from every body, and not attempting exact conformity to any. But faith, and prayer, and truth, and righteousness, "the whole armour of God," and "the "mind which was in Christ," are equally needful for all his servants.—The curses of wicked men are no more to be feared, than their power or menaces; as they will at length rebound upon themselves, and their proud self-confidence will surely be confounded. But those who trust in the Lord, and simply seek his glory, shall never be ashamed: in their hands the feeblest means shall be successful, and before them the most formidable opposition shall come to nothing. The event of every conflict of the church of God against her enemies, will undeniably evince, "that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear; for the "battle is the LORD's, and he will give it into our hands:" and this shall tend to make known his glory throughout the earth.—Human favour is of small value, for men soon forget those who have been most useful to them; and they alone are happy, who enjoy the favour of him, who never forgets or forsakes the meanest of his true people.—Finally, in David's victory over the champion of the Philistines, we may see a faint shadow of the Redeemer's victory over Satan, who for ages had defied the armies of the living God, and, from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, found no one able in his own strength to stand against him: but Jesus overcame him on his own ground, and foiled him with his own weapons, and still goes on by his despised gospel to pursue the victory; while all the hosts of the true Israel join in his conquests, and share the benefits; and they shall ere long meet in heaven to celebrate his triumphs with everlasting songs of praise.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. The modesty, piety, and courageous faith of David were so congenial to the character of Jonathan, that they attracted his most cordial esteem and affection: (*Notes*, xiv. 6—15:) so that the most endeared friendship subsisted between them, from that time, without the least interruption, notwithstanding Saul's envy and malice; and though Jonathan knew that David was anointed to be king, and that he himself was excluded! (*Notes*, xix. 1—7. xx. 14—17. 32—42. xxiii. 17, 18. 2 *Sam.* i. 19—27.) This disinterested friendship was the effect of that grace of God, which produces in all true believers "one "heart and soul," and causes them to delight in each other's converse and comfort: (*Notes*, 1 *Pet.* i. 22—25. 1 *John* iii. 13—15:) yet similarity of disposition, and the coincidence of the extraordinary services which in the courage of faith they had performed, served to render their reciprocal affection peculiarly fervent and intimate. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. Saul did not at first know David, but he soon recollected him. It is manifest from this, that he had before returned from Saul to his pastoral employments, but from this time he went back no more to them. (*Note*, xvii. 55—58.)

V. 3, 4. Jonathan, by stripping off his own clothes and armour, and giving them to David, intended avowedly to ratify the covenant between them, as well as to testify his affection, and equip him according to his character and station. So that David then put off the shepherd, and put on the courtier and soldier.

V. 5. Abner continued commander in chief; but David had some high military station, and perhaps he was made captain of Saul's guards.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the [a] Philistine, that [h] the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with [†] instruments of musick.

7 And the women [i] answered *one another* as they played, and said, [k] Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

8 And Saul was very wroth, and [l] the saying [‡] displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: [m] and *what* can he have more but the kingdom?

9 And Saul [n] eyed David from that day and forward.

10 And it came to pass on the morrow, that [o] the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he [p] prophesied in the midst of the house; and David [q] played with his hand, as at other times: and *there was* a javelin in Saul's hand.

11 And Saul [r] cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall *with it*. [s] And David avoided out of his presence twice.

12 And Saul was [t] afraid of David, because [u] the LORD was with him, and was [v] departed from Saul.

13 Therefore Saul [x] removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and [y] he went out and came in before the people.

14 And David [§] behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and [z] the LORD *was* with him.

15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very [a] wisely, he was afraid of him.

16 But [b] all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

17 ¶ And Saul said to David, Behold, my elder daughter Merab, [c] her will I give thee to wife; only be thou [‖] valiant for me, and fight [d] the LORD's battles: for Saul said, [e] Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

18 And David said unto Saul, [f] Who

[a] Or, *Philistines.* [h] Ex. xv. 20. Judg. xi. 34. Ps. lxviii. 25. Jer. xxxi. 11—13.

[†] Heb. *three-stringed instruments.* [i] Ex. xv. 21. Ps. xxiv. 7—10. [k] xxi. 11. xxix. 5.

[l] Esth. iii. 5. Prov. xiii. 10. xxvii. 4. Ec. iv. 4. Jam. iv. 5. [‡] Heb. *was evil in his eyes.* Num. xi. 1. xxii. 34. *Margins.* [m] xiii. 14. xv. 28. xvi. 13. xx. 31. 1 Kings ii. 22.

[n] Gen. iv. 5, 6. xxxi. 2. Matt. xx. 15. Mark vii. 22. Eph. iv. 27. Jam. v. 9.

[o] xvi. 14, 15. xix. 9. xxvi. 19. [p] xix. 24. 1 Kings xviii. 29. xxii. 12. 20—23. Jer. xxviii. 2—4. 11. Zech. xiii. 2—5. Acts xvi. 16. 2 Thes. ii. 11. [q] xvi. 16. 23.

[r] xix. 9, 10. xx. 33. Prov. xxvii. 4. Is. liv. 17.

[s] Luke iv. 30. John viii. 59. x. 39.

[t] 15. 20. xvi. 4. Ps. xlviii. 3—6. liii. 5. Mark vi. 20. Luke viii. 37. Acts xxiv 25. [u] xvi. 13. 18. xxii. 13. Acts vii. 9. [v] xvi. 14. xxviii. 15. Ps. li. 11. Hos. ix. 12. Matt. xxv 41. [x] 17. 25. viii. 12. xxii. 7. [y] 16. Num. xxvii. 16, 17. 2 Sam. v. 2. Ps. cxxi. 8.

[§] Or, *prospered. See on* 5. [z] x. 7. xvi. 18. Gen. xxxix. 2, 3. 23. Josh. vi. 27. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20. Acts xviii. 10. [a] Ps. cxii. 5. Dan. vi. 4, 5. Col. iv. 5. Jam. i. 5. iii. 17. [b] 5. Luke xix. 48. xx. 19.

[c] xvii. 25. Ps. xii 2. lv. 21.

[‖] Heb. *a son of valour.* [d] xvii. 47. xxv. 28. Num. xxxii. 20. 27. 29. [e] 21. 25. Deut. xvii. 7. 2 Sam. xi. 15. xii. 9. [f] 23. ix. 21. Ex. iii. 11. Ruth ii. 10. 2 Sam. vii 18. Prov. xv. 33. xviii. 12. Jer. i. 6.

V. 6—9. After the death of Goliath, and the consequent victory over the Philistines; Saul, and David with him, went to several of the cities of Israel. 'I suppose, 'Saul and the whole court thought fit to honour David, by 'accompanying him to Jerusalem when he carried Goliath's 'head thither.' *Bp. Patrick.* However this might be, in all places to which they came, the women, according to the custom of the times, went forth to meet them with instruments of musick, and singing an ode composed on the occasion. (*Judg.* xi. 34. *Notes, Ex.* xv. 1. 20, 21. *Judg.* v. 1. *Ps.* lxviii. 24, 25.) In this ode, composed in poetical language, no injustice was done to Saul, nor any affront intended him: yet the language employed might have given umbrage to a mind less propense to envy and suspicion, than that of Saul. Accordingly, he was greatly displeased; and, perceiving how David increased in popularity, he concluded that God was about "to rend the "kingdom from him, and to give it to a neighbour of his, "who was better than he." (xv. 28.) Probably he had been also informed, that Samuel anointed David, and favoured his interest; so that he began to look upon him with a jealous and malignant eye.

V. 10, 11. When Saul indulged malevolence, he "gave "place to the devil," and provoked God to permit the evil spirit again to trouble him. (*Note,* xvi. 14. *Ps.* li. 11.) Being thus under a supernatural though malignant influence, he behaved in some respects as the prophets did, when the Spirit of inspiration came upon them; yet from a contrary cause. It is not indeed certain whether he *assumed* this appearance to cloke his attempting to murder David, or whether Satan really wrought upon him till he seemed to prophesy. He was, however, influenced by deliberate malice when he threw the javelin at David. Though David, conscious of his innocence, and satisfied that he was doing his duty under God's protection, would not leave his place, yet he evidently suspected some mischief from the javelin in Saul's hand; and was enabled to avoid the blow, both at this time and on another occasion. (*Note,* xix. 8—10.)

V. 12—16. Saul was sensible that the Lord was departed from him, and that his former capacity for publick business was diminished: at the same time he perceived, that the Lord had given David peculiar wisdom, and was with him to prosper all his undertakings; and this increased the disquietude of his malevolent mind, and his dread of David as a prevailing rival. He therefore removed him from his presence, changing the command which he had before given him, for that of a thousand men, who made war at a distance, (*Note,* 5.) But this served the more to ingratiate him with the people, by affording him the opportunity of leading them forth to victory over their enemies.

V. 17—19. Saul appears to have been influenced, in this purpose, by fear of exciting a revolt among the people, rather than by the fear of God, or reluctance to commit murder with his own hand. (*Note,* 2 *Sam.* xi. 14—17.) He was engaged by promise to give his daughter to David: (xvii. 25:) but he had delayed the performance, and David was willing to dispense with it. Malice, however, at length prompted him to propose it, that he might excite

am I? and what *is* my life, *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?

19 But it came to pass, at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given unto [g] Adriel the [h] Meholathite to wife.

20 And Michal, Saul's daughter, [i] loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing [*] pleased him.

21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be [k] a snare to him, and that [l] the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt [m] this day be my son-in-law in *the one of* the twain.

22 And Saul [n] commanded his [o] servants, *saying*, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son-in-law.

23 And Saul's servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you *a* light *thing* to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I *am* [p] a poor man, and lightly esteemed?

24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, [†] On this manner spake David.

25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any [q] dowry, but a hundred [r] foreskins of the Philistines, [s] to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul [t] thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law: and [u] the days were not [‡] expired.

27 Wherefore David arose, and went, he and [v] his men, and [x] slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

28 And Saul [y] saw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that* Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him.

29 And Saul was [z] yet the more afraid of David; and [a] Saul became David's enemy continually.

30 Then the princes of the Philistines [b] went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, *that* David [c] behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much [§] set by.

g Judg. xiv. 20. 2 Sam. xxi. 8.
h Judg. vii. 22.
i 28. Gen. xxix. 18. 20. xxxiv. 3. Judg. xvi. 4. 15. 2 Sam. xiii. 1. 1 Kings xi. 1, 2. Hos. iii. 1.
* Heb. *was right in his eyes.*
k Ex. x. 7. Ps. vii. 14—16. xxxviii. 12. Prov. xxvi. 24—26. Jer. v. 26. ix. 8.
l 17. xix. 11, 12.
m 26.
n Ps. xxxvi. 1—3. lv. 21.
o 2 Sam. xiii. 28, 29. Prov. xxix. 2.
p ix. 21. Prov xiv. 20. xix. 6, 7. Ec. ix. 15, 16.
† Heb. *According to these words.*
q Gen. xxix. 18. xxxiv. 12. Ex. xxii. 16, 17.
r xvii. 26. 36. Gen. xvii. 11—14. Josh. v. 3.
s xiv. 24.
t 17. 2 Sam. xvii. 8—11.
u 21.
‡ Heb. *fulfilled.*
v 13.
x Judg. xiv. 19. 2 Sam. iii. 14.
y xxiv. 20. xxvi. 25. Gen. xxx. 27. xxxvii. 8—11. xxxix. 3. Rev. iii. 9.
z 12. 15. Ps. xxxvii. 12, 13. Ec. iv. 4. Jam. ii. 19.
a Gen. iv. 4—8. John xi. 53. 1 John iii. 12—15.
b 2 Sam. xi. 1.
c 5. Dan. i. 20. Luke xxi. 15. Eph. v. 15.
§ Heb. *precious.* ii. 30. xxvi. 21. 2 Kings i. 13. Ps. cxvi. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 4. 7.

David to venture his life more freely, in order to be counted worthy of such an honour; and that he might thus be cut off, without Saul's direct interposition. And though David humbly owned himself unworthy of such an alliance, and his services of such a reward, he did not decline the stipulated conditions. But when Saul's design proved abortive, he affronted him in the grossest manner, by giving his daughter to another man.

V. 23—27. David would doubtless suspect some invidious design in this proposal also: but he cautiously avoided mentioning the slight which had been put upon him; and waved the matter upon the ground of his own poverty and inferiority; though his original was not much if at all inferior to that of Saul. But when, instead of dowry according to the custom of those times, (*Marg. Ref.* q,) a hundred foreskins of the Philistines were required, he would not seem backward to any perilous service; and therefore he promptly went forth, and returned with twice as many as had been prescribed.

V. 28—30. Michal's affection for David, his prudent conduct in another incursion of the Philistines, and his increasing reputation, appeared to Saul's distempered mind to forebode David's advancement to the kingdom by dethroning him; nay, the full conviction that God favoured David, rendered Saul, not only more afraid of him, but also more malignant against him! (*Notes, Gen.* iv. 3—8. *Matt.* ii. 3—18. *John* xv. 22—25. 1 *John* iii. 11—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

True religion teaches us to love real excellency; to rejoice in it, though it eclipse our own reputation; and to delight in the society of those whom the Lord loves and honours, who bear his image and are zealous for his glory, regardless of inferiority of station or selfish considerations. This union of souls, resulting from participation of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, prepares men for filling up their several stations in the church of God, in harmony, sympathy, and love, as the several members do in the natural body; and which, being perfected in heaven, will for ever exclude envy and discontent, and render the felicity of each favoured inhabitant an accession to the joy of all the rest. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xii. 12—31.) But how different is the nature of fallen man! When the Lord is provoked to leave us, and Satan is permitted to excite our evil propensities, we become capable of envying and hating those especially who are most amiable, and who have done the most to serve us, with malignity proportioned to their meekness and wisdom; the commendations bestowed upon them are considered as an injury and reproach to us; and even the peculiar favour of God for them

CHAP. XIX.

Saul orders David to be slain. Jonathan informs David; and, pleading for him with Saul, effects a reconciliation, 1—7. David's success in war renders Saul again jealous; he seeks to kill David, who escapes by flight, 8—10. Saul sends to kill him in his house; but Michal favours his escape, and deceives Saul by an image in the bed, 11—17. David goes to Samuel, 18. Saul sends messengers after him to Naioth; and then goes himself; but first his messengers are seized by the Spirit of prophecy, and afterwards he also, 19—24.

a xviii. 8, 9. Prov. xxvii. 4. Ec. ix. 3. Jer. ix. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 13.

AND [a] Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

b xviii. 1—3. Ps. xvi. 3. John xv. 17—19. 1 John iii. 12—14.

2 But Jonathan, Saul's son, [b] delighted much in David: and

c xx. 2. Prov. xvii. 17. Acts ix. 24. xxiii. 16.

[c] Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret *place*, and hide thyself:

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou *art*, and I will commune with my father of thee; and [d] what I see, that I will tell thee.

d xx. 9. 13.

4 And Jonathan [e] spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king [f] sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and [g] because his works *have been* to thee-ward very good.

e xx. 32. xxii. 14. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. xxxi. 8, 9. Jer. xviii. 20.

f ii. 25. Gen. ix. 6. xlii. 22. 2 Chr. vi. 22. 1 Cor. viii. 12. 1 John iii. 15.

g Ps. xxxv. 12. cix. 4, 5. Prov. xvii. 13. Jer. xviii. 20.

5 For he did [h] put his life in his hand, and [i] slew the Philistine, and the LORD [k] wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest *it*, and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou [l] sin against innocent blood, to slay David [m] without a cause?

h xxviii. 21. Judg. ix. 17. xii. 3. Ps. cxix. 109. Acts xx. 24. Phil. ii. 30.

i xvii. 49—51.

k xi. 13. xiv. 45. xvii. 52, 53. Ex. xiv. 13. 1 Chr. xi. 14. Heb. ii. 3.

l xx. 32. Jer. xxvi. 15. Matt. xxvii. 4. 24.

m Ps. xxv. 3. lxix. 4. John xv. 25.

6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul [n] sware, *As* the LORD liveth, [o] he shall not be slain.

n xiv. 39. xxviii. 10. Ps. xv. 4. Jer. v. 2.

o 10, 11.

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things: and Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence [p] as [*] in times past.

p xvi. 21. xviii. 2. 10. 13.

* Heb. *yesterday, third day.* Gen. xxxi. 2. Ex. iv. 10. 1 Chr. xi. 2. Is. xxx. 33. *Margins.*

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will greatly aggravate malice and envy, and incite to revenge. Thus men imitate and gratify Satan's malevolence; while they themselves are tortured with continued terrors and suspicions, and urged by temptations to every horrid crime, by which they bring upon themselves swift destruction. If we would not be given up to such dreadful excesses, let us watch and pray against the first risings of these dire passions: and we should also be prepared for the effects of them, as they prevail in the minds of others.—For every great and good work a man must expect to be envied by his neighbour: no distinction or pre-eminence can be so unexceptionably obtained, but it will expose the possessor to slander and malice, and perhaps to the most fatal consequences. But such trials are very useful to those who love God: they serve as a counterpoise to the honour put upon them, and check the growth of pride and attachment to the world; they exercise them to faith, patience, meekness, and communion with God; they give them a fair opportunity of exemplifying the amiable nature and tendency of true godliness, by acting with wisdom and propriety in the most difficult circumstances; they make way for increasing experience of the Lord's faithfulness, in restraining their enemies, raising them up friends, and affording them his gracious protection; and they both prepare them for those stations in which they are to be employed, and open their way to them: for in due time modest merit will shine forth with double lustre. But humility, industry, faithfulness, silence under injuries, and a backwardness to seek great things for ourselves, are requisite to safety and comfort in the publick scenes of life; and retired stations are far more favourable to our own inward peace. Lavish commendations of those whom we love and admire, in such a world as this, often prove a real injury: and in all cases every thing should be avoided, which can excite envy or opposition; except the performance of our duty to God and man. But if "the LORD be "with us," and we have the consolations of his Spirit, we shall be happy in any situation: committing our souls and bodies, our characters and interests, our families and connexions, our way and our work, into his almighty hands; he will bring all that to pass which is good for us, and carry us safely through to that blessed world, where treachery, envy, and malice find no admission, but perfect love will prevail for evermore.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1—3. (*Notes*, xviii. 1. 3, 4. 28—30.) At length Saul's envy and enmity burst forth in the avowed purpose of putting David to death, and he required all his servants, and even Jonathan his son, to join with him in this design. Yet, as he doubtless knew, that "Jonathan de-"lighted much in David," it must be ascribed to a peculiar interposition of Providence, that he did not attempt to conceal it from him. (*Note*, xx. 3.)—Some field, where Saul commonly walked, was pitched upon by Jonathan for this conference; that David being there concealed, might have the fullest evidence of Jonathan's fidelity and affection, and all the information which he could procure him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4—7. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xvii. 42—53. *Ps.* xxv. 2, 3. *John* xv. 22—25.) Probably, Saul was for the present impressed by Jonathan's calm and forcible arguments, and was sincere when he sware that David should not be slain: but when his convictions wore off, his malice re-

8 ¶ And there was war again: and [q] David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from [*] him.

9 And [r] the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with *his* hand.

10 And Saul [s] sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but [t] he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.

11 Saul also [u] sent messengers unto David's house [v] to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.

12 So Michal [x] let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped.

13 And Michal took [†] an image, and laid *it* in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster, and covered *it* with a cloth.

14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, [y] she said, He *is* sick.

15 And Saul sent the messengers [z] *again* to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him.

16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, *there was* an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster.

17 And Saul said unto Michal, [a] Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away [b] mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, [c] He said unto me, Let me go; [d] why should I kill thee?

18 ¶ So David fled, and escaped, and came [e] to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him: and he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

19 And [f] it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David *is* at Naioth in Ramah.

20 And Saul [g] sent messengers to take David: and [h] when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing *as* appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

21 And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise: and Saul [i] sent messengers again the third time, and they [k] prophesied also.

22 Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that *is* in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where

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vived, and he was too much accustomed to swear, duly to reverence an oath. (xiv. 24. 39. 44.) David could not indeed greatly confide in Saul's assurances; but he was willing to keep in the way of his duty, and to put his trust in God.

V. 8—10. Though David's valour and success were the known causes of Saul's enmity; yet he was willing again to fight against the Philistines, and to expose himself to their swords, and to Saul's increased envy on that account: nor did he ever decline playing upon the harp before Saul when required, though he saw the javelin in his hand, and had before so narrowly escaped! (*Notes*, xviii. 10, 11. 23—27.)

V. 11, 12. Lest David should elude the messengers if they entered the house in the night, they were ordered to watch till the morning that he might not go out; and then to apprehend him that Saul might slay him. Thus an opportunity was afforded David of escaping. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Judg.* xvi. 1—3.) Michal had either received some information concerning Saul's intentions, or made some observations which served to convince her of them. (*Notes*, *Ps.* lix. *title.* 3, 4. 6—15.)

V. 13—17. Michal's fidelity to her husband was commendable: nay, if the cause had been more doubtful, it would have been her duty to unite with him, while no harm was intended to Saul, and David merely aimed to preserve his life. (*Note*, *Gen.* xxxi. 15, 16.) Her stratagem also to gain time, was allowable: but her direct falsehood in vindicating her conduct to Saul, had not even the excuse of necessity; (*Note*, *Ex.* i. 19;) and it was highly injurious to David's reputation. The whole account illustrates the savage cruelty of Saul, who, it seems, could not be satisfied with the death of his faithful servant, unless he had the satisfaction of slaying him with his own hands: and it shews likewise the extreme danger to which David's life was exposed.—*Mine enemy.* (17) xviii. 29. xxiv. 19. *Note*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 20.

An image.] *Teraphim.* (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*)—It can hardly be thought that teraphim, for idolatrous purposes, were permitted in David's family: and it is therefore supposed, that this image was merely a statue for ornament.

V. 18. As the aged prophet had anointed David to be king, he fled to him on this emergency, rather than to his father's house: that he might have the solace of his counsel, instructions, and prayers.—Naioth is supposed to have been the place of a seminary of prophets, near Ramah. (19. 22. *Note*, x. 5, 6.)

V. 19—24. (*Notes*, *2 Kings* i. 9—14. *John* vii. 31—

are Samuel and David? and *one* said, Behold, *they be* at Naioth in Ramah.

23 And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and [l] the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied, [m] until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

24 And he [n] stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and [o] lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, [o] *Is* Saul also among the prophets?

[l] 20. x. 10. Num. xxiii. 5. xxiv. 2. Matt. vii. 22. John xi. 51. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. [m] Prov. xvi. 9. xxi. 1.

[n] 2 Sam. vi. 14. 20. Is. xx. 2. Mic. i. 8.

[o] Heb. *fell.* Num. xxiv. 4.

[o] x. 11, 12. Acts ix. 21.

CHAP. XX.

David consults with Jonathan how to provide for his safety, 1—10. They renew the covenant of friendship, and confirm it by oath, 11—17. They agree on a token, 18—23. David absents himself from the king's table, and is excused by Jonathan, whom Saul abuses and attempts to kill, 24—34 Jonathan shews David his danger, and most affectionately takes leave of him, 35—42.

AND David [a] fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, [b] What have I done? what *is* mine iniquity? and what *is* my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?

[a] xix. 19—24. xxiii. 26—28. Ps. cxxiv. 6—8. 2 Pet. ii. 9.

[b] xii. 3. xxiv. 11. 17. Ps. vii. 3—5. xviii. 20—24. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 John iii. 21.

6. 40—53.)—Saul, being seized by the prophetick Spirit efore he came to Naioth, stripped off his armour, and oyal robes, or upper garments; as it is probable the other rophets laid aside their upper garments, and Saul's mesengers along with them: (*Marg. Ref.*) and in an extacy, uring the whole day and night, he involuntarily joined in peaking of divine things, or in singing hymns of praise, ithout any power of executing the base purpose of his ourney. After which, finding himself baffled, he probably returned home extremely chagrined, without taking ny notice of Samuel.—This second time of Saul being mong the prophets was noted, as being indeed more wonerful than the former. (*Note*, x. 10—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most vehement anger, when excited by real or supposed injuries, may be pacified by concessions, kindness, nd continued good behaviour: but envious rage is exasperated by excellency of character and conduct, and generally is implacable.—When rooted malice possesses the eart, murder is speedily conceived; and the prospect of npunity, especially when men are armed with power and uthority, emboldens them to avow the most shameful urposes.—Absolute princes are so seldom opposed in heir designs, and so few venture to plead in behalf of hose whom they envy and hate, that they often conclude ll men to be alike selfish, and ready to execute any lucrave schemes of villainy. But that friendship, which is emented by mutual faith and piety, will influence those, ho feel its sacred energy, to renounce their highest temoral interests, and venture the displeasure of their supeors, in pleading the cause of injured worth.—The evil f causeless malice, of ingratitude, and of persecuting hose, whose conduct has been irreproachable, and whose ervices have been eminently useful, is so manifest, that a lain statement of truth and fact, with meek and serious xpostulations, will often for the time impress the minds f such as are most deeply guilty. But resolutions, made consequence of hasty convictions, and without any inard change of disposition, or dependence on the grace of od, seldom produce any durable good effect: and unovernable passions easily break through the most solemn aths, when the fear of God does not possess the heart. fresh temptation soon rouses the dormant corruption: nd, by indulging malignant passions, men give Satan his full advantage, and may be answerable for multiplied murders, without actually perpetrating any.—The servants of God however should keep to their place and duty, though hated for so doing; give honour to their earthly superiors, however they behave; and persevere in their endeavours to "overcome evil with good." The Almighty has innumerable methods of protecting them in the most imminent dangers: he can preserve them by the kindness even of those persons, whose conduct deserves marked disapprobation; he can change the hearts, or bind the hands of their enemies, or shame them for a season out of their malicious purposes.—In some instances, a persecutor, by coming among the people of God, has been apprehended, as it were, by converting grace; and, like Saul of Tarsus, has professed and "preached the faith, that once he sought "to destroy:" (*Notes, Gal.* i. 15—24. *Phil.* iii. 12—14. 1 *Tim.* i. 12—16:) but far more, like king Saul, have for a time been apparently changed, have exercised spiritual gifts, and been numbered among the prophets, whose malice has remained unsubdued, and whose "last state "has been worse than the first." Let us then daily seek for renewing grace, which shall be "in us a well of water "springing up into everlasting life;" let us cleave to truth and holiness with purpose of heart; and in every danger and trouble seek protection, comfort, and direction, in the ordinances of God, and in the society of his ministers and people. For these things will do far more towards making us happy, than all the splendour and luxury of a court, or the most absolute and extensive dominion, and royal or imperial dignity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. David, having been in so great danger at Naioth, and wonderfully rescued, fled from thence, and hastily repaired to Jonathan, to confer with him on the state of his affairs: but Jonathan was disposed to attribute his father's attempts against David to distemper, or to sudden sallies of passion, rather than to a fixed purpose of murdering him. After Saul had sworn not to slay David, (*Note*, xix. 4—7,) it may be supposed he had said no more to Jonathan on that subject, though he confided all his other affairs to him; and therefore Jonathan could scarcely believe that he harboured such base designs: and perhaps he had not heard of Saul's late violent attempts against David. (*Notes*, xix. 11—24.)

2 And he said unto him, [c] God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing, either great or small, but that he will [*] shew it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? It *is* not *so*.

3 And David [d] sware moreover, and said; Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly, [e] *as* the LORD liveth, and [f] *as* thy soul liveth, *there is* [g] but a step between me and death.

4 Then said Jonathan unto David, [†] Whatsoever thy soul [‡] desireth, I will even do *it* for thee.

5 And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to-morrow *is* the [h] new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, [i] that I may hide myself in the field unto the third *day* at even.

6 If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked *leave* of me, that he might run to [k] Beth-lehem his city; for *there is* a yearly [§] sacrifice there for all the family.

7 If he say thus, [l] *It is* well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, *then* be sure that [m] evil is determined by him.

8 Therefore thou shalt [o] deal kindly with thy servant; for [p] thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, [q] if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for [r] why shouldest thou bring me to thy father?

9 And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, [s] then would I not tell it thee?

10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what *if* thy father [t] answer thee roughly?

11 And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field.

12 And Jonathan said unto David, [u] O LORD God of Israel, when I have [‖] sounded my father about to-morrow any time, *or* the third *day*, and, behold, *if there be* good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and [*] shew it thee;

13 [v] The LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father *to do* thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace; and [x] the LORD be with thee, as [y] he hath been with my father.

V. 3. David solemnly called God to witness, that in criminating Saul he did not go upon doubtful surmises; and that it was as certain in itself as that "the LORD "lived," and that he was as sure as Jonathan could be of his own existence, that a design was formed against his life; which constrained him to renounce the service of Saul, and consult his own safety. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5—7. David suggested this expedient, to convince Jonathan of Saul's intentions, and to shew that he was forced into the measures which he afterwards adopted.—Saul still observed the externals of religion; and at the new moons entertained his family and chief officers, at a feast upon a sacrifice. Hitherto David had filled his place there; but on this occasion he purposed to be absent, to make trial of Saul: for, as he was evidently destitute of affection for him, if he were very angry, it must arise from his being deprived of an opportunity to do him mischief. It may be supposed, that David was invited to an annual family-sacrifice at Bethlehem: (*Notes*, ix. 12—14. xvi. 1—5:) the excuse was sufficient; Jonathan was competent to grant David permission to be absent; and he engaged to return on the third day before even, to learn the result. In the meanwhile he purposed to conceal him in the fields about Gibeah. (*Notes*, 19. 25. xix. 19—24.)

V. 8. At Jonathan's instance, he and David had entered into a covenant in the name of JEHOVAH, being ratified by a solemn appeal to him, for their mutual encouragement in worshipping him and promoting his glory. (*Note*, xviii. 3, 4.)—Yet David seems to have had some jealousy, lest Jonathan should warp from his constancy; especially lest the envenomed tongue of slander should injure him in his friend's esteem. 'If,' says he, 'I am guilty of any great offence which violates our covenant, such as treason against Saul; slay me thyself, but betray me not to thy father.' This was finely conceived to touch the tenderest feelings of Jonathan's heart.

V. 12, 13. In order to satisfy David, Jonathan appealed to God for his sincerity, and called on him to avenge his perfidy, if he betrayed his friend. Jonathan knew that Samuel had anointed David, and believed that he would certainly be king: and he had no thoughts of opposing the purpose of God, but rejoiced that so pious and able a person was chosen to reign over Israel; and prayed that the Lord might be with him, as he had been with Saul. For, as it became a dutiful son, he drew a veil over his father's

[c] xiv. 45. *See on* Gen. xliv. 7. Josh. xxii. 29. xxiv. 16. Luke xx. 16.
[*] Heb. *uncover mine ear.* 12. ix. 15. *marg.* Ps. xl. 6. Is. l. 5. John xv. 15. xvii. 8.
[d] Deut. vi. 13. Jer. iv. 2. Heb. vi. 16.
[e] xxv. 26. 2 Sam. xv. 21. 2 Kings ii. 2. 4. 6.
[f] i. 26. xvii. 55. Jer. xxxviii. 16.
[g] xxvii. 1. Deut. xxviii. 66. Ps. cxvi. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 30, 31. 2 Cor. i. 9.
[†] Or, *Say what is thy mind, and I will, &c.*
[‡] Heb. *speaketh*, or, *thinketh.*
[h] Num. x. 10. xxviii. 11. 2 Kings iv. 23. Ps. lxxxi. 3. Col. ii. 16.
[i] 19. xix. 2. Ps. lv. 12. Prov. xxii. 3. John viii. 59. Acts xvii. 14.
[k] xvii. 58. John vii. 42.
[§] Or, *feast.* ix. 12. xvi. 2—5.
[l] Deut. i. 23. 2 Sam. xvii. 4.
[m] 9. xxv. 17. Esth. vii. 7.
[o] Gen. xxiv. 49. xlvii. 29. Josh. ii. 14. Ruth i. 8. Prov. iii. 3.
[p] 16. xviii. 3. xxiii. 18.
[q] Josh. xxii. 22. 2 Sam. xiv. 32. Ps. vii. 4, 5. Acts xxv. 11.
[r] 1 Chr. xii. 17. Ps. cxvi. 11.
[s] 38. 42. xix. 2.
[t] 30—34. xxv. 10. 14. 17. Gen. xlii. 7. 30. 1 Kings xii. 13. Prov. xviii. 23.
[u] Josh. xxii. 22. Job xxxi. 4. Ps. xvii. 3. cxxxix. 1—4.
[‖] Heb. *searched.* Prov. xx. 5. xxv. 2, 3.
[*] Heb. *uncover thine ear.* 2.
[v] iii. 17. xxv. 22. Ruth i. 17. 2 Sam. iii. 35. xix. 13. 1 Kings xix. 2. xx. 10.
[x] xvii. 37. Josh. i. 5. 1 Chr. xxii. 11. 16. Matt. xxviii. 20. Phil. iv. 9.
[y] x. 7. xi. 6—13. xiv. 47. 2 Sam. vii. 15.

14 And thou shalt not only, while
z 2 Sam. ix. 3. Eph. v. 1, 2. yet I live, shew me z the kindness of
the LORD, that I die not;
a xxiv. 21. 2 Sam. ix. 1—7. xxi. 7. 15 But *also* a thou shalt not cut off
thy kindness from my house for ever:
no, not when the LORD hath cut off the
enemies of David, every one from the
face of the earth.
* Heb. *cut.* xviii. 3. Gen. xv. 18. 16 So Jonathan * made *a covenant*
b xxv. 22. xxxi. 2. 2 Sam. iv. 7, 8. xxi. 8. with the house of David, *saying*, b Let
the LORD even require *it* at the hand
of David's enemies.
17 And Jonathan caused David to
† Or, *by his love toward him.* swear again, † because he loved him:
c xviii. 1. 3. Deut. xiii. 6. 2 Sam. i. 26. Prov. xviii. 24. c for he loved him as he loved his own
soul.
18 Then Jonathan said to David,
d *See on* 5. To-morrow *is* the d new moon; and
thou shalt be missed, because thy seat
‡ Heb. *missed.* will be ‡ empty.
19 And *when* thou hast stayed three
§ Or, *diligently.* Heb. *greatly.* days, *then* thou shalt go down § quickly,
and come to the place where thou didst
e 5. xix. 2. ‖ Heb. *in the day of the business.* e hide thyself ‖ when the business was
in hand, and shalt remain by the stone
* Or, *that sheweth the way.* * Ezel.
20 And I will shoot three arrows
on the side *thereof,* as though I shot at
a mark.
21 And, behold, I will send a lad,
saying, Go, find out the arrows. If I
expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the
arrows *are* on this side of thee, take
them; then come thou: for *there is*
peace to thee, and † no hurt, *as* f the † Heb. *not any thing.*
LORD liveth. f Jer. iv. 2. v. 2. xii. 16. Am. viii 14.
22 But if I say thus unto the young
man, Behold, the arrows *are* beyond
thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath
sent thee away.
23 And *as touching* g the matter g 14, 15.
which thou and I have spoken of, be-
hold h the LORD *be* between thee and h 42. Gen. xvi. 5. xxxi. 50.
me for ever.
24 ¶ So David hid himself in the
field: and when the new moon was
come, the i king sat him down to eat i Ps. l. 16—21. Prov. iv. 17. xv. 17. xvii. 1. xxi. 3. 27. Is. i. 11—15. Zech. vii. 6. John xviii. 28.
meat.
25 And the king sat upon his seat,
j Judg. xvi. 20. j as at other times, *even* upon a seat by
the wall: and Jonathan arose, and
Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's
place was empty.
26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any
thing that day: for he thought, Some-
thing hath befallen him, k he *is* not k Lev. vii. 21. xi. 24. 27. 31. 40. xv. 5. 16, 17. 19—21. Num. xix. 16.
clean; surely he *is* not clean.
27 And it came to pass on the mor-
row, *which was* the second *day* of the
month, that David's place was empty;
and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, l xviii. 11. xix. 9, 10. 15.
l Wherefore cometh not m the son of m xxii. 7—9. 13, 14. xxv. 10. Is. xi. 1, 2. Matt. xiii. 55. 1 Pet. ii. 4.
Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor
to-day?

misconduct, and only adverted to his former good management and success. (*Notes*, xi. 4—15.)—The whole is emphatically the language of strong affection and emotion; and this appears in the broken and interrupted language employed.

V. 14—17. It has been very common in disputed successions, for the reigning prince to clear the title of his own family, by cutting off all competitors: Jonathan therefore prudently proposed to extend the personal covenant, before made with David, to their posterity also. He readily renounced all pretensions to the kingdom for himself and his children; and only desired, that he and they might be numbered among the friends of David and his family, when all his enemies had been destroyed.—When we consider David's distress, Saul's enmity, and Jonathan's prospects, we can never sufficiently admire the strength of his faith, and the force of his disinterested love. (*Notes*, xviii. 1. *John* xv. 12—16.) It is observable that Jonathan did not desire, that the Lord should require it of David or his posterity, if any failure took place, but "at the hand of "David's enemies."

V. 19. It must be supposed, that David went to Bethlehem: but the original words seem to intimate, that he should come three days successively, from the place of his retirement to the spot where he and Jonathan had discoursed on the business, in order to learn whether any thing had been discovered. Perhaps he stayed but one day at Bethlehem.

V. 20—22. In case Jonathan could not speak with David, because he was watched, or because of persons passing by; these signals were agreed on: and in case the last should be made, David must conclude, that his death was determined; and that the Lord required him to provide for his safety by concealing himself.

V. 25. When Saul entered the room, Jonathan *arose*, and took his seat next to him; and Abner probably, as a near relation of Saul and commander of his forces, sat next to Jonathan.—It must be supposed, that Saul had before this returned to Gibeah, and that the incidents here recorded took place there.

V. 26. Saul did not ascribe David's absence to a criminal cause: but he might have suspected that fear of his murderous rage, rather than any ceremonial uncleanness inadvertently contracted, had induced him to absent himself. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27. As the exact time when the new moon happened was uncertain, it seems to have been customary to observe two days as festivals; so that those, who were unclean on

n 6. 28 And Jonathan [n] answered Saul, David earnestly asked *leave* of me *to go* to Beth-lehem:

29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in
o xvii. 28. the city; and [o] my brother, he hath commanded me *to be there:* and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren: therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

p Job v. 2. Prov. xiv. 29. xix. 19. xxi. 24. xxv. 28. xxvii. 3. Jam. i. 19, 20. * Or, *Thou perverse rebel.* Heb. *Son of perverse rebellion.* Prov. xv. 2. xxi. 24. Matt. v. 22. Eph. iv. 31. vi 4.

30 Then [p] Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, [*] Thou son of the perverse rebellious *woman,* do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?

q 8. xix. 6. 12—15. † Heb. is *the son of death.* xxvi. 16. 2 Sam. xix. 28. Ps. lxxix. 11. *Marg.*

31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom: wherefore now [q] send and fetch him unto me, for he [†] shall surely die.

r xix. 5. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. xxxi. 8, 9. John vii. 51. s Matt. xxvii. 23. Luke xxiii. 22.

32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, [r] Wherefore shall he be slain? [s] what hath he done?

33 And Saul [t] cast a javelin at him to smite him: [u] whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.

t xviii. 11. xix. 10, 11. Prov. xxii. 24. Ec. ix. 3. Jer. xvii. 9. u 7. Ec. vii. 9.

34 So Jonathan arose from the table [v] in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for [x] he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

v Ec. vii. 20. Eph. iv. 26. x Mark iii. 5.

35 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field [y] at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.

y 19. 2 Sam. xx. 5.

36 And he said unto his lad, [z] Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. *And* as the lad ran, he shot an arrow [‡] beyond him.

z 20, 21. ‡ Heb. *to over him.*

37 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, *Is* not the arrow beyond thee?

38 And Jonathan cried after the lad, [a] Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

a Ps. lv. 6—9. Prov. vi. 4, 5. Matt. xxiv. 16—18. Mark xiii. 14—16. Luke xvii. 31, 32.

39 But the lad knew not any thing:

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the first day, might observe the second. (*Note, Num.* xxviii. 11—15.) For many of these ceremonial uncleannesses lasted only till the evening. (*Marg. Ref.—Lev.* xv.)—Saul, in calling David "the son of Jesse," when he was his own son-in-law, expressed the contemptuous enmity of his heart. (*Notes,* xxii. 9, 10. xxv. 10, 11.)

V. 30. The terms used by Saul seem to contain the most scurrilous abuse, which the language afforded; especially implying, that Jonathan proved himself not to be *his* son, and that he *disgraced his mother* by taking David's part against him. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*)—Considering Saul's rank, and Jonathan's relation to him, his eminent services and excellent character, and the publick and sacred occasion at which it occurred, this speech may give some idea of the furious passions which Saul indulged. (*Notes,* 27. xvi. 14. *Jam.* iii. 3—6.)

V. 31. *For as long,* &c.] Saul doubtless knew that David had been anointed to be king, by the same authority as he himself had been: yet he opposed him with all his might, and vainly hoped to prevent the purpose of God by putting him to death! (*Notes, Matt.* ii. 7—18.)

V. 32—34. (*Marg. Ref.*) When Jonathan had before reasoned with Saul, he was reduced to a better temper; but now he would not hearken to a word: and though, in order to induce Jonathan's concurrence in killing David, he professed a great zeal for his establishment in the kingdom; yet when his purposes were opposed, he madly attempted to kill Jonathan also!—He seems to have used a javelin instead of a sceptre; for he had it always ready at hand.

It has been suggested, that the words of these verses do not mean, that Saul cast a javelin at Jonathan; but only that "he *had* cast a javelin" at David, which Jonathan at this crisis recollected. It must, however, be admitted, that this is by no means an obvious construction of the original. Nor can it be readily thought, that merely a recollection of a fact which formerly had taken place, could induce Jonathan to leave his place "in fierce anger;" when he had, at this time, borne the most provoking language of his father without expressing any indignant perturbation; and had also, subsequent to some of Saul's attempts on David's life, calmly expostulated with Saul, and induced him to engage, by a solemn oath, that he would not slay David. (*Note,* xix. 4—7.)—But the atrocity of such an attempt on the life of his own son, seems to some persons totally incredible. Yet Saul's stern and rigorous conduct, respecting Jonathan, after he had miraculously prevailed to rescue him and Israel from the greatest straits and disgrace, shews that the self-will and severity of his mind, had overcome, even at that favourable crisis, his natural affection. (*Note,* xiv. 36—44.) And the transient attempt of his furious rage, in attempting to murder his son, on the occasion recorded in these verses, bears no proportion to his subsequent deliberate, impious, and most barbarous murder of the priests, and their wives, and children; because they were supposed to favour David. (*Notes,* xxii. 11—19.) Nor can any thing be deemed too atrocious for a man to commit, whom God had given up, and left, in a kind of desperate madness, under the power of Satan, and of his own passions, till he plunged himself into destruction with his own hands. (*Notes,* xxviii. 6—25. xxxi. 3—6.)

V. 35—40. *Marg. Ref.*

only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

40 And Jonathan gave his * artillery unto † his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.

41 *And* as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of *a place* toward the south, [b] and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: [c] and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until [d] David exceeded.

42 And Jonathan said to David, [e] Go in peace, ‡ forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. [f] And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

* Heb. *instruments.*
† Heb. *the lad that was his.*
b xxv. 23. Gen. xliii. 28. 2 Sam. ix. 6.
c x. 1. Gen. xxix. 11. 13. xlv. 15. 2 Sam. xix. 39. Acts xx. 37.
d xviii. 3. 2 Sam. i. 26.
e 22. i. 17. Num. vi. 26. Luke vii. 50. Acts xvi. 36.
‡ Or, The LORD be witness of that *which*, &c. 23.
f xxiii. 18.

V. 41, 42. Finding no one near, Jonathan seized the opportunity of one more interview with his beloved friend; who, in his conduct on this occasion, united all the respect and honour due to Jonathan's rank, with the most endeared affection and glowing gratitude: so that his sorrow even exceeded that of Jonathan's; as considering himself exiled from his country, separated from his wife and his friend, and excluded from the ordinances of God, and the society of his people. Nothing can be conceived more pathetick than this parting; and we do not find, that they met more than once afterwards in this world. (*Notes*, xxiii. 16—18.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—23.

Next to the consolations of true religion, nothing is more supporting to an afflicted mind than the converse of a pious friend: and it is highly desirable to avoid misconstructions of our conduct, by those whom we love and esteem; lest we should lose the comfort of their friendship, and throw temptations in their way.—Though it is painful to suffer for well doing, yet it is far better than to suffer for evil doing: for a clear conscience, an unblemished reputation, and the favour of God, are unspeakable advantages in trying circumstances. (*Notes*, 1 *Pet.* iii. 13—18. iv. 12—16.)—Friendly and pious persons are always backward to suspect others of deep malignity, but wish to impute their misconduct, where undeniable, to other causes: and pious children will veil the faults of their parents as far as consists with other duties, and speak as favourably of them as truth permits. But it is shameful when parents deliberately devise wickedness, which they must studiously conceal from their children, lest they should in them meet with obstacles to their criminal designs.—Evident danger, from the malice of men, renders it allowable for us to quit those places where we were employed, and to take proper measures for self-preservation: yet this ought, if possible, to be so conducted, that all impartial persons may perceive the necessity, and that "the LORD hath sent us away."—At some times it *appears to us*, that "there is but a step between us and death:" at all times we are sensible that it may be so, and should be expecting and preparing for that event; "for, as sure as "the LORD liveth, and as our souls now live" in the body, we shall ere long remove into the eternal world.—But let dangers appear ever so imminent, we cannot die, till the purpose of God concerning us be accomplished; and, if we are believers, till "we have served our generation according to his will." (*Note*, *Acts* xiii. 24—37, *conclusion.*)—Every expedient should be tried to prevent open quarrels, and every appearance of evil guarded against: and by little things a certain judgment may often be formed of men's dispositions and intentions.—True friendship, grounded on the covenant of the Lord, will require nothing unreasonable, and refuse nothing equitable: yet it is apt to be jealous, when fidelity is put to severe trials, and there is danger lest slander and prejudice should interrupt its course. But, in reality, it rests on an immoveable basis, and possesses inconceivable force: it is stronger than death, and able to silence the voice of emulation, ambition, self-love, and even relative affection. Who then can comprehend the love of Jesus, who gave himself a sacrifice unto God for us rebellious and polluted sinners! And what ought to be the force and effects of our love to him!—The believer, being acquainted with the purpose of the Father respecting him, willingly submits to his authority, and rejoices in the prospect of his glory. Loving him as his own soul, he asks and receives repeated confirmations of his covenant of peace; readily performs whatever Jesus his Friend commands; and for his sake feels and expresses a cordial love for those who seek his glory and bear his image. Assured that all his enemies will perish, he desires the blessing of his love and his covenant of peace and friendship for his posterity and his relations: but while he prays for and weeps over such of them, as "reject the counsel of God "against themselves;" he must separate from them, and join interests with those whom they despise and hate.

V. 24—42.

The formal professor is sometimes more constant at divine ordinances, than even the zealous believer: for discomposure of mind will occasionally prevent the attendance of a believer; while the purpose or the practice of the vilest crimes does not interrupt those, who trust in the mere external observance.—When envious and angry passions are indulged, men are pushed on by Satan into the most indecent excesses, without respect even to character, or the most sacred obligations: nor are they, at one moment, aware of the outrages, which they shall commit the next. Let us then fear giving place to the devil in the smallest degree.—Under great provocations the meekest cannot always refrain from anger; but when its emotions are felt, it is our wisdom to withdraw in silence: and it is generous to be more grieved for our insulted friends than for ourselves.—Every comfort on earth is counterpoise with some sorrow; and the dearest friends must experience the most painful separations. But Christians need not, and should not, "sorrow as men without hope:" for, being one with Christ, they are one with each other; and will soon meet in his presence to part no more, where all tears shall be wiped from their eyes.

CHAP. XXI.

David comes to Nob, and obtains from Ahimelech hallowed bread, 1—6. Doeg, an Edomite, is present, 7. David takes also Goliath's sword, 8, 9. He flees to Gath, and feigns himself mad, and is sent away, 10—15.

a xxii. 19. Neh. xi. 32. Is. x. 32.
b xiv. 3. *Ahiah.* xxii. 9—19. Mark ii. 26.
c xvi. 4.

THEN came David to [a] Nob, to [b] Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was [c] afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why *art* thou alone, and no man with thee?

d xix. 17. xxii. 22. Gen. xxvii. 20. 24. 1 Kings xiii. 18. Ps. cxix. 29. Gal. ii. 12, 13. Col. iii. 9.

2 And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, [d] The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed *my* servants to such and such a place.

e 4. Judg. ix. 29. Is. lii. 6.

3 Now therefore what is [e] under thine hand? give *me* five *loaves of* bread in mine hand, or what there is

* Heb. *found.*

[*] present.

4 And the priest answered David, and said, *There is* no common bread

f 6. Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 5—9. Matt. xii. 3, 4.
g Ex. xix. 15. Zech. vii. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 5.

under mine hand, but there is [f] hallowed bread; [g] if the young men have kept themselves at least from women.

5 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women *have been* kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and [h] the vessels of the young men are holy, and *the bread is* [i] in a manner common, [†] yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.

h Acts ix. 15. 1 Thes. iv. 3, 4. 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. iii. 7.
i Lev. xxiv. 9.
† Or, *especially when this day there is other sanctified in the vessel.*

6 So the priest [k] gave him hallowed *bread:* for there was no bread there but the shew-bread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put [l] hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

k Matt. xii. 3, 4. Mark ii. 25—27. Luke vi. 3, 4.
l Lev. xxiv. 5—9.

7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, [m] detained before the LORD; and his name *was* [n] Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of [o] the herdmen that *belonged* to Saul.

m Jer. vii. 9—11. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Am. viii. 5. Matt. xv. 8. Acts xxi. 26, 27.
n xxii. 9. Ps. lii. *title.*
o xi. 5. Gen. xlii. 7, 8. xxvi. 20. 1 Chr. xxvii. 29. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10.

8 And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.

9 And the priest said, [p] The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in [q] the valley of Elah, behold, it *is here* wrapped in a cloth [r] behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take *it:* for *there is* no other save that here. And David said, *There is* none like that; give it me.

p xvii. 51—54.
q xvii. 2. 50.
r Ex. xxviii. 6, &c.

NOTES

CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. Some think Ahimelech is only another name for Ahiah; (xiv. 3;) others, that Ahiah was dead, and that Ahimelech was his younger brother and successor in the priesthood. (*Note*, xiv. 2, 3.)—The tabernacle, on some account, had been removed from Shiloh to Nob, a city of Benjamin, which was not originally allotted to the priests, but, as it seems, had afterwards been given to them. (*Marg. Ref.*) The ark, however, still remained at Kirjath-jearim. (*Note*, vii. 1, 2.)—David went to Nob to enquire of the Lord by the high priest, as he had before been accustomed to do; and to take farewell of him and of the sanctuary, as he had of Samuel and of Jonathan. But as he went without his accustomed retinue, and in apparent distress, Ahimelech probably suspected a breach between him and Saul, and was afraid to entertain him. This proved a snare to David; and lest he should be betrayed to Saul, or sent away destitute, he immediately framed a gross falsehood, which can by no means be excused, and which had most fatal consequences. (*Notes*, xxii. 9—19.)

V. 3—6. It seems wonderful, that David should not be able to procure bread for himself and his few attendants: but when Saul's rooted malice was made known, every one would be afraid or unwilling to entertain him. The necessity, however, was real and urgent: and Ahimelech supposed that in such a case they might eat the shew-bread, provided they were prepared in the same manner as the Israelites had been, for receiving the law from mount Sinai. (*Ex.* xix. 15.) David having therefore satisfied him in this respect, and assured him that the young men were ceremonially clean, as well as *holy* in their general character, (as the words seem to imply;) and having pleaded, that the bread was now in a manner common, as other loaves had been placed upon the table in their stead; he gave them some of it, and they did eat. (*Marg.—Note, Lev.* xxiv. 5—9.)—Jesus Christ in vindicating his disciples from the charge of breaking the sabbath, has also vindicated David in this matter; which proves that the *positive* institutions of religion may be dispensed with, when the preservation of life, or any other urgent necessity requires it. (*Notes, Hos.* vi. 6. *Matt.* xii. 3, 4.)

V. 7. Doeg had become a proselyte to the religion of Israel, perhaps to obtain preferment from Saul: (*Notes, Ps.* lii. *title.* 2—4:) and he was at this time performing some vow, which constrained his attendance at the sanctuary; but the word *detained* seems to imply, that he submitted to it as a painful restraint. (*Note, Am.* viii. 4—10.) Thus, however, he was acquainted with what passed between David and Ahimelech. (*Notes*, xxii. 9, 10. 22.)

V. 8, 9. Either David fled with such precipitation that

10 ¶ And David arose, and [s] fled that day for fear of Saul, and went [t] to [u] Achish the king of Gath.

11 And [w] the servants of Achish said unto him, *Is* not this David, [v] the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

12 And David [x] laid up these words in his heart, and was [y] sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

13 And he [z] changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and [†] scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man [‡] is mad: wherefore *then* have ye brought him to me?

15 Have I need of madmen, that ye have brought this *fellow* to play the madman in my presence? shall this *fellow* come into my house?

[s] xxvii. 1. 1 Kings xix. 3. Jer. xxvi. 21.
[t] xxvii. 2.
[u] Or, *Ahimelech.* Ps. xxxiv. *title.*
[w] Ps. lvi. *title.*
[v] xvi. 1. xviii. 7 8. xxix. 5.
[x] Ps. cxix. 11. Luke ii. 19. 51.
[y] 10. Gen. xii. 11 —13. xxvi. 7. Ps. xxxiv. 4. lvi. 3
[z] Ps. xxxiv. *title.* Prov. xxix. 25.
[†] Or, *made marks.*
[‡] Or, *playeth the madman.* Ec. vii. 7.

CHAP. XXII.

David escapes to Adullam, whither his kindred and others resort to him, 1, 2. At Mizpeh he commends his parents to the protection of the king of Moab, 3, 4. Admonished by the prophet Gad, he returns to the land of Judah, 5. Saul complains that his servants are unfaithful, 6—8. Doeg accuses Ahimelech; who is sent for with the priests, and answers the charge, 9—16. Saul's soldiers refusing to slay the priests at his command, Doeg executes it; and destroys their city with their wives and children, 17—19. Abiathar

he had not time to take his armour; or he left it, in order the better to conceal himself.—It seems that Goliath's sword was not so large, but that David could readily use it; and every time he drew it, it would remind him to bless God for his victory over the Philistine, and to trust in him to turn the arms of all his enemies against themselves. (*Note*, xvii. 50—53.)

V. 10—15. David expected that Saul would pursue him into every part of the land of Israel, and he was not disposed to form a party against him. Perhaps Achish deemed it politick to draw off so able a commander from the service of Saul, and had given him some intimations that he would protect him. But his officers judged otherwise: and, remembering his victory over Goliath, and the lavish commendations bestowed on him; (*Note*, xviii. 6—9;) and having heard, that he had been appointed to be "the king of the land;" they judged it impossible to fix him in their interest, and perhaps intimated that he should be put to death. (*Note*, xxix. 4—6.) This so alarmed David, that he feigned himself mad, and mimicked the actions of lunaticks; which gave Achish the opportunity of sending him away, without either employing or hurting him: but it is not certain, whether he really thought him mad, or was willing to avail himself of appearances, to get out of the difficulty.—David's conduct was, in some respects, degrading to his character, and discovered a wavering in his faith and courage. He soon, however, recovered his confidence and composure; for on this occasion he composed the thirty-fourth and the fifty-sixth Psalms, which are remarkable for strength of faith and fervour of piety. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxiv. *title.* 4—6. lvi. *title.* 1—4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When in the courts of kings a favourite falls, in general it is very rapidly: for out of fickleness, envy, malice, ambition, or fear, almost every one deserts or opposes him; disregarding the most unsullied reputation, eminent services, or personal obligations. It is therefore "better to "trust in the LORD, than to put any confidence in princes." (*Note, Ps.* cxviii. 8, 9.) "Oppression maketh even a wise "man mad;" (*Note, Ec.* vii. 7;) and few conduct themselves in extreme difficulties, without taking some manifestly false step: we should therefore "watch and pray, "that we may not enter into temptation;" and especially seek that strength of faith in God, which may overcome the fear of man.—Ingenious falsehoods often promise present security; but they insure future disgrace and disquietude: and no impositions are more foolish and prejudicial, than those, which some men practise, in seeking counsel and comfort from the ministers of Christ.—Urgent necessity will justify us in neglecting, in particular instances, the rituals of religion: but we ought always to attend on holy things, in holiness of body and soul, and with a mind as abstracted from all earthly objects as possible.—The true believer is glad to go to the courts of the Lord, is reluctant to quit them, and mourns when confined from them: but the time-serving hypocrite is dragged to them, and *detained* in God's service, from secular motives, and is often forming schemes of wickedness when he seems to be worshipping. What wonder then, that "his sacrifice "is an abomination to the LORD?" (*Notes, Ps.* xxvi. 6—8. xxvii. 4—6. xlii. 1—3. lxiii. 1—4. lxxxiv. 1—4. 10. *Prov.* xv. 8, 9.)—The remembrance of former mercies not only revives gratitude, but inspires confidence and courage: and the word of God is that "sword of the Spirit," concerning which, in all temptations and conflicts, we may well say, "There is none like it."—In this world we must pass from one danger to another, and often meet with terror where we seek security; and those very honours, of which men are ambitious, and which are most gratifying at the time, expose them to manifold disadvantages and perils: nor can we expect our situation to be better, while the best of characters are so inconsistent and defective. But we may "trust the LORD at all times;" he will supply our wants, and never forsake us notwithstanding our lamented infirmities: he will not leave the lives of his people in the hands of their enemies, nor their souls in disconsolation: and the more simply we depend on him and obey him, the more comfortably and surely we shall walk through this troublesome world, to that "rest which is reserved "for the people of God."

escapes to David, who blames himself, and assures him of protection, 20—23.

a xxii. 10—15. Ps. xxxiv. *title.*
b Josh. xii. 15. xv. 35. 2 Sam. xxiii. 13, 14. 1 Chr. xi. 15. Ps. cxlii. *title.* Mic. i. 15. Heb. xi. 38.

DAVID [a] therefore departed thence, and escaped to [b] the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard *it*, they went down thither to him.

c Judg. xi. 3. Matt. xi. 12. 28.
* Heb. *had a creditor.* Matt. xviii. 25—34.
† Heb. *bitter of soul.* i. 10. xxx. 6. Judg. xviii. 25. 2 Sam. xvii. 8. Prov. xxxi. 6. *margins.*
d ix. 16. xxv. 15, 16 xxx. 22—24. 2 Sam. v. 2. 2 Kings xx. 5. 1 Chr. xi. 15—19. Ps. lxxii. 12. Heb. ii. 10.

2 And every one *that was* [c] in distress, and every one that *was* [*] in debt, and every one *that was* [†] discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became [d] a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

e Judg. xi. 29.
f xiv. 47. Ruth i. 1—4. iv. 10. 17.
g Gen. xlvii. 11. Ex. xx. 12. Matt. xv. 4—6. 1 Tim. v. 4.
h iii. 18. 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. Phil. ii. 23, 24.

3 And David went thence to [e] Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto [f] the king of Moab, [g] Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, *and* *be* with you, [h] till I know what God will do for me.

4 And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was [i] in the hold.

i 2 Sam. xxiii. 13, 14. 1 Chr. xii. 16.
j 2 Sam. xxiv. 11. 1 Chr. xxi. 9. xxix. 29. 2 Chr. xxix. 25
k xxiii. 1—5. Neh. vi. 11. Ps. xi. 1. Is. viii. 12—14.

5 And the prophet [j] Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; [k] depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.

6 ¶ When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that *were* with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a [‡] tree in Ramah, having his [l] spear in his hand, and all his servants *were* standing about him;)

‡ Or, *grove in a high place*
l xviii. 10. xix. 9. xx. 33.

7 Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; Will [m] the son of Jesse [n] give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all [o] captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;

m 9. 13. xx. 27. 30. xxv. 10. 2 Sam. xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 16. Is. xi. 1. 10.
n viii. 14, 15.
o viii. 11, 12.

8 That all of you have conspired against me, and *there is* none that [§] sheweth me [p] that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and *there is* none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

§ Heb. *uncovereth mine ear.* xx. 2. Job xxxiii. 16. *marg.*
p xviii. 3. xx. 8. 13—17. 30—34. 42. xxiii. 16—18.

9 Then answered [q] Doeg the Edomite, (which was set over the servants of Saul,) and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub.

q xxi. 7. Ps. lii. *title.* 1—5. Prov. xix. 5. xxix. 12. Ez. xxii. 9. Matt. xxvi. 59—61.

10 And [r] he enquired of the LORD for him, and [s] gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

r 13. 15. xxiii. 2. 4. 12. xxx. 8. Num. xxvii. 21.
s xxi. 6—9.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1, 2. David, being unable to secure himself by flight, and finding that none would venture to harbour him, hid himself in a cave. (*Note, Ps.* cxlii. *title.*) Thither his relations resorted to him for protection from the rage of Saul, and to afford him assistance: along with them also came a number of persons of broken fortunes and unsettled minds, of whom he formed a small army. But they acted entirely upon the defensive, and indeed became protectors of the country: and probably David's instructions, devotions, and example, produced a great change in the temper and behaviour of the larger part of them. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* xxv. 7, 8. 14—17. xxx. 22—25. *Judg.* xi. 3.)

V. 3, 4. The king of Moab, being at variance with Saul, was favourable to David; perhaps the more so, as David was descended from a Moabitess. (*Ruth* iv. 13—17.) With him, however, he procured a retreat for his aged parents. (*Note, 2 Sam.* viii. 2.)

V. 5. It is probable that Gad had been educated in the schools of the prophets under Samuel's tuition; (*Marg. Ref.* j. *Note,* x. 5, 6;) and knowing that David was anointed to be king, he seems to have attended him in his distresses. By him the Lord commanded David not to abide at Mizpeh, which bordered on Moab; (*Note, Judg.* xi. 9—11;) or in any distant fortified place: but to return into the land of Judah, that he might not be alienated from his brethren, or his men enticed to idolatry; that his faith might be exercised and increased; and that he still might perform some service to his country. (*Note,* xxiii. 1—6.)

V. 6. Saul had pitched his tent, or set up his standard, near Gibeah, upon some *eminence;* (for so the word *Ramah* signifies;) and with a spear in his hand he seemed to menace vengeance against all who did not join him in persecuting David. (*Note,* xx. 32, 33.)

V. 7, 8. This language of Saul is very expressive of rage and jealousy. He took it for granted that David had conspired against him. His pious, amiable, and dutiful son also was accused of being the ringleader in the conspiracy; because he would not assist in the murder of an excellent man, whom he greatly loved! Nay, the people in general, and his own tribe in particular, had conspired against him, and had no compassion on him, and were blind to their own interests; merely because they were not so furious against David as he was! (*Notes,* xvi. 14. xx. 30—33.)—It is probable that Saul had heard that Jonathan had made a covenant with David; and, not being able to learn the particulars, he suspected that treason was implied in it. Perhaps Jonathan kept at a greater distance, and was more reserved than before.

V. 9, 10. There was no good reason why Doeg should at all mention Ahimelech's conduct, which he knew did

11 Then the king [t] sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that *were* in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.

12 And Saul said, Hear now, [u] thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, [*] Here I *am*, my lord.

13 And Saul said unto him, [v] Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And [x] who *is so* faithful among all thy servants as David, which is [y] the king's son-in-law, and [z] goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?

15 Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute *any* thing unto his servant, *nor* to all the house of my father: [a] for thy servant knew nothing of all this, [†] less or more.

16 And the king said, [b] Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, [c] thou and all thy father's house.

17 And the king said unto the [‡] footmen that stood about him, Turn and [d] slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king [e] would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD.

18 And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And [f] Doeg the Edomite turned, and [g] he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day [h] fourscore and five persons that did wear [i] a linen ephod.

19 And [j] Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword; both [k] men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

t Rom. iii. 15.
u 7. 18.
* Heb. *Behold me.* 2 Sam. ix. 6. Is. lxv. 1.
v 8. Ps. cxix. 69. Am. vii. 10. Luke xxiii. 2—5.
x xix. 4, 5. xx. 32. xxiv. 11. xxvi. 23. 2 Sam. xxii. 23—25. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. xxxi. 8, 9.
y 13. xvii. 25. xviii. 27.
z xviii. 13. xxi. 2.
a Gen. xx. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xv. 11. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 16, 17.
† Heb. *little or great.* xxv. 36.
b xiv. 44. xx. 31. 1 Kings xviii. 4. xix. 2. Prov. xxviii. 15. Dan. ii. 5. 12. iii. 19, 20. Acts xii. 19.
c Deut. xxiv. 16. Esth. iii. 6. Matt. ii. 16.
‡ Or, *guard.* Heb. *runners.* viii. 11. 2 Sam. xv. 1. 1 Kings i. 5.
d 13. xx. 38. xxv. 17. 1 Kings xviii. 4.
e xiv. 45. Ex. i. 17. 2 Kings i. 13, 14. Acts iv. 19.
f *See on* 9.
g 2 Chr. xxiv. 21. Hos. v. 11. vii. 3. Mic. vi. 16. Zeph. iii. 3. Acts xxvi. 10, 11.
h ii. 30—33. 36. iii. 12—14.
i ii. 28. Ex. xxviii. 40.
j 9. xxi. 1. Neh. xi. 32. Is. x. 32.
k xv. 3. 9. Josh. vi. 17. 21. Hos. x. 14 Jam. ii. 13.

not proceed from malice: but if he must report it, he should have declared, how Ahimelech was imposed upon by David, and that he intended to shew respect to Saul in that very action. (*Notes*, xxi. 1—9.) But on the contrary, he spoke as if David came to take Ahimelech's advice about his subsequent proceedings, and as if Ahimelech was joined in a conspiracy with David against Saul; though nothing could be more contrary to the truth than this insinuation! Doeg therefore slandered Ahimelech, and bare false witness against him, though the general charges adduced accorded with facts. (*Notes, Ex.* xx. 16. *Matt.* xxvi. 57—62.)—It is observable, that Doeg, after Saul's example, did not deign to call David by his name, but contemptuously spoke of him, as "the son of Jesse." (8. 13. xx. 27. 30, 31.)

V. 13. *Enquired of God*, &c.] Saul, by this language, almost in direct terms, charged God himself with counselling a traitor by his high priest, how to prevail against his sovereign! (*Notes, Ec.* ix. 1—3. *John* xii. 9—11.)—As Ahimelech did not deny this part of the charge, it may be concluded to be true, though not mentioned in the narrative.

V. 14—16. In Ahimelech's ready attendance, with all his brethren, and in his answer to Saul, we have the conduct and language of conscious innocence. David's reputation for fidelity and capacity was established: his near relation to Saul, as having married his daughter; his prompt obedience to him, and his honourable services to Israel, were well known: Ahimelech had been used to enquire of the Lord for him, as a publick character: he meant no harm, knew nothing of what had passed, and abhorred the thought of conspiring against his prince; and therefore trusted he should be honourably acquitted.—It is observable that he generously concealed David's imposition, though the mention of it would have greatly tended to exculpate himself.—But Saul was forsaken by God, and given up to Satan and his own malignant passions, and would hearken to nothing but the suggestions of revenge and jealousy.

V. 17. Saul madly and impiously resolved to slay all the priests of the line of Eli; because he supposed, contrary to proof, that one had been guilty: and he seems to have sent for the whole company, with this malignant intention! (11) He scorned to lay hands on an individual; (*Note, Esth.* iii. 6;) and he apparently exulted in revenging himself on "the priests of the LORD." Yet his guards, or *running footmen*, (*Marg. Ref.*) so revered the sacerdotal character, and were so convinced that the priests were innocent, that, though they might themselves expect to feel the weight of their enraged prince's furious resentment, they expressly refused to execute his cruel command. A singular instance of obedience to God, rather than to man! (*Note, Acts* iv. 13—22.)

V. 18. The priests did not generally wear the linen ephod, except when actually officiating: but perhaps the whole company was arrayed in sacerdotal garments, as appearing before the king, and as intending thus to shew their respect to him.—Thus an Edomite, of base character in other respects, without provocation or opposition, with his own hands, slew eighty-five priests of the Lord at one time: and both he and Saul gloried in the bloody execution!—This horrid massacre, however, accomplished the sentence denounced against the house of Eli. (*Notes*, ii. 31—36. iii. 12—14.)

V. 19. Doeg, doubtless by Saul's authority, not satisfied with the blood of the priests, treated the inhabitants

20 ¶ And [l] one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, [m] escaped, and fled after David.

21 And Abiathar shewed David, that Saul had slain the LORD's priests.

22 And David said unto Abiathar, I knew *it* that day, when Doeg the Edomite *was* there, that he would surely tell Saul: [n] I have occasioned *the death* of all the persons of thy father's house.

23 Abide thou with me, fear not: for [o] he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: [p] but with me thou *shalt be* in safeguard.

[l] xxiii. 6. xxx. 7. 2 Sam. xx. 25. 1 Kings ii. 26, 27.
[m] ii. 33. iv. 12. Job i. 15—17. 19.
[n] xxi. 1—9. Ps. xliv. 22.
[o] 1 Kings ii. 26. Matt. xxiv. 9. John xv. 20, 21. xvi. 2, 3. Heb. xii. 1—3.
[p] John x. 28—30. xvii. 12. xviii. 9.

CHAP. XXIII.

David, enquiring of God by Abiathar, defends Keilah and smites the Philistines, 1—6. Saul purposes to besiege him *in* Keilah; but the Lord shewing David the treachery of the men of Keilah, he flees to Ziph, where Jonathan meets and comforts him, 7—18. The Ziphites inform Saul concerning him, who closely pursues him to Maon; but is called off by an invasion of the Philistines, 19—28. David dwells at En-gedi, 29.

THEN they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against [a] Keilah, and they [b] rob the threshing-floors.

2 Therefore David [c] enquired of the

[a] Josh. xv. 44. Neh. iii. 17, 18.
[b] Lev. xxvi. 16. Deut. xxviii. 33. 51. Judg. vi. 4. 11. Mic. vi. 15.
[c] 4. 6. 9—12. xxx. 8. Num. xxvii. 21. Josh. ix. 14. Judg. i. 1. 2Sam. v. 19. 23. 1 Chr. xiv. 10. Ps. xxxii. 8. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Jer. x. 23.

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of Nob as the devoted enemies of God, and with more severity than Saul had exercised towards the Amalekites; nay, to the full import of the command which he had received in that respect! (*Notes*, xv. 1—3. 8, 9.) No doubt they meant to intimidate all the Israelites, from shewing the least favour to David. (*Notes, Ps.* lii. *title.* 1—4.) 'It 'was excellently said by Justin Martyr, Let us pray that 'kings and rulers, together with the royal power, may be 'found having a sober mind.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 22. Upon recollection David had feared these consequences from Doeg's known character. (*Notes*, xxi. 1—9.) His feelings must have been exceedingly painful, when he considered the lie which he had told, as one occasion of this fatal catastrophe.—By this event, however, so terrible to the priests, and so lamentable to Israel, David obtained the presence of the high priest, which afterwards proved a great comfort and benefit to him. (*Notes*, xxiii. 1—6. 9—13. xxviii. 6. xxx. 7—10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Oppression often forces men into measures, to which they were entirely averse, and deprives the community of the services of its most useful members: yet the Lord amidst all dangers preserves his people for their appointed services. He can promote their good by the most contemptible and the meanest instruments; and the Son of David receives all who come to him, however sinful and miserable: he changes them all into a holy people, and employs them in his service; (*Note, Is.* xi. 6—9;) and those who would reign with him, must be contented first to suffer with him.—True piety increases and purifies natural affection; and teaches men, however occupied or distressed, to be tender of their aged parents; and to be more ready to meet hardship or danger themselves, than to expose *them* to it.—In all our difficulties we should wait till we know what "God will do for us;" seeing none of our enemies can go further than he is pleased to permit them: we should therefore guard against excessive fear, venture readily into any place whither duty calls us, and, without yielding to resentment or despondency, persevere in looking out for opportunities of usefulness.—The progress of human nature, instigated by Satan's temptations, is from bad to worse with increasing rapidity. Conscience, fear, and shame give less and less resistance, and every passion grows more and more exorbitant. Envy, malice, and jealousy torment the soul with real miseries, though arising from unreal causes, or groundless apprehensions: the wretch, who is under the dominion of these diabolical passions, suspects every one of enmity and treachery, breaks through all the bonds of honour and conscience, and is hurried on to the most furious and bloody revenge. Unhappy is it for mankind when such persons possess absolute authority; as the most sacred character, unshaken fidelity, conscious innocency, convincing arguments, and respectful assurances, form no security to any one, who is become obnoxious to them! The most harmless and friendly actions become constructive treason, and "Thou "shalt surely die," silences every plea. Nay, the death of one, or of a few, seems a paltry revenge to a proud tyrant! Sacrifices large as his rage and power may be expected, for nothing else can appease his fury. And if some be found willing to venture his indignation, rather than abet his cruelty and impiety; others will be glad to purchase preferment at any price.—Let us then bless God for a mild, equitable, and limited government, and study to fill up our places in society consistently with our peculiar advantages: and may the Lord continue them to our remotest posterity, and extend the same to all the nations of the earth!—He often employs companions in distress, to comfort and protect each other; and, being exposed to the same dangers and enemies, they should combine for their mutual defence. Thus believers, being hated for Christ's sake, find safety under his protection; and ought to lay aside all personal animosities and useless controversies, to unite against their common enemies.—We may also learn from this narration, that *needlessly* to report the truth to the disadvantage of others, often springs from malice, and produces mischief; that a partial statement of facts is effectually bearing false witness; and that a generous mind is unwilling to repeat the faults of others, even for his own vindication. We should likewise consider, that it is very painful to a feeling heart to occasion evil to others, especially by misconduct: and as unexpected bad consequences may arise from our actions, we should learn to walk the more circumspectly; and always to be ready for that stroke, which hurries men into eternity before they are aware. For "the wicked is driven away in his wicked-"ness, but the righteous hath hope in his death."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—6. David was at this time an

LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.

3 And David's men said unto him, [d] Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah, against the armies of the Philistines?

4 Then David enquired of the LORD [e] yet again. And the LORD answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; [f] for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

5 So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 And it came to pass, [g] when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, *that* he came down *with* [h] an ephod in his hand.

7 ¶ And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, [i] God hath delivered him into mine hand: for [j] he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars.

8 And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.

9 And David [k] knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, [l] Bring hither the ephod.

10 Then said David, O LORD God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to [m] destroy the city for my sake.

11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. [n] And the LORD said, He will come down.

12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah [*] deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? and the LORD said, [o] They will deliver *thee* up.

13 Then David and his men, *which were* about [p] six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbare to go forth.

14 And David abode in the wilderness in strong-holds, and remained in [q] a mountain in the [r] wilderness of Ziph:

d 15. 23. 26. Ps. xi 1. Jer. xli. 5.
e xxviii. 6. Judg. vi. 39.
f Josh. viii. 7. Judg. vii. 7. 2 Sam. v. 19 2 Kings iii. 18.
g xxii. 20.
h xiv. 3. 18. 36, 37. Ex. xxviii. 30, 31.
i 14. xxiv. 4—6. xxvi. 8, 9. Ps. lxxi. 10, 11.
j Ex. xiv 3. xv. 9. Judg. xvi. 2, 3. Job xx. 5. Luke xix. 43, 44.
k Jer. xi. 18, 19. Acts ix. 24. xiv. 6. xxiii. 16—.8
l 6. xiv. 18. xxx. 7. Num. xxvii. 21.
m xxii. 19. Gen. xviii. 24. Est. iii. 6. Prov. xxviii. 15.
n Ps. l. 15. Jer. xxxiii. 8. Matt. vii. 7, 8.
* Heb. *shut up.* Ps. xxxi. 8.
o 7. Ps. lxii. 1. lxviii. 8. Ec. ix. 14, 15. Is. xxix. 15. Heb. iv. 15.
p xxii. 2. xxv. 13. xxx. 9, 10.
q Ps. xi. 1—3.
r Josh. xv. 55.

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inspired writer of the Holy Scriptures; yet the Lord spoke to him by his prophet, and then by the high priest, for the honour of his own institutions. David, having been anointed to be king, considered himself as the protector of Israel, and was ready to employ his men in any service, to which the Lord should please to appoint him: and Saul, occupied almost exclusively in persecuting David, so neglected the protection of Israel, that the depredations of the Philistines were exceedingly distressing, and met with no effectual resistance. (*Marg. Ref.* b.)—It is doubtful, whether David at this time enquired of God by the prophet Gad, or by Abiathar. It seems from the text, that Abiathar did not come to him, till he came to Keilah; yet perhaps this only means the neighbourhood of that city. No doubt, Abiathar brought the high priest's sacred ephod with Urim and Thummim along with him. (xxii. 20—23. *Notes, Ex.* xxviii. 15—30.)—It seems that David and his men having vanquished the Philistines, pursued them into their own country, and thence brought away the cattle.

V. 7, 8. Saul, forgetting all the multiplied proofs which had been given, that the Lord was with David, considered the slight circumstance of his entering into a fenced city, as an evidence that "God had delivered him "into his hand!" (*Notes*, 14. xxiv. 8—15.) The generous patriotism of David, in defending his country, while persecuted by his prince and many of the people as an outlaw, had no effect on the rancorous heart of Saul.

V. 9—13. David perhaps thought, that he could defend this fenced city against Saul, if the inhabitants would be firm in his interests. But, as the cruel massacre of the inhabitants of Nob must have alarmed them with the dread of similar treatment, he could not confide in their assurances; and, enquiring of God, he was informed that they would purchase peace by delivering him up, though perhaps they were not then meditating such ingratitude and treachery. He therefore left the city, to secure himself from danger, and them from temptation and sin.—The express and repeated answers given to the enquiries, which David made by the high priest, were in fact a divine attestation, that he was appointed to the kingdom. (*Notes*, 1—6. *Ex.* xxviii. 30. *Num.* xxvii. 21.) Probably these were given in an audible voice from some tent, where the ephod was generally placed, and before which the enquiry was made. The prayer which David used, perhaps by the mouth of Abiathar, in enquiring of God, may be considered as an example of the manner in which pious princes conducted that solemn and important concern.

Six hundred. (13) David's company had increased, perhaps in consequence of his success in his patriotick expedition. (xxii. 2.)

V. 14. The disappointment of Saul's presumptuous confidence, that "God had delivered David into his hand," is here emphatically noted. (*Note*, 7, 8.)

and [s] Saul sought him every day; [t] but God delivered him not into his hand.

15 And David saw, that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David *was* in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

16 And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and [u] strengthened his hand in God.

17 And he said unto him, [x] fear not; for the hand of Saul my father [y] shall not find thee: and [z] thou shalt be king over Israel, and [a] I shall be next unto thee: and [b] that also Saul my father knoweth.

18 And [c] they two made a covenant before the LORD. And David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

19 ¶ Then came up [d] the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of [e] Hachilah, which *is* [*] on the south of [†] Jeshimon?

20 Now therefore, O king, come down, according to [f] all the desire of thy soul to come down; and [g] our part *shall be* to deliver him into the king's hand.

21 And Saul said, [h] Blessed *be* ye of the LORD; for ye have compassion on me.

22 Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place where his [‡] haunt is, *and* who hath seen him there: for it is told me *that* he dealeth very subtlely.

23 See therefore, and [i] take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that [k] I will search him out throughout all [l] the thousands of Judah.

24 And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men *were* in the wilderness of [m] Maon, in the plain on [n] the south of Jeshimon.

25 Saul also and his men went to seek *him*; and they told David: wherefore he came down [§] into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard *that*, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon.

26 And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and [o] David made haste to get [p] away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them.

27 But [r] there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for [s] the Philistines have [‖] invaded the land.

28 Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place [*] Sela-hammahlekoth.

s xxvii. 1. Ps. liv. 3, 4. Prov. i. 16. iv. 16.
t 7. Ps. xxxii. 7. Prov. xxi. 30. Jer. xxxvi. 26. Rom. viii. 31. 2 Tim. iii. 11. iv. 17, 18.
u Deut. iii. 28. Neh. ii. 18. Job iv. 3, 4. xvi. 5. Prov. xxvii. 9. Ec. iv. 9—12. Is. xxxv. 3. Ez. xiii. 22. Luke xxii. 32. 43. Eph. vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1. Heb. xii. 12, 13.
x Is. xli. 10. 14. Heb. xiii. 6.
y Ps. xxvii. 1—3. xlvi. 1, 2. xci. 1, 2. Prov. xiv. 26. Is liv. 17.
z Luke xii. 32.
a Prov. xix. 21. Acts xxviii. 16. Rom. xv. 24.
b xx. 31. xxiv. 20. Acts v. 39.
c xviii. 3. xx. 12—17. 42. 2 Sam. ix. 1. xxi. 7.
d xxii. 7, 8. xxvi. 1. Ps. liv. *title*, 3, 4. Prov. xxix. 12.
e xxvi. 1. 3.
* Heb. *on the right hand.*
† Or, *the wilderness.*
f Deut. xviii. 6. 2 Sam. iii. 21. Ps. cxii. 10. Prov. xi. 23.
g 1 Kings xxi. 11—14. 2 Kings x. 5—7. Ps. liv. 3. Prov. xxix. 26.
h xxii. 8. Ps. x. 3. Is. lxvi. 5 Mic. iii. 11.
‡ Heb. *foot shall be.* Job v. 18.
i Mark xiv. 1. 10, 11. John xviii. 2, 3.
k 2 Sam. xvii. 11—13. Prov. i. 16. Rom. iii. 15, 16.
l Num. x. 36. Mic. v. 2.
m xxv. 2. Josh. xv. 55.
n 19.
§ Or, *from the rock.* 28. Judg. xv. 8.
o xix. 12. xx. 38. 2 Sam. xv. 14. xvii. 21, 22. Ps. xxxi. 22.
p 2 Chr. xx. 12. Ps. xvii. 9. xxii. 12. 16. cxviii. 11—13. 2 Cor. i. 8. Rev. xx. 9.
r Gen. xxii. 14. Deut. xxxii. 36. Ps. cxvi. 3.
s 2 Kings xix. 9. Rev. xii. 16.
‖ Heb. *spread themselves upon.* 1 Chr. xiv. 13.
* That is, *The rock of divisions.*

V. 16. Jonathan would doubtless converse with David, concerning the promises, power, faithfulness, and love of God, and what he had learned, believed, and experienced of them; which tended to strengthen his faith, to encourage his hope, and to invigorate his confidence in God, and to induce calm submission to his will. (*Notes, Is.* xxxv. 3, 4. *Luke* xxii. 39—46. v. 43. *Col.* i. 9—14.)

V. 17, 18. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*I shall be next unto thee.* (17) This was Jonathan's conjecture, grounded on David's friendship, but not on the word of God, who had appointed things otherwise. Jonathan's cheerful acquiescence would be a great satisfaction to David's mind.—Thus these endeared friends finally parted, as to this world. (*Note*, xx. 41, 42.)

V. 19—21. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Israelites in general were, it seems, averse to Saul's persecution of David, and backward to give him intelligence or assistance: he therefore deemed himself an injured and unfortunate man, whom none of them pitied; and these treacherous Ziphites were considered as his only friends!—(*Notes*, 7, 8. xxii. 7, 8.)—Saul still retained the language of piety while perpetrating the most atrocious crimes. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxvi. 1—4.)

V. 22—25. Had Saul marched directly along with the Ziphites, he probably would have come on David before he was aware: but Saul's delay, while he sought to make the more sure of him, gave David an opportunity of retreating.—*Thousands of Judah.* (23) *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex.* xviii. 24—26. *Judg.* vi. 15. *Mic.* v. 2.

V. 26—28. When Saul's army had nearly surrounded David's little company, tidings were brought that the Philistines had invaded the land: (*marg.:*) and either their invasion was very formidable, and the case extremely urgent; or Saul feared the people's resentment, if the Philistines ravaged the country, while he was destroying its defender. He therefore retired, doubtless full of rage and vexation, and David "escaped as a bird out of the snare "of the fowler;" the Philistines being the instruments of God in his preservation.—He was also preserved from the painful necessity of fighting in his own defence, against

his servants; the power [g] of Persia and Media, [h] the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him:

4 When [i] he shewed [j] the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his [k] excellent majesty, many days, *even* an hundred and fourscore days.

5 And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were [*] present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, [l] seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

6 *Where were* [m] white, green, and [†] blue *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings, and pillars of marble: [n] the beds *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement of [‡] red, and blue, and white, and black marble.

7 And they gave *them* drink in [o] vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and [§] royal wine in abundance, according to the [‖] state of the king:

8 And the drinking *was* according to the law; [p] none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all [q] the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

9 Also Vashti [r] the queen made a feast for the women, *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

10 ¶ On the seventh day, when [s] the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, [t] Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven [*] chamberlains, that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

11 To bring [u] Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she *was* [†] fair to look on.

12 But the queen Vashti [x] refused to come at the king's commandment [‡] by *his* chamberlains: therefore [y] was the king very wroth, and his anger [z] burned in him.

13 Then the king said to [a] the wise men, which [b] knew the times, (for so *was* the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:

14 And the next unto him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, *and* Memucan, [c] the seven princes of Persia and Media, which [d] saw the king's face, *and* which sat the first in the kingdom;)

15 [§] What shall we do unto the

[g] 14. Ezra i. 2. Is. xxi. 2. Jer. li. 11. Dan. v. 28. viii. 20.
[h] Dan. iii. 2, 3. vi. 1. 6, 7.
[i] Is. xxxix. 2. Ez. xxviii. 5. Dan. iv. 30.
[j] Ps. lxxvi. 1—4. cxlv. 5. 12, 13. Dan. ii. 37—44. vii. 9—14. Matt. iv. 8. vi. 13. Rom. ix. 23. Eph. i. 18. Col. i. 27. Rev. iv. 11.
[k] 1 Chr. xxix. 11, 12. 25. Job xl. 10. Ps. xxi. 5. xlv. 3. xciii. 1. Dan. iv. 36. v. 18. 2 Pet. i. 16, 17.
[*] Heb. *found.*
[l] 2 Chr. vii. 8, 9. xxx. 21—25.
[m] Ex. xxvi. 1. 31, 32. 36, 37.
[†] Or, *violet.*
[n] vii. 8. Ez. xxiii. 41. Am. ii. 8. vi. 4.
[‡] Or, *of porphyre, and marble, and alabaster, and stone of blue colour.*
[o] 1 Kings x. 21. 2 Chr. ix. 20. Dan. v. 2—4.
[§] Heb. *wine of the kingdom.*
[‖] Heb. *hand.*
[p] Jer. xxxv. 8. li. 7. Hab. ii. 15, 16.
[q] John ii. 8.
[r] v. 4 8.
[s] Gen. xliii. 34. Judg. xvi. 25. 1 Sam. xxv. 36, 37. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Prov. xx. 1. Ec. vii. 2—4. x. 19. Eph. v. 18, 19.
[t] vii. 9. *Harbonah.*
[*] Or, *eunuchs.* Dan i. 3—5. 18, 19.
[u] Prov. xvi. 9. xxiii. 29—38. Mark vi. 21, 22.
[†] Heb. *good of countenance.* 2 Sam. xiv. 25. Prov. xxxi. 30.
[x] Gen. iii. 16. Eph. v. 22. 24. 1 Pet. iii. 1.
[‡] Heb. *which was by the hand of his eunuchs.*
[y] Prov. xix. 12. xx. 2. Dan ii. 12. iii. 13. 19. Nah. i. 6. Rev. vi. 16, 17.
[z] Ex. xxxii. 19. 22. Deut. xxix. 20. Ps. lxxiv. 1. lxxix. 5.
[a] Jer. x. 7. Dan. ii. 2. 12. 27. iv. 6, 7. v. 7.
[b] 1 Chr. xii. 32. Matt. xvi. 3.
[c] Ezra vii. 14.
[d] 2 Kings xxv. 19. Matt. xviii. 10. Rev. xxii. 4.
[§] Heb. *What to do?* vi. 6.

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afterwards all the citizens of Shushan, without distinction, were feasted for seven days in like manner. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Matt.* xiv. 15—21.)

V. 6. *Marg. and Marg. Ref.—The beds.*] On these the guests sat, or reclined, at table. (*Note, Am.* vi. 3—8.)

V. 7, 8. (*Marg. Ref.* o.) The absurd practice of urging people to drink more strong liquor, than they are of themselves inclined to, has prevailed in all ages; though it is a most gross violation of common-sense, freedom, and civility, as well as of morality and religion. It seems to have been devised and supported by drunkards, that the more sober part of mankind might be drawn in to keep them in countenance, by a reluctant intoxication. —The regulation enjoined by the king was very necessary in the midst of so many incentives to intemperance; and his mind, being thus made known, doubtless prevented many disorders which otherwise would have been committed.

V. 9. It seems, that the women were feasted by the queen in a more retired situation than the nobles and people, and were kept separate from the men by express appointment; which made the subsequent order of the king appear the more unreasonable. (*Note,* 10—12.)

V. 10—12. When the customs of the Persians relative to their women, especially the wives of their kings, are considered, this injunction of Ahasuerus must appear highly improper and inconsistent. He sent seven of his chamberlains, (which so far was honourable to his queen;) commanding her to appear in her royal attire, in order that a number of princes and nobles, who were heated with wine, might be gratified by a sight of her singular beauty! A reluctance therefore to an exhibition, so contrary to the decorum observed by her sex, became her rank and modesty: but as the king was peremptory, and every one must have known that she came at his command; it was highly imprudent in her, to persist in a refusal, which could terminate only in an open contest and the most fatal effects. His anger 'was the more immoderate, because 'his blood was heated with wine, which made his passion 'too strong for his reason.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13, 14. These wise men, being acquainted with the records of the kingdom, might be able to bring precedents, how former kings had acted under circumstances in any respect similar, according to the laws and customs of the kingdom; as well as to understand in general what was proper to be done in the present emergency. (*1 Chr.* xii. 32.) And it was the king's manner, in all such matters, to confer with those who knew law and judgment.—The seven counsellors here mentioned had free access to the king, and were the first subjects in the kingdom. (*Note, Ezra* vii. 14.)

V. 15. Some suppose, that Ahasuerus was inclined to forgive Vashti, if it might stand with the honour of his

queen Vashti, according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus, by the chamberlains?

16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not [e] done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people, that *are* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.

17 For *this* deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall [f] despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.

18 *Likewise* shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus *shall there arise* too much contempt and wrath.

19 If [*] it please the king, let there go a royal commandment [†] from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that [‡] it be not altered, that Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto [§] another [g] that is better than she.

20 And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published [h] throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) [i] all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

21 And the saying [‖] pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

22 For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, [j] into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, [k] that every man should bear rule in his own house, and that [*] *it* should be published [l] according to the language of every people.

e Acts xviii. 14. xxv. 10. 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8.

f 2 Sam. vi. 16. Eph. v. 33.

* Heb. it be good with the king. 21. iii. 9. viii. 5.

† Heb. *from before him.*

‡ Heb. *it pass not away.* viii. 8. Dan. vi. 8. 12. 15. 17.

§ Heb. *her companion.*

g 1 Sam. xv. 28. 1 Kings ii. 32.

h Deut. xvii. 18. xxi. 21.

i Eph. v. 33. Col. iii. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 1—7.

‖ Heb. *was good in the eyes of the king.* 19. ii. 4. Gen. xli. 37.

j iii. 12. viii. 9. Dan. iii. 29. iv. 1.

k 1 Tim. ii. 12. Tit. ii. 4, 5.

* Heb. *one should publish it according to the language of his people.* iii. 12.

l Luke xvi. 8. Acts ii. 5—11. 1 Cor. xiv. 19, 20.

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government, and the laws of the realm. But others think, that he was disposed to divorce her, or otherwise punish her; but wished to proceed against her under colour of law and justice.

V. 16—18. Memucan is mentioned last of the seven counsellors: and it is supposed he was the youngest, or last in order on some account; and that he was required to give his opinion first, that he might not previously be biassed by the sentiments of his seniors or superiors.—It is uncertain, whether Memucan really deemed the queen's disobedience a dangerous precedent, while it remained unpunished; or whether he paid court to the king, by counselling him to follow his own humour, and by suggesting a plausible reason for so doing. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xiv. 6—22. *P. O.* 1—20.) He, however, argued that the queen's rank, and the notoriety and pertinacity of her disobedience, would encourage other women to despise the persons and authority of their husbands; which contempt in the women would excite the wrath of the men, and thus destroy domestick subordination and peace.—Yet if husbands had been careful not to act *contemptibly*, or to give foolish and improper commands, they might have ruled by reason and affection, without either such fatal consequences, or violent measures. But despotism in civil government leads to despotism in domestick life: men imagine, that there is no way to rule, but by force and terror; and thus the superior relations become tyrants, and the inferior, slaves, submitting by constraint, without either conviction or affection.

V. 19—22. By this irrevocable edict, which was published in the various languages, spoken through the immense empire of the Persians, that all might understand it, Ahasuerus's example was virtually proposed for general imitation: so that every husband was allowed to divorce his wife, if she disobeyed his command, even when evidently foolish and unreasonable! But whether pride, resentment, policy, or lust, predominated in the councils of Ahasuerus, may remain uncertain: but the Lord was thus making preparation for defeating Haman's diabolical project, long before it ever entered into his heart, and before he arrived at the height of his power and prosperity. (*Notes,* iii. 6—15. viii. 8. *Ps.* lxxv. 10. *Ez.* xxxviii. 10.)

It should be published, &c. (22) *Marg.*—'The decree 'runs in the Hebrew, "That every man should bear rule '"in his own house, and speak in the language of his '"people"...: that is, he should give his commands in his 'own language, which every one was bound to learn,' *Bp. Patrick.* It is, however, evident, that great care was taken in all these decrees, that they should be circulated in each province in the language of that province, that all might understand them. (iii. 17. viii. 9.) How important then is it, that the word of God should be translated into every language, and circulated in that language which is best understood in every land! and that all, without exception, should be offered them in the vulgar tongue, in every country.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

No extent of possessions or dominion can satisfy the human heart, and give contentment or felicity even in this present life. Cares, fears, and temptations are augmented by every accession; the power of doing good or harm is enlarged, and alas! the latter is generally chosen. But "to whom much is given, of him will much be required" by the great Proprietor, who is continually saying to monarchs, as well as to subjects, "Give an account of thy "stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward."—Ostentatious generosity and magnificence, for a man's own

CHAP. II.

By advice of his servants, Ahasuerus causes fair virgins to be sought out in every province of his kingdom, that he may choose a queen, 1—4. Esther had been brought up by Mordecai, 5—7. She obtains favour with the keeper of the women; pleases the king; and is made queen, having observed Mordecai's directions, 8—20. Mordecai discovers a plot against the king; the criminals are punished; and his service is registered in the chronicles of the kingdom, 21—23.

honour and glory, that his wealth, bounty, and taste may be admired and applauded, is a common idolatry of the great and noble: and, except grace prevail in the heart, self-exaltation and self-indulgence, in some form or other, will be the ruling principles. But indeed the honour of every endowment, possession, or achievement, of created beings, belongs solely to the underived, unchangeable Creator: his glory, in our own true felicity and that of our fellow-creatures, should be our great end in every action; and all other considerations ought to be subordinated to it, and regulated by it.—But if the feast of an earthly monarch, when he would "shew the riches of his "glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent ma-"jesty," was so magnificent; what will be that feast, which the King of kings has prepared, to "shew the "riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his "excellent majesty," "to the praise of the glory of his "grace," in heaven, for ever and ever! There will be unfading splendour, inexhaustible abundance, and unalloyed pleasures, without interruption or satiety; and without danger or fear of excess: nor will there arise the least discord to mar enjoyment, through all the ages of eternity. "All things are ready" for this feast; sinners without exception are invited: may we accept the gracious invitation; seek and find the wedding-garment; and sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb!—But in all other feasts, the pleasure is greatly alloyed, and soon palls; and too generally they prove unfavourable, not only to wisdom and piety, but even to present comfort and advantage. Seldom do any frequent them, without being led into some degree of excess, injurious to their strength of body and vigour of mind. They are scenes of temptation, suited to excite man's various evil propensities. The enemy of souls will be sure to avail himself of the unguarded moments, especially of such as are in reputation for wisdom and piety; and he has artfully prevailed to render it creditable, for men to become tempters of each other to intemperance: so that few publick entertainments, even among professed Christians, are conducted by such good rules as this *heathen* feast. But *real* Christians must not only shun such scenes, and separate from those who frequent them; but likewise, by warnings and exhortations, endeavour to preserve their brethren from sin: and if, by this conduct at their own tables, they incur the censure of being penurious; "the "poor, whom they always have with them," afford them a fair occasion of refuting the slander. Indeed, that will go very far in hospitality to the indigent, which is quickly wasted by pampering the luxury of the affluent. (*Note, Luke* xiv. 12—14. *P. O.* 12—24.)—Seasons of peculiar festivity often terminate in vexation. Wine and jovial company elate the mind, add strength to the passions, and stun the voice of reason and conscience. On such occasions caprice generally dictates the conduct; unreasonable claims are started, or projects formed; and the eagerness of men's spirits ill brooks contradiction or affront, while it disposes to give them. Thus anger is excited and exasperated; and discords, revenge, duels, and murders, are the frequent consequences of pleasurable meetings! Propriety and decorum are also often disregarded; the respect and attention due to relatives are forgotten; improper requisitions are made, by which contempt and imprudent opposition are excited; affection is suspended, during the reign of haughty resentment; and all parties forget their reciprocal interests and duties, till their reputation and peace receive such wounds, as can seldom admit of a complete cure.—Let it also be specially noted, that superiors, in all cases and circumstances, should be careful not to command what may *reasonably* be disobeyed; for this must weaken their authority, and prove a temptation to those over whom they rule: yet inferiors ought never to persist in a refusal, except when it is really a point of conscience towards God. (*Notes, Rom.* xiii. 1—7.)

V. 13—22.

There would be safety in the multitude of counsellors, if men did but welcome plain-dealing; and if the counsellors of princes did not generally consult their inclinations, rather than their interests.—Domestick subordination doubtless ought to be preserved; and the wife ought to honour and obey her own husband: yet surely this may be effected by other means, beside severe laws, divorces, and measures more pernicious, than the evil which they are intended to remedy! Regard to mutual interest, comfort, and reputation, serves to keep the world in tolerable order: the prudence and affection of the husband will do great things, where properly exercised: the general regard, which the more decent members of the community have to the precepts and authority of God, has considerable effect: true grace radically cures that evil, from which domestick discord arises: and in deplorable cases where the peace of society is *materially* violated, the magistrate may properly interpose. All other evils arising from this source may better be tolerated, than to attempt a remedy, by making the men tyrants, and the women slaves: while it is evident that the former fail as much, and commonly *far more*, in the duty of their relation, than the latter. Nor should even the interests of kingdoms be promoted, were it possible, by evident injustice.—The example of the great has a very extensive effect, and they are the more deeply concerned, not to exhibit a pernicious pattern to their inferiors: but human policy sometimes overshoots its mark; and to prevent the effect of one injurious precedent, forms another of still more fatal tendency. Let us then keep to the rule of God's word, and it will guide the humble, obedient believer through all these labyrinths; and be "a lantern to "his feet, and a light unto his paths." Let us be upon our guard against every incentive to our passions; watching and praying against wrath, pride, and self-will, as well as sensual indulgence. Let us learn to bridle our tempers; to conquer by yielding; and to "leave off contention be-"fore it be meddled with." And let us rejoice that the Lord reigns, and will over-rule all the madness and folly

AFTER these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, [a] he remembered Vashti, and [b] what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

2 Then said the [c] king's servants, that ministered unto him, [d] Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:

3 And let the king appoint officers [e] in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto [*] the custody of [f] Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let [g] their things for purification be given *them:*

4 And let the maiden which pleaseth the king, be queen instead of Vashti. And [h] the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

5 ¶ *Now* in [i] Shushan the palace there was a [j] certain Jew, whose name *was* Mordecai, the son of Jair, [k] the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;

6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem, with the captivity which had been carried away with [l] Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

7 And he [†] brought up [n] Hadassah, that *is* Esther, [o] his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid *was* [‡] fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, [p] took for his own daughter.

8 ¶ So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of [q] Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the

a Dan. vi. 14—18.
b i. 12—21.
c i. 10. 14. vi. 14.
d Gen. xii. 14, 15. 1 Kings i. 2, 3.
e i. 1, 2.
* Heb, *the hand.*
f 8. *Hegai.*
g 12—14. Is. iii. 18—23.
h i. 21. iii. 9, 10. 2 Sam. xiii. 4—6. xvi. 21—23. xvii. 4. Matt. xiv. 6.
i 3. i. 2. v. 1.
j iii. 2—6. x. 3.
k 1 Sam. ix. 1. 2 Sam. xvi. 5.
l 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 9, 10. *Jehoiachin.* Jer. xxii. 24. 28. *Coniah.* xxiv. 1.
† Heb. *nourished.* Eph. vi. 4.
n Dan. i. 6, 7.
o 15. Jer. xxxii. 7—12.
‡ Heb. *fair of form and good of countenance.* i. 11.
p Gen. xlviii. 5. 2 Cor. vi. 18. 1 John iii. 1.
q 3. *Hege.*

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of mankind, for the purposes of his own glory, and the safety and felicity of his believing, obedient people.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. When the vehemency of the king's anger subsided, his affection for Vashti revived; and probably he was sensible, that he had acted with precipitation and severity, and had done her injustice. But with all his power and authority, he could not again receive her into favour, without violating a fundamental constitution of the Persian government; which required that no edict, which the king had once established, should be reversed. The fatal effects of this absurd policy will be sufficiently illustrated, in the sequel of this narrative. Under colour of ascribing infallibility to the sovereign, and thus flattering his pride; this restriction perpetually exposed him, in his unguarded hours, to be deluded into the most pernicious measures; and would not so much as allow him to remedy the injustice, or impolicy, into which he had been betrayed, when reflection and experience had made him sensible of his errors. (*Notes,* viii. 3—13. ix. 1—16. *Dan.* vi. 12—17.) And this was the more absurd and dangerous in its nature and effects, if they may be depended on, who inform us, that the Persian monarchs, and their counsellors, commonly framed their edicts at feasts, and when they were drinking. (*Note,* iii. 12—15.)

V. 2—4. (8—14. *Note,* 1 *Kings* i. 1—4.) It is uncertain, whether this was the project of the seven counsellors before mentioned; (*Note,* i. 16—18;) or of some other servants, who more immediately ministered to the king's pleasures. It seems, however, to have been devised, in order to prevent him from thinking any more of Vashti, whose restoration to favour must be guarded against, for the safety of those who had counselled the king to exercise so great severity against her: for, if he had been greatly desirous of Vashti's company, the law of the Medes and Persians would scarcely have prevented him from recalling her. This will appear by the following instance:—Cambyses, king of Persia, having conceived a violent passion for his own sister, enquired of his counsellors whether it was lawful for him to marry her? And they, dreading the effects of his resentment if they opposed his will, answered, that there was no law in Persia, by which a man was allowed to marry his sister, but that it was lawful for the king of Persia to do what he pleased.—It must also be noted, that though the king could not legally reverse the decree which he had signed and sealed; yet he might put to death the counsellors, who induced him to ratify it. (*Notes,* vii. 7—10. viii. 8. *Dan.* vi. 24.)

V. 5—7. Mordecai, though a Benjamite, is repeatedly called *the Jew:* for the whole nation was now called after *Judah.* (*Notes, Gen.* xlix. 8—10. 2 *Kings* xvi. 6.)—Some of Mordecai's ancestors, (probably Kish,) had been carried to Babylon with Jeconiah; (*Note,* 2 *Kings* xxiv. 8—16;) and the family afterwards settled at Shushan. But it seems that they were diminished in number, or impoverished: so that Mordecai's own cousin had been left an orphan; and he, being older than she was, had brought her up, and in all respects behaved as a father to her. Her Jewish name was Hadassah, but the Persians called her Esther.—The conjectures of several learned men concerning her, taken from rather a slight similarity of names between her and the wives of some of the Persian kings, mentioned in Pagan historians, seem entirely groundless; as the dissimilarity of character, and indeed all other circumstances, vastly preponderate against them.

V. 8—10. As Mordecai was so scrupulous in respect of Haman, (*Notes,* iii. 2—5,) it has been wondered, how he could consent to Esther's becoming the wife, or concubine, of a heathen prince, contrary to the law of Moses.

king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

9 And the maiden pleased him, and [r] she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her [s] her things for purification, with [*] such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens *which were* meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he [†] preferred her and her maids unto the best *place* of the house of the women.

10 Esther [t] had not shewed her people nor her kindred: [u] for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew *it*.

11 And Mordecai [x] walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know [‡] how Esther did, and what should become of her.

12 ¶ Now when every maid's turn [y] was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, *to wit,* [z] six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with *other* things for the purifying of the women;)

13 Then thus came *every* maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her, to go with her out of the house of the women, unto the king's house.

14 In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king [a] delighted in her, and that [b] she were called by name.

15 ¶ Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, [c] who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And [d] Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

16 So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in [e] the tenth month, which *is* the month Tebeth, in [f] the seventh year of his reign.

17 And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and [§] favour [‖] in his sight more than all the virgins; [g] so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

18 Then the king [h] made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, *even* Esther's feast; and he made a [*] release to the provinces, and [i] gave gifts according to the state of the king.

19 And when [k] the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai [l] sat in the king's gate.

20 Esther [m] had not *yet* shewed her kindred, nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

r Gen. xxxix. 21. 1 Kings viii. 50. Ezra vii. 6. Neh. ii. 8. Ps. cvi. 46. Prov. xvi. 7. Dan. i. 9. Acts vii. 10.
s 3. 12.
* Heb. *her portions.*
† Heb. *changed her.*
t iii. 8. iv. 13, 14. vii. 4. Matt. x. 16.
u 7. 20. Eph. vi. 1.
x 13, 14.
‡ Heb. *the peace of Esther.* Gen. xxxvii. 14. 1 Sam. xvii. 18. Acts xv. 36.
y 1 Thes. iv. 4, 5.
z Prov. vii. 17. Cant. iii. 6. Is. lvii. 9. Luke vii. 37, 38.
a iv. 11. Gen. xxxiv. 19. Is. lxii. 4, 5.
b Is. xlv. 4.
c 7.
d Cant. vi. 9. Acts vii. 10.
e viii. 9.
f i. 3. Ezra vii. 8.
§ Or, *kindness.*
‖ Heb. *before him.*
g iv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. cxiii. 7, 8. Ez. xvii. 24. Luke i. 48—52.
h i. 3—5. Gen. xxix. 22. Judg. xiv. 10—17 Cant. iii. 11. v. 1. Matt. xxii. 2. Luke xiv. 8. Rev. xix. 9.
* Heb. *rest.*
i ix. 22. 1 Sam. xxv. 8. Neh. viii. 12. Rev. xi. 10.
k 3, 4.
l 21. iii. 2, 3. v. 13.
m 10.

But it does not seem to have been left to the choice, either of Mordecai or of Esther. By a publick edict, the most beautiful virgins were selected from all parts of Ahasuerus's dominions; and it would have been unavailing, as well as dangerous, to have opposed the persons employed in this business. 'The word we translate "was brought," may 'be rendered *was taken;* and that by force, as the word 'sometimes signifies; and as the former Targum here 'explains it, *She was brought by violence.*' Bp. Patrick.—If Esther had made known her nation, it might have interfered with her advancement to the rank of queen, as the Jews were generally despised; but she could not have avoided becoming one of Ahasuerus's concubines. Polygamy was connived at, by the Mosaick law; so that the situation of a concubine was not deemed dishonourable, or unlawful: and in her peculiar circumstances, the *ritual* law of not *giving their daughters to those* of another nation, might not be thought obligatory.—The conduct of Providence, however, should be chiefly noticed; though it does not appear that either Mordecai or Esther could have acted otherwise, if they had been inclined.

V. 11—14. *Marg. Ref.*—*P. O.* 1—14.

V. 15—17. About four years were spent, before another queen was chosen instead of Vashti: (i. 3:) so long a time had been employed in collecting the virgins from all parts of Ahasuerus's dominions, and in other preparations which were thought requisite.—Ezra obtained his commission in the former part of this same year, if Artaxerxes were the same as Ahasuerus: (*Note, Ezra* vii. 6—10:) and they who think, that Artaxerxes granted the desire of Ezra, through Esther's influence, suppose that Esther had been the favoured concubine of the king, residing in his palace a considerable time before she was publickly made and crowned queen, which was in the tenth month of the seventh year of his reign.

V. 18. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note,* 1—3.

V. 19, 20. It is probable, that a number of virgins had been collected before Vashti was made queen; in relation

21 ¶ In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's
n vi. 2. *Bigthana.* chamberlains, [n] Bigthan and Teresh, of
* Heb. *threshold.* those which kept the [*] door, were
o 2 Sam. iv. 5, 6. xvi. 11. 1 Kings xv. 25—27. xvi. 9. 2 Kings ix. 22—24. xii. 20. xxi. 23. Ps. cxliv. 10. wroth, [o] and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

22 And [p] the thing was known to
p Ec. x. 20. Acts xxiii. 12—22. Mordecai, who told *it* unto Esther the queen; and [q] Esther certified the king
q vi. 2. Rom. xi. 33. r Phil. ii. 4. *thereof* in [r] Mordecai's name.

23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out: therefore they were both [s] hanged
s v. 14. vii. 10. Gen. xl. 19. 22. Deut. xxi. 22, 23. Josh. viii. 29. on a tree: and it was written in [t] the book of the chronicles before the
t vi. 1, 2. Mal. iii. 16. king.

to which it is here said, "When the virgins were gathered "together *the second time.*"—About this time Mordecai seems to have been appointed to some station in the service of the king: and the historian appears merely to have intended to connect the account of Mordecai's discovery of the treason, (21—23,) with Esther's advancement to be queen, as introductory to the subsequent narrative.—Esther, after her high preferment, still continued as attentive to Mordecai's command, as she had been before; out of gratitude for his kindness, and confidence in his wisdom, piety, and affection. 'A rare example of virtue, 'that she should be so observant of him, when she was a 'queen: for most forget what they were, when they are 'unexpectedly grown very great.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 21—23. Many conjectures have been formed of the cause of this conspiracy, and the manner in which it was discovered; but curiosity alone is concerned in such enquiries, which after all end in uncertainty. It suffices for us to know, that a conspiracy was formed; that Mordecai detected it, and, by informing Esther, conveyed the intelligence to the king, that the criminals were convicted and executed; and that the account of it was written in the records of the kingdom. The transaction itself was nowise uncommon; but the event shewed the hand of God in it, in a most remarkable manner, and for the most important purposes. (*Notes*, vi.) 'Here we may see the in-'felicity and the danger of the most potent persons. The 'life of a great king depending on the fidelity of one single 'person, whose service was neglected by the court; though a memorial was made of it.' *Pellicanus in Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Resolutions formed in anger, and executed without deliberation, make work for bitter recollection and repentance. A wise man therefore will not proceed even to punish the guilty, till passion has subsided and reason resumed her sway.—The depravity of our nature, and the fallibility of our judgment, render it indispensable to our interest and happiness, that we should be allowed to change our sentiments and conduct, and correct our mistakes. Our gracious God has mercifully placed us under a dispensation, which admits of this: and though many painful effects must follow from transgression, we shall not be ruined by it, if we avail ourselves of this provision. (*Ez.* xviii. 30.) But while pride and obstinacy seem to arrogate infallibility, and to aspire to a dignity incompatible with fallen nature; they forfeit the real advantages of our situation, and leave a man without redress, exposed to all the fatal consequences of every false step. No one, however, should be too proud, to confess that he has been mistaken: and as this would preclude the absurdity of human laws, which must never be repealed or reversed; so it would strike at the root of that self-justifying, pertinacious temper, which induces sinners to neglect the gospel, and go on in sin. But even when men are in some measure made sensible of their folly and iniquity, new projects, amusements, and gratifications are devised, to silence conscience, and to carry them forward without uneasiness in the broad road of ungodliness.—The servants of mighty monarchs, though themselves princes and nobles, have often stooped to be pimps and parasites, in order to support their present authority, to purchase impunity for past crimes, or to procure future and still greater preferment! (*P. O. Gen.* xii. 10—20, *latter part.*) But how degrading is it to our rational nature, that numbers of able men of superior rank, as well as of inferior station, should exert all their ingenuity and assiduity, in enabling an individual more devotedly to pamper those "fleshly lusts which war against "the soul!" Even reason, (not to say religion,) if her voice could be heard, would command men to moderate and restrain their passions, and to teach them submission by habituating them to brook denial. But the higher human beings are advanced in authority, the lower they too generally sink into the most abject slavery to their sensual appetites: as if their superiority were intended merely as a medium for the more unrestrained licentiousness, and to enable them to be *avowed* in those excesses, which inferior libertines indulge with a more decent reserve!—How low is our nature sunk, when these are the leading pursuits, and the highest felicity, of many millions of rational creatures! when every consideration of decency, equity, and conscience; when domestick comfort, relative duties, and the natural rights of mankind; when even reputation, interest, and health; when life, and the immortal soul itself, are habitually sacrificed to such a base and hateful idol! Yet after a prostituted ingenuity has done its utmost, disappointment, vexation, and loathing must ensue: and that man most wisely consults even the enjoyment of this present life, who most exactly obeys the precepts of the divine law.—We ought also to be thankful for revelation, which is needful to teach us how to act in the common affairs of life. But without the supernatural teaching, inclining, and assisting influence of the Holy Spirit, men will not pay a due regard to that revelation: for, with the Bible in their hands, numbers deviate at least as widely from reason and scripture, as even the Persian monarchs did; except, as the want of power, and the laws of the land, restrain their licentiousness. For these laws indeed, and for many other advantages, we have great cause to be thankful: and especially, that the children of Britons are not liable to be forced into the Seraglio of any licentious ruler. Yet, alas! after all, who can bear steadily to contemplate the corrupt state of our favoured nation, in this respect, without

CHAP. III.

Haman is advanced by the king, who commands his servants to bow down to him; but Mordecai refuses to do it, 1, 2. Haman, being informed, in revenge, purposes to destroy the whole Jewish nation, 3—6. He chooses a day, by casting lots, for executing his purpose, 7. By calumniating the Jews, he obtains a decree from the king to extirpate the nation, and publishes it through all the provinces, 8—15.

AFTER these things did king Ahasuerus [a] promote Haman, the son of Hammedatha the [b] Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat [c] above all the princes that *were* with him.

2 And all [d] the king's servants, that *were* in the king's gate, [e] bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so commanded concerned him. But Mordecai [f] bowed not, nor did *him* reverence.

a vii. 6. Ps. xii. 8. Prov. xxix. 2.
b Num. xxiv. 7. 1 Sam. xv. 8.
c i. 14. Gen. xli. 40. 55. Ezra vii. 14. Dan. vi. 2.
d ii. 19. 21.
e Gen. xli. 43. Phil. ii. 10.
f 1. Ex. xvii. 14. 16 Deut. xxv. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 3. Ps. xv. 4.

a mixture of shame, indignant regret, and consternation?

V. 15—23.

It is peculiarly useful to consider the providential conduct of God fulfilling his wise, faithful, righteous, and merciful purposes, in the midst of the extravagances occasioned by the mad passions of wicked men. He "careth "for his people," and he is "the father of the fatherless:" orphans are often peculiarly favoured in his providence, to encourage us to entrust our children to his care while we live, and when we are about to die and leave them.—It is our duty, in some cases, if we are able, to provide for the orphan children of our near relations; and by so doing, men often provide for their own comfort and safety, and for their families also.—The Lord not only confers personal and mental endowments, and enriches the soul with wisdom and grace; but he gives *favour* likewise: and, notwithstanding prejudices, and general contempt, he can, when he pleases, secure to his people the most endeared affection of those who know him not. If wealth or kingdoms were good for them, they would certainly have them; but prosperity too generally feeds the distempers of corrupt nature, and poverty and obscurity are more advantageous. Even those high stations, which some few believers occupy for the good of their brethren, will be their *cross*, if not their *snare;* and their comforts must flow from the same source, and be of the same nature, with those of the poorest Christian; and are generally in more scanty measure.—We ought, however, to be passive in the Lord's hands; and only be careful to avoid sin, and to perform our duty, in whatever station we are placed.—Our *profession* of religion, and many things relating to it, must often be regulated and timed according to circumstances; so that we not only need to regard the advice of wise and experienced Christians, but daily to ask for that wisdom which is from above, or we shall be liable to perpetual mistakes.—It is a singular proof that men have obtained a good measure of that wisdom, when unexpected prosperity and favour leave them humble and teachable, attentive to every relative duty, grateful to benefactors, and disposed to listen to prudent and pious counsellors.—No men are exposed to so great danger, from treachery, resentment, and ambition, as absolute monarchs: and their servants, when really attached, often confer obligations upon them, which they never can adequately compensate. But the servant of God must be faithful to every trust, and watchful for the safety and interest of those who employ him: and though he seem at present neglected, he may be remembered hereafter. However, his conscientious and upright conduct is registered in heaven, and will be graciously rewarded by his God, when all his enemies shall be driven into utter destruction. (*Note, Ec.* ix. 13—18. *P. O.* 11—18.)

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Haman is supposed to have been an Amalekite, descended from the stock of the ancient kings of that people, many of whom were named Agag. (*Num.* xxiv. 7. 1 *Sam.* xv. 8.)—If his descent was generally known, his advancement, to be the king's chief minister and favourite, would be peculiarly displeasing and alarming to the Jews; as they were expressly commanded to extirpate the Amalekites. (*Notes, Ex.* xvii. 14—16. *Deut.* xxv. 17—19. 1 *Sam.* xv. 1—3.)

V. 2. It has been much disputed, why Mordecai so pertinaciously and absolutely refused to bow before Haman, when commanded by his prince: and many, supposing that nothing more was meant than civil obeisance, such as Joseph's brethren and the Egyptians rendered to him, and such as they suppose Ezra, and Nehemiah, and even Daniel, must have paid to the Persian kings, have ascribed Mordecai's refusal to his contempt of Haman's character, or his dislike to him as an Amalekite. But these reasons are not sufficient to justify his conduct, when the fate of the whole nation was at stake: yet he evidently acted conscientiously, and was accepted by the Lord. We must not therefore ascribe his behaviour to pride, moroseness, resentment, or envy. It is well known, that the Persian monarchs required an obeisance, which even the Greeks often refused or evaded, as express adoration: and it is not at all unlikely, that Ahasuerus required a similar act of adoration to be offered to his favourite. 'To bow the 'knee or the body, to all great persons, was a common re'spect; for which there needed not a particular command, '... with respect of Haman. ...There was therefore some 'kind of divine honour intended, such as was paid to the 'Persian kings themselves, to whom the Greeks would not 'pay this sort of respect, because it was accounted divine. 'And the word *reverence* imports something beyond *bow*'ing;* which was falling flat on their faces to the ground.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The original words may be rendered, "They "*kneeled down and fell prostrate* before Haman," or, they *worshipped him:* and perhaps the two expressions are never united, except when *adoration* is expressly meant, and they are in this narrative uniformly united. (*Matt.* iv. 9. *Acts* x. 25, 26. *Rev.* xxii. 8, 9.)—In the apocryphal addition to this book, Mordecai is introduced as thus appealing to God: 'Thou knowest, Lord, that it was neither in con'tempt, nor pride, nor for any desire of glory, that I did 'not bow down to proud Haman: for I could have been

3 Then the king's servants, which *were* in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, [g] Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

4 Now it came to pass, [h] when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, [i] that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for [k] he had told them that he *was* a Jew.

5 And when Haman saw [l] that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman [m] full of wrath.

6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman [n] sought to destroy all the Jews, that *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, *even* the people of Mordecai.

7 ¶ In [o] the first month, that *is*, the month Nisan, [p] in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, [q] they cast Pur, that *is*, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month*, that *is*, the month [r] Adar.

g Ex. i. 17. Matt. xv. 2, 3.
h Gen. xxxix. 10.
i Dan. iii. 8, 9. vi. 13.
k Ezra i. 3. Dan. iii. 12. 16—18. 26—30. vi. 20—23. 26—28. Jon. i. 9.
l 2. v. 9.
m i. 12. Job v. 2. Prov. xii. 16. xix. 19. xxi. 24. xxvii. 3, 4. Dan. iii. 19.
n Ps. lxxxiii. 4. Rev. xii. 12—17.
o Neh. ii. 1.
p i. 3. ii. 16.
q ix. 24—26. Prov. xvi. 33. Ez. xxi. 21, 22. Matt. xxvii. 35.
r ix. 1. 5. 17—19. 21. Ezra vi. 15.

'content, with good will, for the salvation of Israel, to 'kiss the soles of his feet: but I did this, that I might not 'prefer the glory of man above the glory of God, neither 'will I worship any but thee.' (*Esther* xiii. 12—14.) Indeed it is most probable that the homage required by Haman was idolatrous: and we may reasonably conclude, that the king himself dispensed with the customary ceremonies, out of regard to the conscientious scruples of those few Jews, who were admitted into his presence, and whom he peculiarly favoured; but that Haman, despising Mordecai and hating his people, was not so condescending. And though we do not read that other Jews refused Haman this honour; yet numbers might be of the same opinion, who were not put to the trial, not being employed in any places of honour or profit about the king: and indeed it does not appear that Mordecai was blamed by any of them, even amidst the most imminent danger to which the whole nation was exposed. (*Note, Dan.* iii. 1—7.)

V. 3—5. Haman seems not to have noticed Mordecai's singularity, (amidst the homage which he received from all others,) till it was pointed out to him by the other servants of Ahasuerus. These first remonstrated with Mordecai for his disobedience to the king: but when he disregarded them, they desired to know whether "his matters would "stand; for he had told them that he was a Jew." 'He 'acquaints them plainly of what religion and nation he '"was; who might not ... worship any but God alone.' *Bp. Patrick.* This proves, that he vindicated himself on the ground of his religion: and it implies, that he expected Ahasuerus would admit of this plea; which favours the supposition, that the kings of Persia had been used to excuse their Jewish servants from such obeisance, as they could not conscientiously render.—It is probable, however, that these informers thought this a good opportunity of paying court to the favourite; or of obtaining Mordecai's post for some of them, or their dependents; and they did not approve of his singularity, by which he seemed to reproach their compliance.

V. 6. A wise man would have treated this information with neglect: and, had he even thought that Mordecai's conduct was the effect of pique, pride, malice, or insolence, he would have left him to his humour. But Haman was a man of a weak and vain-glorious mind, and intoxicated with prosperity, as the whole history shews. Being therefore fired with indignation, that these honours were refused him by one so greatly his inferior, and having understood that the refusal was dictated by principles, which were common to all the Jews; he considered the whole nation as his enemies, and determined, if possible, to involve them all in one common destruction. (*Note, Ps.* lxxxiii. 1—4.)—The ancient enmity of an Amalekite seems also to have revived; and perhaps he meant to revenge the quarrel of his nation, as well as the affront which he had received from Mordecai. His rank and authority, and his unbounded influence over Ahasuerus, emboldened him to expect success in the daring attempt. His self-importance made him think it a mean revenge, to crush an individual who had offended him: and his pre-eminence seemed only to suggest the idea of being able to do more mischief, and diffuse more extensive misery, than an inferior could have done. His diabolical ambition and cruelty thirsted for the extirpation of the whole people of the Jews at one blow; at least all of them who dwelt in the immense kingdom of Persia, including those in Judea, which was a province of that kingdom. (*Note, Ezra* ii. 1.) It may therefore fairly be concluded that the device was not his own; but was suggested by that ambitious spirit, who aspires to be "the "god of this world," who has been "a murderer from "the beginning," and whose enmity to the "Seed of the "woman," to Christ and his church, is communicated to all his children. In this view, it was a plan worthy of the vast capacity, enmity, malice, ambition, and desperation of that arch rebel against his Maker. (*Notes, Gen.* iii. 14, 15. *Matt.* iv. 1, 2. *John* viii. 41—47, *v.* 44.)

V. 7. Esther had now been queen five years; yet her nation and kindred had not become publickly known: for Haman did not suspect that the queen was a Jewess, or that Mordecai was her near relation. (*Note,* vii. 6.) Had Mordecai been ambitious of preferment, no doubt he would have counselled Esther to make known her kindred, when she was first in high favour: but he seems to have foreseen, that she was advanced for some future service to her people, for which she ought to reserve herself. (*Note,* iv. 13, 14.)—The word "Pur" signifies *the lot.* Haman, having formed his project, enquired of his idols, according to his own superstition, by casting lots what day would be most propitious to its execution: for he made himself sure of the king's concurrence! and it pleased God, so to order it, that the day which had the favourable token, was above eleven months distant. Haman's superstition was such,

8 And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people [s] scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people, in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and [t] their laws *are* diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it *is* not [*] for the king's profit to suffer them.

9 If it please the king, let it be written [†] that they may be destroyed; and I will [‡] pay [u] ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring *it* into the king's treasuries.

10 And the king [x] took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' [§] enemy.

11 And the king said unto Haman, The silver *is* given to thee, the people also, [y] to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

12 Then were the king's [‖] scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded, unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province, [z] according to the writing thereof, and *to* every people after their language; [a] in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and [b] sealed with the king's ring.

13 And the letters were sent [c] by posts into all the king's provinces, to

s Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. iv. 27. xxx. 3. xxxii. 26. Neh. i. 8. Jer. l. 17. Ez. vi. 8. xi. 16. Zech. vii. 14. John vii. 35. Jam. i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 1.

t Ezra iv. 12—15. Acts xvi. 20, 21. xvii. 6, 7. xxiv. 5. xxviii. 22.

* Heb. *meet*, or *equal, for the king to, &c.*

† Heb. *to destroy them.*

‡ Heb. *weigh.* Gen. xxiii. 16.

u Matt. xviii. 24

x viii. 2. 8. Gen. xli. 42.

§ Or, *oppressor.* vii. 6.

y Ps. lxxiii. 7. Jer. xxvi. 14. xl. 4. Luke xxiii. 25.

‖ Or, *secretaries.*

z i. 22. viii. 9. ix. 27.

a 1 Kings xxi. 8. Dan. vi. 8. 12. 15.

b viii. 2. 8.

c viii. 10. 14. 2 Chr. xxx. 6. Job ix. 25. Jer. li. 31. Rom. iii. 15.

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that he did not venture to execute his design till that time came: though it can hardly be supposed, but he must have perceived, that many things might occur to prevent the execution of his intentions. The king might change his mind, or might die; or the Jews might take refuge in other countries, or make such preparations for their own defence, as to render the attempt most perilous, and the success of it very hazardous.—The event shewed the vanity of his oracles or auguries; and illustrated the doctrine of a particular providence over all the affairs of men, and the care of God over his church. 'This whole business 'was governed by a wonderful providence of God, by 'whom these lots were directed, and not by the Persian 'gods, to fall in the last month of the year; whereby 'almost a whole year intervened between the design and 'its execution; and gave time for Mordecai to acquaint 'Esther with it, and for her to intercede with the king, for 'the revoking or suspending his decree, and disappoint-'ing the conspiracy.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Prov.* xvi. 33.)

V. 8, 9. Haman does not seem even to have mentioned to Ahasuerus the *name* of the people, whom he purposed to extirpate; supposing that they would be sufficiently known from his description of them. He probably acted as prime-minister under the king, who, like most of those eastern monarchs, giving himself up to his pleasures, left the management of his affairs almost entirely to him. Indeed the ascendancy of Haman was so absolute, that none of the other counsellors seem to have been advised with in this most important matter; and probably the proposal was made and consented to, while the king was heated with wine. (*Note*, ii. 1.)—The laws and customs of the people of God were indeed diverse from those of any other nation: but there is no proof, that they refused obedience to the laws of Persia, except as Mordecai refused to worship Haman; for we do not find that the kings of Persia required them to worship idols, or even forbad them to observe their sabbaths, festivals, and ceremonial institutions.—It does not appear from the narrative, that the horrible cruelty and injustice of the proposal at all startled the king! Indeed Haman seems to have been more apprehensive, that he would object to the impolicy of diminishing the revenue, by decreasing the number of his subjects. He therefore offered the king ten thousand talents of silver, (about four millions sterling, if reckoned according to the talent of the Jews' Tables,) by way of compensation for the loss. But it seems, that he meant to indemnify himself out of the property of the massacred Jews: and he would engage to raise the sum at once from the execution of his project; which would, as he pretended, be more than equivalent to all present or subsequent disadvantages. 'He intended not to pay one farthing 'of it himself, it being easy to raise it out of the spoil of 'the Jews' goods.' *Bp. Patrick.* Those who were employed in executing the bloody decree, were required "to "take the spoil of them for a prey" (13); out of which he would require them to pay a certain proportion to "those who had the charge of the business" of collecting the revenue, "to bring it into the king's treasuries."

V. 10, 11. Without considerable knowledge of the human heart, and the history of mankind, we shall find a difficulty in conceiving, how any prince could be induced to consent to so horrid and pernicious a proposal, without objection or hesitation. It would be absurd to assign a *reason* for so infatuated a measure. But when an arbitrary monarch has become the dupe of a wicked favourite; it has always been observed, that the first object of his life, the chief, and almost the only use, which he makes of his power, is to gratify and aggrandize him: and the lives of subjects, or the interests of empires, have, on such occasions, often been wantonly sacrificed to the avarice, the ambition, the revenge, or the caprice, of a worthless minion!—'So loth are men that love their pleasure, to take 'any pains to distinguish between truth and falsehood.' *Bp. Patrick.*—As a token that the request was granted, Ahasuerus gave the ring, with his royal signet, from his own hand, to the enemy and oppressor of the Jews; and he also granted to him all the spoil, without making any payment into the treasury: thus Haman seemed about to obtain the most complete gratification of his revenge, ambition, and avarice. (*Notes, Ex.* xv. 9, 10. *Is.* x. 13—15. *Luke* xii. 15—21.)

V. 12—15. Haman hasted to form the grant of the

destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish,
d 1 Sam. xv. 3. all Jews, [d] both young and old, little
e viii. 12—14. Jam. iv. 13. children and women, [e] in one day, *even*
upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth
month, which *is* the month Adar,
f viii. 11. ix. 10. Is. x. 6. and *to take* [f] the spoil of them for a
prey.

g viii. 13, 14. 14 The [g] copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.

15 The posts went out, being [h] hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman [i] sat down to drink; but [k] the city Shushan was perplexed.

h Prov. xiii. 16. iv. 16.

i Hos. vii. 5. Am. vi. 6. John xvi. 20. Rev. xi. 10.

k iv. 16. viii. 15. Prov. xxix. 2.

king into a decree, and to publish it throughout the empire: that the sentence might be looked upon as irreversible; and that all the subjects might prepare to carry it into execution, as they valued the favour of the king, and of his minister. Thus he expected, that the hope of ingratiating themselves at court, and the enmity borne the Jews, would unite the inhabitants of every city and province, in this bloody massacre: doubtless he intended to stir them up, and lead them to the attack, by his emissaries; and, further to encourage them, it seems probable, that they were allowed to take the whole spoil of the Jews to themselves as a prey. That his meaning might not be mistaken, he caused the edict to be drawn up with a remarkable repetition, and almost in the style of modern law; and the inhabitants of every province were expressly commanded, "to destroy, kill, and cause to perish," all the Jews, even old men, and women, and children, in one day.—When this strange and most horrid decree was published, it caused much perplexity and consternation, not only to the Jews, but to all considerate men, especially at Shushan: for they could not but tremble for themselves, when they perceived what a bloody tyrant had possession of authority; and they must foresee, that terrible effects would follow from such a mad and rash attempt, which would render an immense number of people desperate, and drive them to the most furious courage in their own defence. 'Perhaps some of them were related to the Jews, or had 'made friendship with them; and therefore were much 'concerned at this horrid decree.' *Bp. Patrick.* But Haman was insensible to every thing, except the gratification of his revenge: and in order to keep such reflections and reports at a distance from the king, he engaged him in pleasure and indulgence; and they sat down to drink, as perfectly unconcerned in the event!—Eleven months intervened, between the publishing of the decree, and the day appointed for carrying it into execution. 'This was 'not wisely projected, to let his design be known so long 'before it was to take effect: for the king's mind might 'alter, or the Jews might find some way to deliver themselves, or might steal out of the kingdom.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The favourites of earthly princes have too often been distinguished by their folly, pride, and profligacy: but those of the King of heaven are endowed with wisdom and grace, and prepared for usefulness in their several situations.—The vanity and comparative worthlessness of earthly dignities and possessions are shewn, by their being so commonly lavished upon the basest of the human species; "God having provided better things" for the objects of his special love.—The poison of the old serpent, infused by his first temptation, "Ye shall be as gods," still rankles in the human heart; and when the pride of man is emboldened by great prosperity, it is capable of openly affecting the honour and worship, which belong to God alone! (*Notes, Gen.* iii. 4, 5. *Ex.* xxviii. 2—5. *P. O.* 1—10. *Notes, Dan.* vi. 6—9. *Acts* xii. 20—23.) We are all by nature idolatrous, and *self* is the most favourite of our idols: and whilst we admire and glory in our own supposed excellences, we delight that others should join the incense of their adulation; we are pleased to be treated, as if every thing were at our disposal, and within the reach of our capacity, and that all around should submit to us and bow before us. And when this vast ambition occupies a narrow mind, and the possessor climbs the pinnacle of earthly grandeur, he forgets that he is a man; and acts as if the world were made for him, and were to be governed by him; and as if all its inhabitants were created to be his slaves, and to worship at his shrine!—The desire of the favour of monarchs, and the fear of their wrath, influence most men to allow of these arrogant claims, and to conform to this strange idolatry: and those princes, who have literally demanded altars, sacrifices, and incense to their own deity, have generally met with a ready and zealous compliance from most of their subjects. But the true believer can neither obey such edicts and conform to such fashions, nor be induced, by any persuasions or menaces, to violate the law of God, or the dictates of his own conscience. He must "obey God, rather than men," and leave the consequences to him; and whether "his matters will stand," and his religion excuse his disobedience to unlawful commands, in human courts of justice, or not, he will certainly be justified in so doing before the tribunal of God.—Who can know the desperate wickedness of the human heart, or prescribe any bounds to its devices! When a man possesses the dangerous privilege of doing as he pleases, without controul, and with present impunity; when pride and ambition meet with an unexpected repulse, and when indignation and revenge occupy the heart; the most horrible and diabolical designs will be considered, as the evidences of a noble and daring mind. In such circumstances, the infuriated wretch will think scorn of the petty rapines and assassinations of inferior villains, and become ambitious of being as much distinguished by a vast revenge, as by the eminence of his rank: and what massacres and crimes will not in that case be perpetrated without remorse, and even with pride and pleasure; while immense numbers both fall victims to his fury, and are involved with him in the guilt of murder and other enormities! What cause then have we to be thankful for external restraints to our headstrong passions; and how ought we to watch and pray against pride, anger, malice, and every sinful propensity! for if left under the power of

CHAP. IV.

Mordecai and the Jews fast, and mourn exceedingly, 1—3. Esther, sending to enquire of Mordecai the reason, is informed of the decree, and required to petition the king for her people, 4—9. She excuses herself by alledging the peril of the attempt: but being shewn the consequences, she appoints a fast of three days, and consents to approach the king, though at the hazard of her life, 10—17.

a iii. 8—13.
b 2 Sam. i. 11. Job i. 20. Jon. iii. 4—9. Acts xiv. 14.

WHEN Mordecai perceived [a] all that was done, Mordecai [b] rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth [c] with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and [d] cried with a loud and a bitter cry;

c 3. Josh. vii. 6. 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Job ii. 8. xlii. 6. Is. lviii. 5. Ez. xxvii. 30. Dan. ix. 3. Matt. xi. 21.

d Gen. xxvii. 34. Is. xv. 4. xxii. 4. Ez. xxi. 6. xxvii. 31. Mic. i. 8. Zeph. i. 14. Rev. xviii. 17—19.

2 And came even before the king's gate: for none *might* enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

3 And [e] in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, *there was* [f] great mourning among the Jews, and fast-

e i. 1. iii. 12.

f 1 Sam. iv. 13, 14. xi. 4. Is. xxii. 4, 5. 12. xxxvii. 1. 3.

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them, we cannot conceive how far they would hurry us.—Let us also remember to be thankful for a limited, mild, and equitable government; and to beg of God to extend the same blessing to all other nations; with all the blessings of our holy religion, and that liberty with which Christ makes his people free.

V. 7—15.

The world, as lying in wickedness, must hate the people of God, who bear his image and do his will: but they will be peculiarly obnoxious to tyrants; as they must refuse unreserved compliance with their mandates and humours; being the subjects of another kingdom, and governed by laws diverse from, nay opposite to, their favourite maxims and pursuits. They are indeed, and ought to be, "a peculiar" and singular "people," "not conformed to this world," while they are dispersed in the various parts of it: and they should be willing to be treated as precise, conceited, and unpliant. But those who persuade princes, that it is not for their profit to tolerate them, and that they had better persecute, destroy, or banish them, are as much enemies to the state, as to the church of God. Whatever mere professors may be, true Christians are the best subjects under every government: not only because they are more peaceable, honest, and industrious than their neighbours; and conscientiously pay tribute, and render obedience in all things lawful; but because their examples and conversation edify many, and their prayers bring down a blessing upon the land in which they live in peace. No acquisitions of wealth therefore could compensate the loss of them, even in a political view; and without bringing into the account the enormous load of national guilt, which persecution rapidly accumulates.—The ungodly are often lavish in expenses on their lusts; and thus shame those Christians who are penurious in promoting the cause of God: they, however, frequently find means by one of their crimes to bear the expenses of the rest; and it is through defect of ingenuity or of power, if they do not always accomplish this.—Inconsiderate princes, who are the slaves of pleasure and dupes to their favourites, may, though humane in their own dispositions, become as mischievous as the most bloody tyrants; by consenting, through false accusations, to that injustice and cruelty which they would have abhorred, if they had taken the pains properly to investigate the business. Thus the most important interests of millions are sacrificed to the humour, emolument, or revenge of some worthless wretch; who regards the honour of his patron no more than he does the happiness of the people, and is as insensible to gratitude, as to compassion. But we may cease to wonder that such things have been done, when we consider how individuals, in every station of life, sacrifice their credit, interest, health, and connexions, and even shorten their lives, as well as ruin their souls, for the sake of the most contemptible gratifications: and though sensible of their danger, they have no power to resist the importunity of an inordinate, unreasonable inclination! When this becomes the case of one in authority, and unites with his other passions and partialities; intoxication and excess extinguish every remaining spark of humanity, and stupify conscience and reflection; and he and his companions will be revelling with unfeeling and most unseasonable mirth, while thousands are deploring the fatal effects of their pernicious counsels.—But the Lord bounds the effects of man's malice, as he does the raging waves of the ocean: even superstition, though baneful in itself, may sometimes operate as a useful restraint on those who are free from every other; and it has often so dismayed unprincipled men, in the full career of prosperous wickedness, that they have postponed their designs, till opportunity has been given to render them abortive. Thus "the counsel of the LORD shall stand, "and he will do all his pleasure:" and "they that trust "in him shall never be confounded."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. (*Marg. Ref.*) Mordecai, besides giving vent to his own sorrows, by his open lamentations, and by the habit of a penitent mourner, doubtless intended to excite the attention of his people to the extent and imminence of their danger, and to the proper method of seeking deliverance. Probably, he was one of the most considerable Jews in Shushan, and immediately struck at by the decree: therefore he thus avowed his relation to the Jews, and called upon them to unite in seeking protection from God.

V. 2. Nothing was allowed to enter within the palace, which did not bear the aspect of joy and pleasure, or which could remind the king of misery or mortality. (*Note, Gen.* l. 4.) Thus, whatever oppressions were committed upon the subjects, all complaints were discouraged, and care was taken to prevent the king from being troubled with the report of them. Mordecai, therefore, when expressing his grief by the customary tokens, might not enter to his usual place of attendance: but he walked as near it as he could, that being noticed, Esther might hear of him; through whom he doubtless entertained hopes of deliverance. (*Notes*, 13, 14. ii. 21—23.)

V. 3. It cannot be reasonably doubted, that the fast-

ing, and [g] weeping, and wailing; and [*] many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 So Esther's maids and her [†] chamberlains came and told *it* her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him; [h] but he received *it* not.

5 Then called Esther for Hatach, *one* of the king's chamberlains, whom he had [‡] appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, [i] to know what it *was*, and why it *was*.

6 So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which *was* before the king's gate.

7 And Mordecai told him of [j] all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

8 Also he gave him [k] the copy of the writing of the decree, that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew *it* unto Esther, and to declare *it* unto her, and [l] to charge her that she should go in unto the king, [m] to make supplication unto him, and [n] to make request before him for her people.

9 And Hatach came, and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

10 Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;

11 All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into [o] the inner court, who is not called, *there is* [p] one law of his to put *him* to death, except such to whom [q] the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: [r] but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

12 And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

g Matt. xiii. 42. xxii. 13. xxv. 30.
* Heb. *sackcloth and ashes were laid under many.* Is. lviii. 5. Dan. ix. 3.
† Heb. *eunuchs.* i. 12. 1 Sam. viii. 15. *Marg.* 2 Kings ix. 32. Is. lvi. 3. Acts viii. 27.
h Gen. xxxvii. 35. Ps. lxxvii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 15.
‡ Heb. *set before her.* i. 10. 12.
i Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. Phil. ii. 4. Heb. iv. 15.
j iii. 2—15.
k iii. 14, 15.
l ii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 13. 17.
m Job ix. 15. Prov. xvi. 14, 15. Ec. x. 4. Acts xii. 20.
n vii. 3, 4. viii. 6. Neh. ii. 3—5. Prov. xxi. 1.
o v. 1
p Dan. ii. 9.
q v. 2. viii. 4.
r i. 19. ii. 14. 1 Pet. iii. 7.

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ings and weepings of the Jews were attended by constant prayers and supplications: yet all mention of them, and of the glorious God whom they worshipped, seems to have been carefully and purposely avoided, both here and elsewhere. (*Preface.*)

V. 4. Some of the queen's attendants were, it seems, acquainted with her relation to Mordecai; and his excessive grief being noticed, she soon heard of it. As a token of her sincere and deep sympathy with him in his sorrow, and her unabated affection for so kind a benefactor, she sent him change of raiment, according to the custom of the times; in order perhaps, that he might resume his place: but she seems not to have known the cause of his affliction; and his refusal to be comforted would lead her to conclude, that it was for some very great and terrible calamity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. The wives and concubines of the Persian kings were watched with such jealous strictness, that the queen herself had not liberty to go out of the precincts of the palace, to confer in person with so near a relative; nor might he have access to her, especially in mourning! So that she could only enquire the cause of his excessive sorrow, by the interposition of one of the chamberlains, whom the king had appointed to attend on her. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—9. (*Marg Ref.—Notes*, iii. 2—15.) Mordecai told Hatach, in what manner Haman's revenge was excited, and of the proposal, which he had made to the king of paying ten thousand talents into the treasury, if a decree might be passed for destroying all the Jews; and that such a decree had been ratified, of which he sent a copy to Esther; and he charged her to intercede with the king in behalf of her nation.

V. 11. It may be supposed, that this law was framed, under the *pretext* of securing the person of the king from the assaults of conspirators, and of maintaining his dignity; that being seldom seen, he might be considered as a kind of deity: but it would serve also to protect his ministers and favourites from detection, in their oppressions or pernicious measures. For in general the king must see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and receive *their* reports: and if any one would venture to present to him a complaint, petition, appeal, or information, he must do it at the hazard of his life; as the king would seldom call for any person, in opposition to the advice of his counsellors and ministers. By this method the king also was excluded from liberal society and converse; so that his palace in the city, and his pavilions in the camp, became a kind of prison: and no wonder, that princes who were so immured, became morose and capricious, and prepared for every kind of tyranny and cruelty. (*Notes, Neh.* ii. 1, 2. *Dan.* vi. 6—9.)—As the law extended to the women likewise, we may suppose that this was intended to free the monarch from molestation, when his affections had been transferred from former objects to more successful rivals: for if the queen went into his presence uncalled, immediate death was the inevitable consequence, should he be displeased at her intrusion. And as Esther had not been called for during a whole month, she had some reason to fear that she had lost the king's favour; and that she should also lose her life, if she presumed to enter uncalled into his presence.—Probably, Haman had occupied the king's mind with every species of licentious pleasure, that he might think no further of the edict, which he had confirmed and published.

13 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, [s] Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For, if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, [t] *then* shall there [*] enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but [u] thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth [x] whether thou art come to the kingdom for [y] *such* a time as this?

15 ¶ Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*,

16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are [†] present in Shushan, and [z] fast ye for me, and neither [a] eat nor drink, three days, night or day: [b] I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law: and [c] if I perish, I perish.

17 So Mordecai [‡] went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

[s] Prov. xxiv. 10—12. Matt. xvi. 24, 25. John xii. 25. Phil. ii. 30. Heb. xii. 3.
[t] Gen. xxii. 14. Num. xxiii. 22—24. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. 36. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Is. liv. 17. Jer. xxx. 11. xxxiii. 24—26. xlvi. 28. Am. ix. 8, 9. Matt. xvi. 18. xxiv. 22.
[*] Heb. *respiration*. Ezra ix. 9. Job ix. 18.
[u] ii. 7. 15. Judg. xiv. 15—18. xv. 6.
[x] Gen. xlv. 4—8. Is. xlv. 1—5. xlix. 23. Acts vii. 20—25.
[y] 1 Sam. xvii. 29. 2 Kings xix. 3. Neh. vi. 11.
[†] Heb. *found*.
[z] 2 Chr. xx. 3. Is. xxii. 12. Joel i. 14, 15. ii. 12—17. Jon. iii. 4—6.
[a] v. 1. Matt. xii. 40. Acts ix. 9. xxvii. 33.
[b] Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. Acts x. 7.
[c] Gen. xliii. 14. 1 Sam. xix. 5. 2 Sam. x. 12. Luke ix. 24. Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. Rom. xvi. 4. Phil. ii. 30.
[‡] Heb. *passed*.

V. 13, 14. Mordecai represented to Esther, that in case the decree against her people should be executed, she would certainly be known to be a Jewess, and would be slain even in the king's palace, by some of the envious and malicious enemies of that nation. But, being "strong in "faith," he was assured, that God would by some means deliver his people; and that, if she refused to venture her life in the cause, their enlargement would be attended by some remarkable judgment upon her, and all her remaining relations. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Prov.* xxiv. 11, 12. *Matt.* xvi. 24—28.) He also suggested to her, that most probably she had been advanced to her present dignity, on purpose to be the deliverer of her nation in this perilous crisis, and in this case, her attempt would be both safe and honourable.—It is remarkable that sentiments, so replete with faith and piety, are conveyed to us, without the mention of God, or Providence. This seems to have been done intentionally. (*Preface.*)

V. 15—17. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some think that the Jews were only required to abstain from all delicacies, and to fast each day till after sun-set: but perhaps on this extraordinary occasion, all, who had no hindrance that rendered it impracticable, (in which situation many must needs be found,) fasted from the morning of the first, until some time on the third day, without eating any thing. (*Notes, Dan.* x. 2, 3. *Joel* i. 13—15. ii. 15—17. *Jon.* iii. 5—10.) The queen herself, however, conformed to the same rule which she prescribed to others: and she had obtained some attendants, who were willing to unite with her in these exercises of devotion, though it is not probable, that they were Jewesses. And when preparation had been made, by solemn humiliation before God, no doubt accompanied by fervent, united, and persevering prayer, she determined, by an heroick act of faith and love, to venture her life in the cause of her people: and if it were the will of the Lord, that she should be put to death, she was ready to acquiesce in his appointment. 'This is not a speech of 'despondence, but of courage and resolution; being as 'much as to say, I am content to perish in so good a cause: 'and if I perish for it in this world, (as the Targum glosses,) 'I shall have my portion in the world to come.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Neh.* vi. 10—14. *Acts* xx. 22—24. *Phil.* ii. 24—30. 1 *John* iii. 16, 17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

Publick calamities, especially those which oppress the church of God, should more affect our hearts than any private affliction: and it is peculiarly distressing to a generous mind, to be even the *occasion* of suffering to others. —Vain is the attempt of man to banish misery from his heart, by any of those varied devices which he tries for that purpose. A refuge from the wrath to come is indeed provided; and an effectual support under temporal afflictions, and victory over death itself: but most men content themselves with striving to forget their misery, instead of seeking and securing happiness. Yet the approach of death, as well as its consequences, must be formidable, in proportion as it is unexpected and unprepared for.—Exalted stations, and envied distinctions, in many respects, greatly abridge the liberty of the possessors, and preclude them from the most agreeable and profitable society. Pride, envy, suspicion, and other unreasonable passions, render them slaves to cumbrous forms; and to preserve their dignity, or from fear of giving offence, they often have less opportunity of enjoyment or improvement, than their inferiors, and become the ignorant dupes of designing men in matters of the greatest importance. Too often laws also are framed in subserviency to men's lusts: and under every government, the more cause is given for complaint, the less liberty is allowed to complain.—But let us rejoice that the righteous Lord reigns, and upon a mercy-seat. To him we have access at all times: his golden sceptre is ever held forth to encourage our approach: we cannot come uncalled into his presence, when we plead the Saviour's name; our danger consists in keeping at too great a distance, not in drawing too near: if he have taken us for the objects of his peculiar love, he will never cast us off; and it is our own fault if we have not daily access to him and communion with him. We never have any good reason to complain of his dispensations; though we have frequently cause to bemoan our afflictions, to deprecate the miseries to which we are exposed, and to appeal to him against our oppressors, persecutors, and tempters: and we are *charged* to present our daily petitions at his throne of grace, for the whole church of God and all the members of it, according to their several difficulties, trials, and services; as well as for the conversion and salvation of our fellow sinners. For this purpose, we should enquire concerning the state of our brethren, how they fare, and of the cause of God, how it prospers; that we may be directed in our prayers, and in our endeavours to serve the common cause by the due improvement of our talents. And if we be thus disposed, we shall seldom want

CHAP. V.

Esther, venturing uncalled before the king, is graciously received; and, being encouraged to make her request, she invites the king and Haman to a banquet, 1—5. Being again asked what was her request, she invites them to another banquet the next day, 6—8. Haman, proud of this distinction, and elated by prosperity, is yet disquieted by Mordecai's neglect, and amidst his vain-glorying complains of it to his friends and his wife, 9—13. By their advice he erects a gallows for Mordecai's execution the next morning, 14.

a iv. 16. Matt. xxvii. 64.
b i. 11. viii. 15. Matt. x. 16. xi. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 3—5.
c iv. 11. vi. 4.
d 1 Kings x. 18—20. Luke xxii. 30. Rev. iii. 21.

NOW it came to pass [a] on the third day, that Esther put on *her* [b] royal *apparel*, and stood [c] in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king [d] sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

2 And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* [e] she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther [f] the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

e Gen. xxxii. 28. Neh. i. 11. Ps. cxvi. 1. Prov. xxi. 1. Acts vii. 10. x. 4.
f iv. 11. viii. 4.

3 Then said the king unto her, [g] What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what *is* thy request? it shall be even given thee [h] to the half of the kingdom.

g 6. vii. 2. ix. 12. 1 Kings ii. 20. iii. 5. Matt. xx: 20—22. Luke xviii. 41.
h 6. Mark vi. 23.

4 And Esther answered, [i] If *it seem* good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto [k] the banquet, that I have prepared for him.

i 8. Prov. xxix. 11.
k 8. iii. 15. Gen. xxvii. 25. xxxii. 20. Ps. cxii. 5. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

opportunities of comforting the mourners, protecting the oppressed, or succouring those who are in tribulation or necessity.

V. 10—17.

As the enemies of the church are instigated by malice to be unwearied in mischief, surely *we* should be constrained by love to be as unwearied in doing good. But we are prone to shrink from perilous and self-denying services: and to think ourselves sufficiently excused for neglecting an opportunity of important usefulness, if we can truly say, that it would have been embraced at the hazard of liberty or life. Yet, as the disciples of him who laid down his life for us, we ought also, if properly called to it, "to lay "down our lives for the brethren:" and no labour, loss, or suffering in the way, will justify us in neglecting the duty of our station. If then Christians, who are placed in exalted situations, shew a disposition to consult their own ease and safety rather than the publick good, they should be plainly remonstrated with, and reminded that their interest and that of God's people are inseparable; that their enemies are the same; that he, who sinfully determines "to save his life, shall lose it;" that enlargement and deliverance will arise to the church of God from some quarter; that if they, from selfish motives, refuse the privilege of being his instruments, the honour will be given to others, and disgrace or ruin will come upon them and their's, for deserting the cause when the emergency called for their interposition; that Providence has raised them to their high stations, that they may serve God, and do good to mankind, and will they then neglect the opportunity which is presented to them? that, perhaps, this was the very service for which they were raised up; and it is preposterous to fear man in doing the evident will of God. Such remonstrances, when urged by men of consistent character, have a powerful effect, in exciting the timorous and reluctant to venture *in a good cause*.—Those, however, who are called to stand forth boldly in perilous services, have a right to demand the united prayers of all their brethren. And, in great emergencies and adversities especially, solemn seasons of fasting, humiliation, and prayer are peculiarly useful, to prepare the mind for expecting and receiving deliverance from the mercy of God, in a proper manner.—Believers may have fellowship with each other in the same duties, when not able to meet in the same place.—Those who stir up others to self-denial should set the example of it: and a winning deportment, a pious conversation, and a holy life, will generally induce others to join us in seeking the Lord, wherever we are placed. (*Note*, *Acts* x. 3—8, *v.* 7.) Having solemnly commended our souls and our cause to God, we may venture under his protection upon any service, without distressing fear: we are perfectly safe, if he please to preserve us; and should we lose our lives in doing his will, that loss would be our greatest gain.—Indeed all dangers are trivial, compared to the danger of losing our souls. When this is apprehended, the trembling sinner is often as much afraid of casting himself, without reserve, upon the Lord's free mercy, as Esther was of coming before the king. But let him venture, as she did, with earnest prayers and supplications, saying, "If I perish, I perish," and he shall certainly succeed in the event. And as the cause of God will at last be triumphant, it is our highest interest cordially to adhere to it, whatever cross we may be required to endure.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—3. Esther, having entrusted herself to the protection of God, and put on her royal apparel, ventured into the presence of the king; most probably before the conclusion of the solemn fast, and while the Jews were still engaged in prayer. Her conduct was contrary to the law of the Persians: but the king, by holding forth the golden sceptre, granted her a pardon; and by his subsequent enquiry and promise, relieved her anxiety and raised her expectations. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Gen.* xxxii. 6—8. 24—28. xxxiii. 4. *Neh.* i. 5—11. *Prov.* xxi. 1. *Acts* ix. 3—6. xii. 5—11.)—The apocryphal addition to this book, says, that at first the king frowned, and Esther fainted; and that God then put it into his heart to behave kindly towards her.

V. 4. It appears probable, that Esther intended to make a previous trial of the king's disposition, before she presented her important petition, which could scarcely be granted without the immediate ruin of his principal fa-

l vi. 14.

5 Then the king said, [l] Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

m 3. vii. 2. ix. 12.

6 And [m] the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

7 Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request *is;*

8 If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to * perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do [n] to-morrow as the king hath said.

* Heb. *do.*

a vi. 1, &c. Prov. xvi. 9.
o Job xx. 5. Am. vi. 12, 13. Luke vi. 25. John xvi. 20. Jam. iv. 9.

9 ¶ Then went Haman forth that day, [o] joyful, and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that [p] he stood not up, nor moved for him, [q] he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

p iii. 2. Ps. xv. 4. Matt. x. 28.
q iii. 5. 1 Kings xxi. 4. Job xxxi. 31. Ps. xxvii. 3. Dan. iii. 13, 19. Matt. ii. 16. Acts vii. 54.

10 Nevertheless Haman [r] refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and † called for his friends, and [s] Zeresh his wife.

r Gen. xliii. 30, 31. xlv. 1. 2 Sam. xiii. 22, 28. Ec. vii. 9.

† Heb. *caused his friends to come.*
s vi. 13.

11 And Haman told them of [t] the glory of his riches, and [u] the multitude of his children, and all *the things* wherein the king had promoted him, and [x] how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

t i. 4. Gen xxxi. 1. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. xlix. 6, 16, 17. Is. x. 3. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Dan. iv. 30. Mark x. 24. Luke xii. 19, 20. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
u ix. 7—10. Job xxvii. 14, 15. Hos. ix. 13, 14.
x iii. 1.

12 Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared, but myself; and [y] to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.

y Job viii. 12, 13. xx. 5—8. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. Prov. vii. 22, 23. xxvii. 1. Luke xxi. 34, 35. 1 Thes. v. 3.

13 Yet [z] all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

z 1 Kings xxi. 4—6. Job xviii. 4. Ec. i. 2. 14. Phil. iv. 11, 12.

14 Then [a] said Zeresh his wife, and all his friends unto him, [b] Let a ‡ gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow [c] speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then [d] go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And [e] the thing pleased Haman; and [f] he caused the gallows to be made.

a 2 Sam. xiii. 3—5. 1 Kings xxi. 7. 25. 2 Chr. xxii. 3, 4. Mark vi. 19—24.
b vii. 9.
‡ Heb. *tree.*
c iii. 8, &c. vi. 4.
d iii. 15. 1 Kings xxi. 7. Am. vi. 4—6. Rev. xi. 10.
e 2 Sam. xvi. 21—23. xvii. 1—4. Mark xiv. 10, 11. Acts xxiii. 14, 15. Rom. i. 32.
f vii. 10. Ps. vii. 13—16. ix. 15. Prov. i. 18. iv. 16. Rom. iii. 15.

vourite. It might also be improper to make her request before the king's attendants; and she meant to do it in the presence of Haman. The delay likewise expressed her respect for the king, whom she reluctantly troubled, because the matter was urgent: and probably she well knew that blandishments, and the exhilaration of wine and feasting, disposed him to grant such petitions as he would otherwise have rejected.

V. 5—8. (*Marg. Ref.*) Whether Esther's courage failed her, or whether she had some good reason for this delay; the providential wisdom of God was wonderfully manifested by it, as the event sufficiently shews. 'There was also a 'singular providence of God in this matter, which so dis-'posed her mind, that the high honour the king bestowed 'on Mordecai the next day, might fall out between this 'and that, and make way for her petition. ... The Israelites 'were in great expectation of the issue of this feasting, and 'hoped to see Haman suddenly cut off: but she was re-'solved to turn their thoughts the right way, that is, from 'her unto God, looking for mercy from their heavenly Fa-'ther.' *Bp. Patrick and Targum quoted by him.* (*Notes,* vi.)

V. 9, 10. Mordecai had before refused Haman the exorbitant honours which he claimed: but now he "stood "not up, nor moved for him," which, probably he had before done; for Haman's prodigious wickedness rendered him unworthy even of common respect. Mordecai would also shew this base man, that, so far from abject submission from dread of his cruel revenge, he had trusted his cause with God, and did not "fear what flesh could do to "him." But Haman, though full of indignant wrath, refrained himself for the present.—It seems that at the close of the solemn fast, Mordecai had hasted to put off his sackcloth, and to be found in his place. (*Notes,* 1—3. ii. 21—23. iv. 1, 2.)

V. 11, 12. Haman's wife and friends must have before known all the particulars of his prosperity: but he loved, it seems, to be talking on these subjects; and the queen's invitation, which he supposed to spring from peculiar esteem and respect, was a recent distinction which greatly flattered his pride.

V. 13. The neglect of Mordecai, by Haman's own confession, more than counterbalanced all his singular prosperity, and marred all his enjoyment. His proud heart rankled with malice and impatience, because this Jew still lived, kept his place, and refused to bow unto him. The destruction of the nation was determined on at a distant day; but he thirsted for Mordecai's blood, as an anticipation of that more complete revenge.—'How small a mat-'ter will spoil all the satisfaction of those, who are 'arrived at the top of human felicity! Immense riches, 'glory, and honour, gave not Haman so much pleasure, 'as he felt pain from one man's disrespect.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 14. Zeresh and Haman's friends supposed, that being so deeply chagrined, he could not enjoy the royal banquet, if he did not previously gratify his malice by the death of Mordecai. They were confident, that at the first word the king would consent to Mordecai's execution; and they advised the immediate erection of a gibbet for that purpose, that no time might be lost: and, in order that all men might witness the death of him, who refused

CHAP. VI.

The king, unable to sleep, orders the records of the kingdom to be read, 1; and discovering that Mordecai's service had not been rewarded, he considers how to honour him, 2, 3. Haman, coming early to request that Mordecai might be hanged, is himself appointed to confer the highest honours upon him, 4—11. He is extremely cast down, and distressed; his friends and wife predict his ruin; and in this state of mind he is called to attend Esther's banquet, 12—14.

a v. 8. Gen. xxii. 14. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, 27. Is. xli. 17. Rom. xi. 33.
* Heb. *the king's sleep fled away.* Dan. ii. 1. vi. 18.

ON [a] that night [*] could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring [c] the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. b ii. 23. Mal. iii. 16.

2 And it was found written that Mordecai had told of [c] Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the [†] door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. c ii. 21. *Bigthan.* † Heb. *threshold.*

3 And the king said, [d] What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, [e] There is nothing done for him. d Judg. i. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xvii. 25, 26. 1 Chr. xi. 6. Dan. v. 7. 16. 29. Acts xxviii. 8—10. e Gen. xl. 23. Ps. cxviii. 8, 9. Ec. ix. 15.

honour to the king's favourite, it must be more than twenty-five yards high! This cruel and foolish counsel was calculated to please Haman; and though night was approaching, the gallows was immediately prepared: but little did he dream for whom it was erected. (*Notes*, vii. 9, 10. ix. 13, 14.) 'The Jews were extremely troubled at 'the sight of these gallows, and all cried to God in the 'words of the Psalmist, cxxiii. 2, "Behold, as the eyes '"of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as '"the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; '"so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he '"have mercy upon us."' *Targum in Bp. Patrick.* The text selected is apposite; but the rest is the mere imagination of the writer.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In those things which must be done, and which require great courage, needless delays should be avoided: and it is best to proceed when our affections are lively, and our faith in exercise.—Costly or royal apparel is not the Christian's *ornament*, and is utterly worthless when compared with wisdom and grace: yet, on some occasions and in some stations, it may and ought to be worn. (*Notes*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 8—10. 1 *Pet.* iii. 1—4.) But it is a most deplorable evil that inferior persons will ape the fashions, and emulate the expense, of their superiors: and thus they often injure their families and creditors, or lavish that which belongs to the poor; and at the same time expose their own weakness and folly.—The best method of prevailing with men, is first to prevail with God by earnest prayer; for he can dispose the heart of any prince or persecutor, to favour his people, as far as he pleases. Yet while we trust in his omnipotent protection, we should be wise as well as courageous: and he will generally teach those who consult him, to conciliate men's affections by attention and respect, and to watch for favourable opportunities before they propose important matters. But, however largely men may profess or promise, it is best not to ask or expect too much from them.—A slight affront, which a humble man would scarcely notice, will torment a proud man even to madness, destroy all his comforts, and sometimes fill him with diabolical rage and misery. Vain-glorious men delight in boasting of the commendations, honours, and favours conferred on them; each new distinction gives a momentary gratification to their vanity; and they receive every attention, as a tribute to their merit, or as homage paid to their superior talents. They *invite*, and even *hire* men, to listen to their praises; and often glory most in those things, which tend to their immediate disgrace and ruin. For "vanity and vexation" are at last the inventory of all sublunary things. All "availeth them nothing," while this is wanted, or the other wrong; a beloved child or friend is dead, or an enemy lives and prospers; while some are mounted higher themselves, and others refuse to render them the most servile flattery, and comply with their capricious and unreasonable demands. (*Notes* and *P. O.* 1 *Kings* xxi. 1—7.) Prosperity increases insolence and arrogance, which stir up envy and enmity, and provoke affronts and opposition; and thus the most envenomed resentments and tormenting passions are excited, and the fair edifice of fancied felicity vanishes, like the enchanted castles of romantick poets. May we then seek happiness in the favour of God, in peace of conscience, and dominion over our own spirits; and in cultivating that love, which "suffereth long and is kind,... envieth not, vaunteth not "itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, "seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked, thinketh "no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the "truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth "all things, endureth all things; and which never fail-"eth," but shall be perfected in the eternal felicity of heaven! (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 5—7.)

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. No reason is assigned why Ahasuerus was not able to sleep: but the Lord so ordered it, that sleep fled from him: (*marg.*) and instead of calling for the ministers of his pleasure to entertain him, he was disposed to examine the records of his kingdom! It does not appear, that he had any express intention, in having recourse to this extraordinary way of employing his sleepless hours, during the night: but the only wise God so appointed it. And he likewise so ordered it, that the reader opened the records in that part, in which Mordecai's important service was written! (*Note*, ii. 21—23.) Had not this circumstance intervened, Haman no doubt would have prevailed in his request against Mordecai; and this would have been extremely unfavourable to the success of Esther's petition for her people, and against Haman. (*Note*, v. 14.)

V. 3. Instead of a reward, Mordecai, and all his people for his sake, were actually condemned to die! Probably some recompence had been intended: but so unassuming a person, who would not cringe and flatter, and

4 And the king said, [f] Who *is* in the court? Now Haman was come into [g] the outward court of the king's house, [h] to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

5 And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

6 So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man, [*] whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, [i] To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?

7 And Haman answered the king, For the man [†] whom the king delighteth to honour,

8 [‡] Let the royal apparel be brought which the king *useth* to wear, and [k] the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown-royal which is set upon his head;

9 And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man *withal* whom the king delighteth to honour, and [§] bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and [l] proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

10 Then the king said to Haman, [m] Make haste, *and* take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: [‖] let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

11 Then [n] took Haman the apparel and the horse, [o] and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horse-back through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

12 ¶ And Mordecai [p] came again to the king's gate: but Haman [q] hasted to his house mourning, and [r] having his head covered.

f Prov. iii. 27, 28. Ec. ix. 10.
g iv. 11. v. 1.
h iii. 8—11. v. 14. vii. 9. Job v. 13. Ps. ii. 4. xxxiii. 12.
* Heb. *in whose honour the king delighteth.* Ps. xxxv. 27. Is. xlii. 1. lxii. 4, 5. Jer. xxxii. 41. Matt. iii. 17. John v. 23.
i iii. 2, 3. v. 11. Prov. i. 32. xvi. 18. xviii. 12. xxx. 13. Ob. 3.
† Heb. *in whose honour the king delighteth.*
‡ Heb. *Let them bring the royal apparel, wherewith the king clotheth* himself. 1 Sam. xviii. 4. Luke xv. 22.
k 1 Kings i. 33.
§ Heb. *cause him to ride.*
l Gen. xli. 43. Zech. ix. 9.
m Dan. iv. 37. Luke xiv. 11. Rev. xviii. 7.
‖ Heb *suffer not a whit to fail.* 2 Kings x. 10.
n Ezra vi. 13. Is. lx. 14. Luke i. 52. Rev. iii. 9.
o viii. 15. ix. 3.
p ii. 19. 1 Sam. iii. 15. Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2.
q 2 Sam. xvii. 23. 1 Kings xx. 43. xxi. 4. 2 Chr. xxvi. 20. Job xx. 5.
r vii. 8. 2 Sam. xv. 30. Job ix. 24. Jer. xiv. 3, 4.

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who presented no requests for preferment, was soon forgotten by a mighty prince, surrounded by his courtiers and pleasures, and engrossed by a multiplicity of affairs. (*Notes, Gen.* xl. 23. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 55—58. 2 *Sam.* ix. 1. *Ec.* ix. 13—18. *Luke* xvii. 11—19.)—'But there was a 'special Providence in it, that he went without a reward 'then, which procured it for him most opportunely at this 'time. It is not improbable, that, as Josephus saith, the 'history of some of his ancestors was read before they 'came to his reign; wherein was set down what services 'men had done, and what preferment or gifts had been 'bestowed upon them; which moved the king to ask, 'when they came to this story of Mordecai, what had 'been done for him.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 4, 5. 'Haman came early to court, that he might 'gratify his revenge, and go with more pleasure to the 'banquet. This was another part of God's providence, to 'bring him so soon to court, when the king was thus dis-'posed.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Even Haman might not enter the inner court till called for. (*Note*, iv. 11.)

V. 6—11. We may suppose, that Haman was much pleased to be so speedily called into the king's chamber: but his request was prevented, by his advice being asked on a very different business. Probably, the king was considering what good preferment was vacant, which might suit Mordecai, whom he should delight to honour and reward, as the preserver of his life: but he did not name the person; and Haman's thoughts were so engrossed about himself, that he could not think, the king would honour any one *above him*, or would *delight* to honour any one *beside him*.—His excessive vanity, ambition, presumption, and ostentation, as well as the emptiness of his worthless mind, are fully illustrated by the honours which he chose, supposing them intended for himself. He must, forsooth, have the use of the king's own royal robe, and horse, and crown; one of the most noble princes must be his page, and his herald; and by proclamation it was to be made known, what delight the king had in honouring him! Perhaps Ahasuerus understood his meaning, and was disgusted at his exorbitant pretensions: and while he peremptorily commanded him to do all this to "Mordecai "*the Jew*," he could scarcely help remembering the edict, which Haman had obtained against that people. Haman, however, did not venture to object or demur; his request for leave to hang Mordecai was adjourned *sine die*; and he was constrained to become page to a man, comparatively obscure, whom he hated and contemned above all other men on earth, while this extraordinary honour was conferred on him! Imagination itself cannot devise a more painful mortification. It cannot indeed be supposed, that Mordecai was greatly pleased with this unmeaning pageantry considered in itself, which would confer no solid advantage, but expose him to great envy: yet he probably considered it as a favourable presage of Esther's success, and of the deliverance of his people from their malicious enemies.—Some learned men think, that "the crown-"royal" denotes an ornament by which the king's horse was distinguished; and not the crown which the king himself wore.

V. 12. Mordecai, not elated with the honour which he had received, returned to his place and duty as if nothing had happened. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* iii. 15. *Prov.* xxvii. 2.)

s v. 10—14.

13 And Haman told [s] Zeresh his wife, and all his friends, every *thing* that had befallen him. Then [t] said his wise men, and Zeresh his wife, unto him, [u] If Mordecai *be* of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, [x] but shalt surely fall before him.

t Gen. xli. 8. Dan. ii. 12.

u Gen. xl. 19. 1 Sam. xxviii. 19, 20. Dan. v. 26—28. Zech. xii. 2, 3.

x Job xvi. 2.

14 And while they *were* yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and [y] hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

y v. 14. Deut. xxxii. 35, 36.

But Haman went home as a condemned criminal, dreading the consequences of this unexpected disaster. If Mordecai had been a person before unknown to Haman, it would have been no real degradation, to be employed in honouring him in this manner, as the preserver of the king's life; though his pride would have been mortified: but, as he was the man whom he mortally hated, and one of that nation whose destruction he had sought and confidently expected; he must conclude that this favour indicated the determined purpose of the king to prefer Mordecai; and consequently foreboded his own ruin. For in such a contest, there could be no alternative between victory and destruction. (*Note, Prov.* xxv. 8—10.) The contrast also, between the object of his so early coming to the king, to request permission to hang Mordecai, and the honour which he was in consequence compelled to do him, was in itself most dismaying.—*Having his head covered.*] *Marg. Ref.* r.—*Note*, vii. 8.

V. 13. "Haman told Zeresh his wife, and his friends," 'who were waiting to hear what was become of Mordecai, 'whom they advised to get hanged on the gallows,... how 'cross every thing had fallen out to him that morning.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The "wise men," here mentioned, seem to have been astrologers or magicians, whom he consulted on this occasion; and were probably the same persons whom he had before consulted: (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, iii. 7:) and perhaps they pretended to found their judgment on the principles of their art, or to consult their oracles. Yet what had been observed of the contest between Haman and Mordecai, and the sudden and rapid falls of court-favourites in absolute monarchies; as well as what they must have heard of the wonderful works of JEHOVAH in behalf of his people; were sufficient to convince them, that this unexpected turn was the forerunner of more fatal consequences. But they deduced no salutary counsel from these apprehensions: and indeed their conclusions were entirely calculated to drive Haman to despair. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 12—19.) His wife also concurred with them in opinion, that these were fatal omens; which was calculated still more to overwhelm him.

V. 14. Haman, in the anguish of his heart, seems to have neglected his appointment; and doubtless he would willingly have been excused from the banquet, to which he had expected to go so cheerfully: (*Note*, v. 14:) but there was no alternative; he *must* attend, to hear his accusation, and the judgment in consequence awarded against him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are in every thing entirely dependent upon God; nor can the whole world purchase an hour's refreshing sleep, if he see good to withhold it: from him therefore we should seek this solace to our cares, and thank him for it when we have enjoyed it. But when, by any means he withholds sleep from us, it is of great importance to employ usefully our waking hours. The cares and duties of our station in society may properly occupy our reflection, to the exclusion of those thoughts that are vain and injurious: but it is best, when we can meditate upon God, and his works, his truths, his precepts, and promises; and when we can bless him for his mercies, and pour out our hearts before him in prayer. (*Notes, Ps.* lxxvii. 2—12.)—The providence of God superintends the most minute concerns of men. Those actions which are the result of caprice, and appear unaccountable, fall in with his wise and gracious purposes, and "not a sparrow falls to the "ground without him."—Gratitude even to man, though commended by all, is practised by very few indeed; and commonly *least* by those who have *most* in their power. Pride of rank and birth, a variety of pleasures and occupations, and the presence of agreeable flatterers, combine to induce neglect and forgetfulness of those, who have most faithfully and effectually served them; especially if obscure, modest, and unassuming. Yet thus they not only become guilty of the odious sin of ingratitude; but actually yield the superiority to the very man whom they affect to despise: for he that *confers*, is always superior to him who *receives*, an unmerited and unrequited favour.—Those qualifications which demand esteem, and those actions which merit a reward, generally meet with neglect, if they do not expose the possessors to ill treatment, in the circles of the great, and in the courts of kings.—The instruments of pleasure and amusement, who help them to forget their misery, and to waste their fleeting moments; the forward, the subtle, and the artful; and those who can sacrifice conscience, honour, and honesty, to wit, ingenuity, and politeness, have hitherto always met with most favour from the great. Let us then learn to serve a Master, who will not let the least well-meant service lose its reward.—And if any reader should recollect, that nothing has been done to requite some benefactor who aided him many years ago, let him not think that the obligation is out of date: but rather let him study how he may, effectually and without further delay, do that which should have been done long since; and delight to honour his benefactors, if he can render them no other recompence.—Pride, envy, and ambition are insatiable; and every sinful passion grows more exorbitant by indulgence. When a man heartily idolizes his important *self*, he readily fancies that others equally admire him, and are disposed to do him all the honour which he foolishly longs after. If any one open his lips in commendation, doubtless *he* must be the object! if a favour be mentioned, it must be intended for *him!* if a preferment be vacant, *who but he* can be thought of to fill it, provided it be not beneath his acceptance!—But "before honour is humility, and a haughty "spirit before a fall:" both God and man delight in rendering the mortification of proud worms proportioned to their ambition: and men of this character meet with many presages on earth of that everlasting contempt and misery which await them in another world, if not rescued from

CHAP. VII.

Esther, at the banquet, petitions the king for her own life, and the lives of her people; and accuses Haman as their enemy, 1—6. The king, in wrath and jealousy, condemns Haman, who is hanged on the gallows prepared for Mordecai, 7—10.

SO the king and Haman came to [a] banquet with Esther the queen.

a Heb. *drink.* iii. 15. v. 8.

2 And [a] the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What *is* thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request? and it shall be performed, *even* to the half of the kingdom.

a *See* on v. 6. John xvi. 24.

3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, [b] let my life be given me at my petition, and [c] my people at my request:

b 7. 1 Kings xx. 31. 2 Kings i. 13. Job ii. 4. Jer. xxxviii. 26.

c iv. 8. Ps. cxxii. 6—9.

4 For [d] we are sold, I and my people, [†] to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. [e] But if we had been sold for bond-men and bond-women, I had held my tongue, although [f] the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

d iii. 9. iv. 7, 8. Deut. xxviii. 68. 1 Sam. xxii. 23.

† Heb. *that they should destroy, and kill, and cause to perish.* iii. 13. viii. 11. Ps. xliv. 22, 23.

e Gen. xxxvii. 26—28. Deut. xxviii. 68. Josh. ix. 23. Neh. v. 5. Joel iii. 6. Am. ii. 6.

5 Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, [g] Who is he, and where is he, [‡] that durst presume in his heart to do so?

f 6. iii. 9.

g Gen. xxvii. 33. Job ix. 24.

‡ Heb. *whose heart hath filled him.* Acts v. 3.

6 And Esther said, [§] The adversary and enemy *is* [h] this wicked Haman. Then Haman [i] was afraid [||] before the king and the queen.

§ Heb. *The man adversary.*

h 1 Sam. xxiv. 13. Ps. xxvii. 2. cxxxix. 19—22. Prov. xxiv. 24, 25. Ec. v. 8. 1 Cor. v. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 8.

i Neh. vi. 16. Job xv. 21, 22. xviii. 5—12. Ps. lxxiii. 5—9. 17—20. Is. xxi. 4. Dan. v. 5, 6.

|| Or, *at the presence of.* i. 12.

7 ¶ And the king, arising from the banquet of wine [j] in his wrath, *went* into the palace-garden: and [k] Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; [l] for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

k Prov. xiv. 19. Is. lx. 14. Rev. iii. 9.

j 1 Sam. xx. 7. 9. xxv. 17. Ps. cxii. 10. Prov. xix. 12. Dan. iii. 19.

this diabolical vice. (*Notes, Dan.* iv. 34—37. v. 18—28.) They who have flattered them in prosperity, will prove "miserable comforters" in the time of their distress: worldly pleasures will soon become tasteless, and even nauseous, to those who have a conscience burdened with guilt or appalled with terror: and even the wise men of this world have often foreseen the ruin of those, who engage in the unequal contest with the church of God.—But the depth of the believer's distress is the seed-time of his joys; and every victory and comfort is to him an earnest of his final triumph and felicity. The honour, which the Father delights to confer upon his beloved Son, is a pledge of the security and salvation of all whom he represents, and who commit their cause into his hand. Their bitterest enemies shall promote, and be constrained to witness their exaltation; and to know, "what shall be "done to the men whom the LORD delighteth to honour;" and how much their "eternal weight of glory" exceeds the worthless, transient honours of the world: while the sight shall increase the anguish and despair of those, who expected to be gratified in effecting their misery and destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 2—4. While the king repeatedly urged Esther to make her request; and, in language more expressive than before, promised to grant it, though it were to the value of half his kingdom; (v. 3. 6;) she, with the greatest modesty and respect, and in the most simple and affecting manner, besought him, that her own life might be spared, and the lives of her people, which were all involved in one common danger. Without complaining of his conduct in any degree, she stated, that she and her people had been sold as sheep for the slaughter; alluding to the money, which Haman had offered to pay into the treasury for their destruction: she quoted the words of the unrighteous decree, "to be destroyed, to be slain, and "to perish," as proving that her life, as well as those of the other Jews, was certainly in danger: (iii. 13:) and she added, that if they had been only sold for slaves, she would not have interposed; though the enemy could never have made up the loss, which the king would have sustained by thus oppressing his peaceable and industrious subjects. Some interpret the last clause to mean, that if the sufferings of the enslaved Jews, though extreme and undeserved, had not been likewise detrimental to the king's interest, Esther would have held her peace. The whole speech, however, was replete with natural eloquence, and suited to affect and persuade the king.

V. 5. Perhaps Ahasuerus at first scarcely recollected his edict against the Jews, or was not aware of its consequences; or he did not immediately perceive that Esther referred to it: and therefore he could not conceive that any one could be so daring, as to attempt the life of his queen, as well as the destruction of his subjects. The language is peculiarly expressive of astonishment and indignation. 'In the Hebrew the words are, "Who is he, whose heart '"hath filled him to do so?". A speech like that in the 'New Testament, (*Acts* v. 3,) "Why hath Satan filled '"thine heart?" Made thee so daring and presumptuous.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, Acts* v. 1—11; *v.* 3.)

V. 6. The events, and presages, of the morning no doubt tended to increase Haman's terror on this occasion. He had found, that the king "delighted to honour" Mordecai the *Jew;* he now discovered that the queen was a *Jewess*, and strongly attached to her people; he had heard the king repeatedly promise to "grant her request to the "half of his kingdom;" and he could not but be aware that his own ruin was impending.

V. 7. We may suppose, that at the moment when Esther mentioned "this wicked Haman," as the enemy of her and of her people, the whole transaction of the edict

8 Then the king returned out of the palace-garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was
m i. 6. Is. xlix. 23. fallen upon [m] the bed whereon Esther *was*. Then said the king, Will he
* Heb. *with me.* force the queen also *before me in the house? As the word went out of the
n vi. 12. Job ix. 24. Is. xxii. 17. king's mouth, they [n] covered Haman's face.
o i. 10. *Harbona.* p vi. 14. 2 Kings ix. 32, 33. 9 And [o] Harbonah, [p] one of the chamberlains, said before the king,
q Behold also, the [†] gallows fifty cubits q v. 14. Job xxvii. 20—23. † Heb. *tree.*
high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, [r] who had spoken good for the r ii. 21—23. vi. 2.
king, standeth in the house of Haman.
Then the king said, [s] Hang him thereon. s ix. 25. 1 Sam. xvii. 51. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15, 16. xxxv. 8. xxxvii. 35, 36. lxxiii. 19. Prov. xi. 5, 6. Dan. vi. 7, 24. Judg. xv. 7. Ez. v. 13. Zech. vi. 8.

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. [t] Then was the king's wrath pacified.

rushed into the king's mind, and appeared to him in its true colours; and that he was filled with rage, when he reflected how his worthless favourite had seduced him into a measure, calculated to ruin his kingdom, to take away the life of his beloved queen, and exceedingly to tarnish his own reputation; and that he walked about in agitation of mind, not knowing what could be done in such an emergency.

V. 8. Haman had prostrated himself against the couch, on which Esther reclined at the banquet. His only design was to deprecate, with the most abject submission, her displeasure, and to intreat her to intercede for his life. But the king, regarding him as one capable of any villany, and growing more enraged by reflecting upon his former machinations; suspected him, or professed to suspect him, of having designs against the queen's honour also.—This word sufficiently informed the attendants of the king's determination: and they directly treated Haman as a condemned criminal, who was never more to see the face of the king, or even the light of the sun, but to be hurried away to immediate death.

V. 9. Harbonah, probably when he went to call Haman to the banquet, had seen the gallows, and discovered for what purpose it was prepared. Haman had doubtless been greatly envied for his prosperity, and hated for his insolence, in the midst of all the homage which was paid him. But now that the king's mind was evidently alienated from him, the courtiers were glad to please him and the queen, by concurring in Haman's downfal.

V. 10. It is immaterial to us, whether Haman died by crucifixion, or was strangled, or put to death in some other way, before he was suspended on the gibbet. (*Notes, Deut.* xxi. 22, 23. *Josh.* viii. 29. 2 *Sam.* xvii. 23. xviii. 9. xxi. 9—14, *v.* 9. *Matt.* xxvii. 3—5. *Gal.* iii. 10—14.) Crucifixion however seems to have been a Roman punishment; at least not to have been in use at this early period. (*Note, Ps.* xxii. 16—18, *v.* 16.) It is enough to know, that he suffered the punishment which he had devised for Mordecai. *Nec lex est æquior ulla, quam necis artifices arte perire sua.* 'There is no law more equitable, than that the devisers of 'death should perish by their own art.'—Thus "the right-"eous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh "in his stead." (*Note, Prov.* xi. 8.)—'In this wonderful 'deliverance of the Jewish nation, there was no extraor-'dinary manifestation of God's power, no particular cause or agent, that was in its working advanced above the ordinary pitch of nature; and yet the contrivance, or suit-'ing of those ordinary agents appointed by God, is more 'admirable than if the same end had been effected by 'means truly miraculous.' *Dr. Jackson* in *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The repeated promises, even of weak, mutable, and selfish men, encourage us to make our requests to them with great expectation of success: much more then should the exceedingly great and precious promises of the unchangeable God, embolden us to present many and large petitions to him, in behalf of ourselves and others, and with the full assurance of receiving far more than we ask. —If the love of life inspire such earnest and pathetick pleadings, with those "who can only kill the body;" how fervent and importunate should our continual prayers be to "Him, who is able to destroy both body and soul in "hell!" And how affectionately should we pray for the eternal salvation of our relatives, friends, and neighbours, and all around us!—In supplicating the great men of this world, we must be very cautious not to withhold proper respect, or to give needless offence; even just complaints must be suppressed, and that asked as a great favour, which might equitably be demanded as a debt. But when we approach the King of kings, provided we come with humble reverence and uprightness of heart, we cannot ask or expect too much: for though nothing but wrath is our due, he is able and willing to "do exceeding abundantly "above all that we ask or think."—Persecution is as impolitick as it is unjust: nor would the wealth of both the Indies compensate the temporal loss, which must arise to every prince, who puts to death his conscientious, industrious subjects, immures them in prisons, drives them out of his dominions, harasses them with oppressions, and tempts them to hypocrisy.—Men often commit crimes without remorse, which, when described in their nature and consequences by proper language, or pointed out to them in the conduct of others, appear most horrible and atrocious: and when they find upon reflection, the nature and effects of their own heedless conduct, they are filled with anguish and remorse. (*Notes, 2 Sam.* xii. 1—14. *Ps.* li. 1—6.) Yet alas! their indignation frequently falls exclusively upon their tempters or accomplices, instead of producing unreserved self-condemnation and abhorrence. But when such convictions are excited in those in authority, though they do not terminate in true repentance, they may yet produce many salutary effects, by inducing them to punish atrocious criminals, to protect the innocent, and to rectify grievous abuses.—Those who are most insolent in prosperity, are commonly the most abject in adversity: and the enemies of God shall all be brought down before his people, and made to know his love towards them. (*Ex.* xi. 8. *Is.* lx. 14. *Rev.* iii. 9.)—When men have proved themselves capable of the most daring

CHAP. VIII.

Haman's estate is given to Esther; and Mordecai, as her near relation, is preferred in Haman's stead, 1, 2. Esther, with tears, intreats the king to reverse the decree against the Jews, 3—6. The king authorizes the Jews to defend themselves, and sends letters to that effect, throughout the provinces, 7—14. The honours conferred on Mordecai, and the joy of the Jews, 15—17.

ON that day did the king Ahasuerus [a] give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy, unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai [b] came before the king; for Esther had told what he *was* unto her.

2 And the king took off [c] his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And [d] Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

3 ¶ And Esther spake yet again before the king, and [e] fell down at his feet, and [*] besought him with tears, to put away [f] the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.

4 Then the king [g] held out the golden sceptre towards Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king,

5 And said, If it please the king, [h] and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing *seem* right before the king, and [i] I *be* pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the [†] letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, [‡] which he wrote to destroy the Jews, which *are* in all the king's provinces.

6 For [k] how can I [§] endure to see [l] the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

a Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ps. xxxix. 6. xlix. 6—13. Prov. xiii. 22. xxviii. 8. Ec. ii. 18, 19. Luke xii. 20.
b i. 14. ii. 7. 15.
c iii. 10. Gen. xli. 42. Is. xxii. 19—22. Luke xv. 22.
d 2 Sam. ix. 7—10. Ec. ii. 18, 19—26. v. 13, 14.
e 1 Sam. xxv. 24. 2 Kings iv. 27.
* Heb. *she wept and besought him.* Is. xxxviii. 3. Hos. xii. 4. Heb. v. 7.
f iii. 8—15. vii. 4.
g iv. 11. v. 2.
h vii. 3. Ex. xxxiii. 13. 16. 1 Sam. xx. 29.
i ii. 4. 17.
† Heb. *device.* iii. 12, 13.
‡ Or, *who wrote.*
k Gen. xliv. 34. Jer. iv. 19. ix. 1. Luke xix. 41, 42. Rom. ix. 2, 3. x. 1.
§ Heb. *be able that I may see.*
l vii. 4. Neh. ii. 3.

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and horrid crimes; they have no reason to expect any other, but to be suspected where they are not guilty, and to have the worst constructions put upon their most innocent actions.—The favour of men is deceitful and precarious: the higher wicked ambition climbs, the more rapid and terrible will be its fall. When haughty favourites, either of mighty princes, or of fickle multitudes, begin to totter upon their slippery eminence, all hands join to hurry them down, either out of envy, revenge, hatred, or similar ambition: and even they, who have most caressed and delighted to honour them, will often as much delight in their misery and ruin. Thus "the fear of the wicked "cometh upon him," and that suddenly: he is "taken "in his own net, and entangled in his own devices;" and "when he perishes there is shouting." (*Notes, Prov.* x. 24. xi. 10, 11.)—At the day of final retribution, when the whole wickedness of the ungodly shall be discovered, and the justice of God displayed in their everlasting punishment; all the righteous shall joyfully exclaim, "So let all "thine enemies perish, O LORD!" (*Notes, Rev.* xviii. 20. xix. 1—6,) but those who love him "shall shine forth as "the sun, in the kingdom of their Father."

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Some of Esther's attendants were acquainted with Mordecai's relation to her; (*Note*, iv. 4;) and the king knew that he was of Jewish extraction: (vi. 10:) but he did not know that Mordecai was Esther's own cousin, and had been as a father to her, till on this occasion she disclosed it to him. Mordecai in consequence was introduced to Ahasuerus, and preferred by him: and as he had been so kind a friend to the queen when she was in destitute circumstances, and had also preserved the king's life, none could have fairer pretensions. The ring with the royal signet seems to have continued with Haman, as denoting the high offices which he bore under the king, till he was deposed and condemned; when, being taken from him, it was given to Mordecai as his successor. (*Notes*, iii. 10, 11. *Gen.* xli. 41—43. *Is.* xxii. 20—25. *Jer.* xxii. 24—27.) Haman's large estate also, being confiscated for his crimes, was given to Esther, and managed for her by Mordecai: (*Notes, Job* xxvii. 13—23, *vv.* 16, 17. *Prov.* xiii. 22. xxviii. 8. *Ec.* ii. 24—26:) and if that haughty man could have foreseen these events, the prospect would have embittered his life, and even augmented the anguish of his death.

V. 3—6. Haman was dead, Mordecai was advanced, and the queen's person was protected: but the edict against the Jews remained in force, and their numerous enemies, in every province, would certainly endeavour to carry it into execution; so that Esther had not yet obtained the deliverance of her people, and that lay nearest to her heart. Probably, she was sometimes called for by the king: but to shew that she was interested in the concerns of her nation, even more than in her own safety, she again ventured uncalled into his presence to plead for them. She seems to have been peculiarly earnest on this occasion; for she fell at his feet, and besought him with tears to grant her request. It may be supposed, that Ahasuerus hesitated in this perplexing case; as not knowing how to extricate himself with credit from so great a difficulty, and as reluctant to proclaim to all the world the folly, into which he had been seduced. But Esther, with great discretion, avoided every intimation that the king himself had issued the decree, and expressed herself as if it had been not only Haman's device, but altogether his work, even as if the edict had been forged by him. Indeed it had originated in his pride and revenge; his artful insinuations had decoyed the king to give an inconsiderate assent to it; and he had framed it in his own words, and to answer his own purposes. (*Notes*, iii. 6—15.)—'If she herself were 'spared, she represents to him, that it would break her 'heart to see all her kindred, nay her whole nation, de-'stroyed.' *Bp. Patrick.* Her plea, and the expressions

7 Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, [m] Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and [n] him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, [o] in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, [p] may no man reverse.

9 Then were [q] the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, (that *is*, the month Sivan,) on the three and twentieth *day* thereof; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, unto the Jews, [r] and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces, which *are* from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, [s] and according to their language.

10 And he wrote [t] in the king Ahasuerus's name, and sealed *it* with the king's ring; and sent letters [u] by posts on horseback, *and* riders on mules, camels, *and* [x] young dromedaries;

11 Wherein the king granted the Jews which *were* in every city [y] to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, *both* little ones and women, [z] and *to take* the spoil of them for a prey;

12 Upon [a] one day, in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, *namely*, [b] upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar.

13 The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, *was* [*] published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready

m i. Prov. xiii. 22.
n vii. 10. Gal. iii. 13.
o iii. 12. 1 Kings xxi. 8.
p 5. i. 19. Dan. vi. 8. 12—15. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Heb. vi. 17, 18.
q iii. 12.
r i. 1. 22. iii. 12, 13. Dan. vi. 1.
s i. 22. iii. 12. 2 Kings xviii. 26. Dan. iv. 1. 1 Cor. xiv. 9—11.
t 1 Kings xxi. 8. Ec. viii. 4. Dan. iv. 1.
u iii. 13. 15. 2 Chr. xxx. 6. Job ix. 25. Jer. li. 21.
x Is. lx. 6. lxvi. 20. Jer. ii. 23.
y ix. 2—16.
z iii. 13. ix. 10, 15, 16. Is. x. 6.
a ix. 1. Ex. xv. 9, 10. Judg. i. 6, 7.
b iii. 13—15.
* Heb. *revealed*.

used in urging it, are peculiarly pathetick and emphatical, and suited to excite the deepest and most tender sympathy; as well as to shew her fervent affection for her people, as the people of God.

V. 8. The decree against the Jews was irrevocable: but another edict might counteract its operation, and that would also become irreversible: and Esther and Mordecai were allowed to frame one for the purpose, as explicit as they pleased; and to ratify it in the same manner. Thus, that most absurd law, or constitution, made it 'necessary to authorize a civil war throughout this vast empire; both parties acting *by* and *against* the king's authority, at the same time!—The maxim in our government, that 'no act 'can be so framed, but that the same authority which 'enacted it may repeal it,' is immensely more suited to the state of human nature: for no human wisdom can foresee all the effects of any regulation, till experience has evinced them. While the king had *legal* authority to put the evil counsellor to death, to confiscate his estate, and to prefer his most hated enemy to his high offices, so that no objection seems to have been advanced by his nobles and counsellors; he had not the legal power to reverse the obnoxious decree! (*Notes*, ii. 1. iii. 10, 11.)—'Thus he chose to fill his realm with blood, rather than 'revoke a rash decree.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9. (*Notes*, 1, 2. iii. 12—15.) More than two months had past, since Haman's decree was framed. (iii. 7.) Probably Ethiopia or the south of Egypt is intended.

V. 10. These letters were sent by *runners*, (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxx. 6—9, *v* 6;) or by horsemen. The words for the other animals, on which some of the messengers rode, are unusual, and learned men are by no means agreed about the meaning of them. Probably they were derived from the Persian language, or from that of some of the eastern nations. But the greatest speed was needful in this emergency, and every method was taken to secure it. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'He sent men on horseback, ... and upon other 'creatures as swift as horses, and upon mules both young 'and old, according as the places were nearer or further 'off. So he ordered the letters to be sent with great speed 'by the post, which carried them from stage to stage, till 'they came to the place whither they were directed.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11—13. This last decree evidently shewed the king's intentions, though the former edict remained in force: so that they who assaulted the Jews, were, *in reality*, though not *formally*, rebelling against his authority. The Jews were not allowed to assault their enemies: but they might *legally* assemble and combine in defending themselves, and slay any number of those who attacked them. As the children and women were included in Haman's decree, they were also mentioned in this: but the Jews did not avail themselves of the clause; neither did they take any spoil. (iii. 13. *Note*, ix. 6—10.) Haman aimed at extermination, they only at self-defence. If this edict had not been granted, the Jews would have been punishable for taking previous measures in order to defend themselves; so that they could not have engaged, with concert or prospect of success, in any measure for that purpose: and even if any had escaped the massacre, they would have been exposed as criminals to the sword of the magistrate, for resisting the execution of the law. They might, and doubtless would, when rendered desperate, have sold their lives as dear as possible; but they could have had little hopes of

against that day, to [c] avenge themselves on their enemies.

14 *So* the posts that rode upon mules *and* camels went out, [d] being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at [e] Shushan the palace.

15 ¶ And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in [f] royal apparel of [†] blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and [g] the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

16 The [h] Jews had [i] light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.

17 And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, [k] a feast and a good day. And [l] many of the people of the land became Jews; [m] for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

c Judg. xvi. 28. Ps. xxxvii. 14, 15. lxviii. 23. xcii. 10, 11. cxlix. 6—9. Luke xviii. 7. Rev. vi. 10. xix. 2.
d 1 Sam. xxi. 8. Ec. ix. 10.
e i. 2. ii. 3. iii. 15. Neh. i. 1. Dan. viii. 2.
f v. 1. vi. 8. 11. Gen. xli. 42. Matt. vi. 29. xi. 8. Luke xvi. 19.
† Or, *violet*. i. 6.
g iii. 15. Prov. xxix. 2.
h iv. 1—3. 16. Ps. xxx. 5—11.
i ix. 17. Ps. xviii. 28. xcvii. 11. Prov. iv. 18, 19. Is. xxx. 39. xxxv. 10.
k ix. 17. 19. 22. 1 Sam. xxv. 8. Neh. viii. 10.
l Ps. xviii. 43. Zech. viii. 20—23.
m Gen. xxxv. 5. Ex. xv. 16. Deut. ii. 25. xi. 25.

escaping, when overwhelmed by numbers, who were countenanced by the governors in every province. But now the advantage was entirely on their side: as none who valued the king's favour would injure them; and they might prepare with union and concert to repel the assault of others, and to inflict deserved punishment on their inveterate enemies. (*Marg. Ref.* c.)

V. 14. (*Note*, 10.) Though this decree was ratified above eight months before the appointed day; yet there would be time little enough to publish it throughout all the provinces of this immense empire, considering the great distance of many of them from Shushan; and to give the Jews opportunity to prepare arms, and take proper measures for their own preservation. The king himself therefore hastened the messengers, as dreading the consequences of the former edict.

V. 15. Mordecai, being now publickly recognized as the chief minister and favourite of the king, went from the palace, arrayed according to his rank, in conformity to the customs of the country. (*Marg. Ref.* f.) It seems that the people of Shushan in general, having a better opinion of his integrity and capacity than of Haman's, were greatly pleased with the change: (*Notes, Prov.* xi. 10, 11. xxviii. 12. 28. xxix. 2:) though the sequel shews, that there was a strong party of rancorous enemies to the Jews, residing there.—*A great crown*, &c.] 'Not like that 'of the kings, but such a coronet as was worn by the peers 'of the realm.' *Bp. Patrick.* Perhaps it was one of the *insignia* of the chief minister under the king.

V. 16. *Had light*, &c.] That is, *prosperity and hope.* The dark cloud which had long hung over the nation of the Jews was dispelled, and the returning favour of the king, in answer to their prayers, was a token of the Lord's care of them. So that their hopes revived, and they began, as it were, to walk in the sunshine, and were filled with gladness, and treated with respect by those who had despised them; being evidently in favour both with God and man. (*Notes, Ps.* xxx. 9—12. xcvii. 11. *Prov.* iv. 18, 19.)

V. 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) When the people saw the interpositions of Providence in behalf of the Jews, many were convinced that God was with them, and that they would certainly prevail in the contest: being therefore afraid of perishing among their enemies, and desirous of sharing the rising prosperity of his people, they embraced their religion, and united interests with them. We may suppose that some were true converts, and others only formal professors, as it commonly happens in such cases. Haman's plot, however, to destroy the Jews, was over-ruled to increase their numbers. (*Notes, Zech.* viii. 20—23. *Acts* xii. 1—4. 24.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Many of those, who most prosper in the world, would have little alacrity in their pursuits, or joy in their possessions, if they could foresee to whom their riches would devolve, and what use would be made of them. It is, however, a good thing when, consistently with justice, that wealth, which has pampered pride and luxury, and increased insolence and oppression, is transferred to those, who will improve it to the glory of God and the benefit of mankind.—No advancement should render us forgetful of our indigent relatives, or indifferent about the publick good, and the peace and prosperity of the church. These especially should be dearer to us, than life itself: and when we have obtained our requests for ourselves; we should be the more fervent in prayer for our brethren, and in using our influence and venturing all consequences for their good.—If we would affect others, we should study to get our own hearts suitably impressed; and in many cases, we may be more importunate in asking favours for our friends and brethren, and for the poor, than we ought to be for ourselves.—It is a good and cogent plea, when we are praying for the conversion of our children or relatives, to say, "How can I endure to see the evil, that shall come "upon them? How can I endure to see the destruction "of my kindred?" And it forms an argument equally forcible, to induce us to use every means for their good, with assiduity and perseverance.—Bad examples, unjust laws, rash projects, and wicked books, often prove an extensive and durable curse to the world, when the authors of them are removed: no wisdom suffices to prevent their fatal tendency; and, as we must all be answerable for the consequences of our misconduct, this should render us very circumspect, lest our guilt should accumulate even after our death. (*Note, Luke* xvi. 27—31.)

V. 7—17.

Every regulation in society, however apparently reasonable and beneficial, which does not advert to the fallen nature of man, will, on trial, be found unsuitable to his real condition, and inconsistent with his best interests: and all provisions, made to humour the ambition and passions of princes, will eventually embarrass and ensnare them. We are, however, indispensably bound to adopt

CHAP. IX.

On the day appointed, the Jews, aided by the rulers, slay their enemies; and among the rest five hundred men in Shushan, and Haman's ten sons, 1—10. The king hearing this, at Esther's request, allows the Jews in Shushan to stand against their enemies on the day following, when three hundred more are slain; and he causes Haman's sons to be hanged on the gallows erected by Haman, 11—15. The Jews throughout the provinces slay seventy-five thousand men, 16. They rejoice with feasting on the two following days, 17—19. These days are appointed by Esther and Mordecai as an annual festival, in commemoration of this deliverance, and called the feast of Purim, 20—32.

a iii. 7. 13. viii. 12. NOW [a] in the twelfth month, that *is*, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that

b Acts xii. 11. the enemies of the Jews [b] hoped to

c Deut. xxxii. 36. 2 Sam. xxii. 41. Ps. xxx. 11. Is. xiv. 1, 2. lx. 14—16. Rev. xi. 18. have power over them; ([c] though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;)

d 10. viii. 11. 2 The Jews [d] gathered themselves together in their cities, throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus,

e Deut. ii. 30. Josh. xi. 20. Is. viii. 9. to lay hand on such [e] as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for [f] the fear of them fell upon all people.

f viii. 17. Ex. xxiii. 27. Josh. ii. 9.

3 And all [g] the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and [*] officers of the king, helped the Jews; because [h] the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.

g iii. 12. viii. 9. Ezra viii 36. Dan. iii. 2. vi. 1, 2.

* Heb. *those which did the business that* belonged to *the king.*

h iii. 2—6. viii. 5.

4 For Mordecai *was* great in the king's house, and [i] his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai [k] waxed greater and greater.

i Josh. vi. 27. 1 Sam. ii. 30. 1 Chr. xiv. 17 Zeph. iii. 19. Matt. iv. 24.

k 2 Sam. iii. 1. 1 Chr. xi. 9. Ps. i. 3. Prov. iv. 18. Is. ix. 7.

5 Thus the Jews [l] smote all their enemies with [m] the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did [†] what they would unto those that hated them.

l Ps. xviii. 34—40. 47, 48. xx. 7, 8. cxlix. 6—9. 2 Thes. i. 6.

m Jer. xviii. 21.

† Heb. *according to their will.*

6 And in [n] Shushan the palace, the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men.

n *See on* iii. 15.

7 And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha,

8 And Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,

9 And Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha,

o v. 11. Ex. xx. 5. Job xviii. 18, 19. xxvii. 13—15. Ps. xxi. 10. cix. 12, 13.

10 The [o] ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the [p] enemy of the

p iii. 1. vii. 4. 6. Ex. xvii. 16.

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every method of preventing the fatal effects of our past mistakes, or crimes; even though we should be constrained to proclaim our own folly to the world: and much expedition should be used, when the lives of men are in danger, or their minds distracted with terrors.—If it was proper, that the decree of Ahasuerus should be communicated to every nation in its own language; how reasonable and necessary is it, that the holy law and gracious gospel of our God should be put into every one's hands in his own tongue!—Those who sow in tears and prayers, may expect speedily to reap with joy.—External decorations are insignificant in the judgment of the wise and pious: yet they may properly distinguish those in authority; and, while they procure them respect from the multitudes, who look no further, they should remind them of the duties to which their dignities call them.—The preferment of wise and pious men ought to be matter of rejoicing to all: but the people of God have the most cause for gladness. They may expect to be delivered from the darkness of oppression, to enjoy the light of peace and prosperity; and to meet with honour, in some measure proportioned to the contempt, which they before endured. And when believers "have rest, and walk in the fear of the Lord, and "in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they will be multi-"plied." Indeed, the attempts of Satan and his agents, to destroy the church by cruel persecutions, have uniformly tended to the increase of true Christians. May the Lord speedily "destroy every enemy who hath done evil "in his sanctuary:" may the princes of the earth become nursing fathers to his church: may his people have "light, "and joy, and honour, a feast and a good day" on earth, anticipating the joy and gladness of heaven: and may Jesus himself reign, by the power of his grace, wherever the sun diffuses his beams; and may he fill the earth with truth and righteousness! Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is.* xiv. 1—6. *Rev.* xi. 7—12.)—As the Jews were not charged with exceeding the limits, assigned them in the king's edict, it may be concluded that they assaulted none, except such as appeared in arms against them: but when they were attacked, they vigorously pursued their advantage. Neither the fear of God, nor that of the king, could overcome the desperate enmity of numbers against the Jews, whom they had hoped to extirpate; so that, perhaps urged on by the enraged friends of Haman, and all his party, they attacked them on the day appointed, in every part of the empire: yet they were every where speedily intimidated, and yielded the Jews an easy and decisive victory.

V. 3, 4. The late decree, and the report which accompanied it of Mordecai's increasing greatness, rendered all the governors afraid of offending him, lest they should fall under the king's displeasure; so that they generally assisted the Jews, which gave them a decided advantage in the bloody contest. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5—10. The sons of Haman seem to have combined against the Jews, by way of revenging their father's death;

Jews, slew they; but [q] on the spoil laid they not their hand.

[q] 15, 16. viii. 11. Gen. xiv. 23. Rom. xii. 17. Phil. iv. 8.

11 ¶ On that day, the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace [*] was brought before the king.

[*] Heb. came.

12 And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now [r] what *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what *is* thy request further? and it shall be done.

[r] v. 6. vii. 2.

13 Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which *are* in Shushan to do to-morrow also [s] according unto this day's decree, and [t] let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows.

[s] viii. 11.

[t] Heb. *let men hang Haman's ten sons.* 2 Sam. xxi. 6. 9. Gal. iii. 13.

14 And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

15 For the Jews that *were* in Shushan, [t] gathered themselves together, on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan; [u] but on the prey they laid not their hand.

[t] 2. viii. 11. Ps. cxviii. 7—12.

[u] 10. 16. 1 Thes. v. 22. Heb. xiii. 5.

16 But the other Jews, that *were* in the king's provinces, gathered themselves together, and [x] stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand; but they laid not their hands on the prey,

[x] viii. 11. Lev. xxvi. 7, 8.

17 On the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day [z] of the same rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

[z] Heb. *in it.*

18 But the Jews that *were* at Shushan assembled together [y] on the thirteenth *day* thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth *day* of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

[y] 1. 11. 13.

19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar *a day of* [z] gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

[z] 22. viii. 17. Deut. xvi. 11. 14. Neh. viii. 10—12. Ps. cxviii. 11—16. Luke xi. 41. Rev. xi. 10.

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as the king and Mordecai were out of their reach. At the head of their retainers, probably, they led on the attack in the royal city of Shushan, but they were all slain, with five hundred of their party.—As the Jews professed only to defend their own lives, when they "did what they would "unto those that hated them;" they would not take their spoil, or any part of it: and there is no intimation, that they injured their families, or any individual, who was not found in arms against them. (*Notes*, iii. 12—15. viii. 11—13.)

V. 13. As it cannot be supposed that Esther was actuated by revenge in this request: it is probable she had learned from Mordecai, that Haman's retainers still formed a faction, not only dangerous to the Jews, but to the state; and were prepared to renew the attack on the next day. She therefore desired, that the Jews might defend themselves, and pursue their assailants, in order that the party might be crushed or finally intimidated: and also, that the bodies of Haman's sons might be suspended on the gallows, prepared by their father; to shew all persons concerned, that by assaulting the Jews, they would expose themselves to the indignation of the king. (*Note*, vii. 10.)

V. 15. 'Some that appeared against them, perhaps 'escaped their hands, whom they might meet withal the 'next day.' ... They 'in the conflict escaped by flight, and 'were now found out and killed.' *Bp. Patrick.*—It does not however appear, that they were authorized by the new decree, to slay any, but those who assaulted them, or that they actually did so. Some think, that many of those slain in Shushan, and in other parts of the empire, were Amalekites, and that thus the prediction, concerning the utter destruction of Amalek, was exactly accomplished. (*Notes*, iii. 1. *Ex.* xvii. 14—16.)

V. 16. *Seventy-five thousand*, &c.] All this large number lost their lives, *through* the pride and revenge of one wicked man, but *by* their own malice and enmity to the worshippers of JEHOVAH. Thus the power and spirits of the enemies of the Jews were broken, and peace and rest were prepared for them. It is not recorded that any Jews were slain on this occasion; and probably their preservation was as remarkable, as the destruction of their assailants.—They were indeed placed in the most extraordinary circumstances: but as they were sanctioned in what they did by the king's authority, and stood in defence of their own lives; as they slew none but those who attacked them, and universally declined availing themselves of the king's permission to enrich themselves with the spoil; they must be allowed to have acted in an unexceptionable manner; and were no more chargeable with the blood shed by them, than if they had been engaged in the most necessary defensive war: and indeed it was one of the most necessary defensive wars, that ever any people or nation engaged in. —'Thereby we may judge what a great number of Jews 'still remained in other countries, and did not return to 'their own. ... It is likely, Mordecai by his letters, had 'charged them not to make use of the liberty the king 'had given them to take the spoil; (viii. 11;) because they 'universally avoided it.' *Bp. Patrick.*—It may be supposed, that the enemies of the Jews, in the vicinity of Judea, did not venture to assault them.

V. 17—19. *Note*, 21—32.

20 And Mordecai [a] wrote these things; and sent letters unto all the Jews that *were* [b] in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, *both* nigh and far;

21 To establish *this* among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly;

22 As [c] the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them [d] from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of [e] sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.

23 And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them:

24 Because Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, [f] the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast [g] Pur, that *is*, the lot, to [*] consume them, and to destroy them;

25 But [†] when *Esther* came before the king, he commanded by letters, that his wicked device which he devised against the Jews, should [h] return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

26 Wherefore [i] they called these days Purim, after the name of [‡] Pur. Therefore for all the words of this [j] letter, and *of that* which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them,

27 The Jews ordained, and took upon them, [k] and upon their seed, and upon [l] all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not [ł] fail, that they would keep these two days, according to their writing, and according to their *appointed* time every year;

28 And *that* these days *should be* [m] remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and *that* these days of Purim should not [ll] fail from among the Jews, nor [n] the memorial of them [*] perish from their seed.

29 Then Esther the queen, [o] the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all [†] authority, to [p] confirm this second letter of Purim.

30 And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to [q] the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* [r] words of peace and truth,

31 To confirm these days of Purim in their times *appointed*, according as Mordecai the Jew, and Esther the queen, had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for [‡] themselves, [s] and for their seed; the matters of [t] the fastings and their cry.

32 And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

[a] Ex. xvii. 14. Deut. xxxi. 19—22. 1 Chr. xvi. 12. Ps. cxxiv. 1—3. cxlv. 4—12. 2 Cor. i. 10, 11.
[b] i. 1. 22. iii. 12. viii. 9
[c] iii. 12, 13. Ex. xiii. 3—8. Ps. ciii. 2. Is. xii. 1, 2. xiv. 3.
[d] Ps. xxx. 11. Matt. v. 4. John xvi. 20—22.
[e] 19. Neh. viii. 10. 12. Luke xi. 41. Acts ii. 44—46. Gal. ii. 10.
[f] 10. iii. 5—13.
[g] iii. 7.
[*] Heb. *crush.*
[†] Heb. *when she came.* ii. 13, 14. vii. 5—10. viii. 1—14.
[h] Ps. vii. 16. cix. 17, 18. cxl. 9. cxli. 10. Matt. xxi. 44.
[i] Num. xvi. 40. Ez. xxxix. 11.
[‡] That is, *Lot.*
[j] 20.
[k] Deut. v. 3. xxix. 14, 15. Josh. ix. 15. 1 Sam. xxx. 25. 2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2.
[l] viii. 17. Is. lvi. 3. 6. Zech. ii. 11. viii. 23.
[ł] Heb. *pass.*
[m] Ex. xii. 17. Ps. lxxviii. 5—7. cii. 2.
[ll] Heb. *pass.*
[n] Ex. xiii. 8, 9. Josh. iv. 7. Zech. vi. 14.
[*] Heb. *be ended.*
[o] ii. 15.
[†] Heb. *strength.*
[p] 20. viii. 10.
[q] i. 1. viii. 9.
[r] Is. xxxix. 8. Zech. viii. 19.
[‡] Heb. *their souls.* [s] 27.
[t] iv. 3. 16. Jer. iii. 2—9.

V. 20. "Mordecai wrote these things," or the history contained in this book, as the words most obviously imply; and not merely the letters afterwards mentioned, as many understand it. It is most probable, that he wrote an account of these interesting transactions, and sent it with his letters into all the provinces of the empire. This, no doubt, included Judea and Jerusalem; the inhabitants of which were as much aimed at in Haman's decree, as the Jews dispersed in other countries were.—The contrast between his style and that of Nehemiah, is very remarkable. The latter is interspersed with ejaculations and pious reflections; (*Notes*, *Neh.* ii. 4. iv. 4, 5. v. 19. vi. 5—9. xiii. 14. 20—22, *v.* 22. 31;) the former treats of divine things, without any explicit mention of God and religion. (*Note*, iv. 13, 14.) The different situation in which the two writers were placed, and the objects which they aimed at in writing, might have as much influence in causing this difference, as their different dispositions. Nehemiah's manner is in general most worthy of imitation: yet in some circumstances men are not to be censured, if they deem it expedient to imitate Mordecai. (*Preface.*)

V. 21—32. These verses contain the institution of the feast of Purim, which the Jews observe to this day. When the second decree of Ahasuerus was published, they had in every place "joy, and gladness, a feast, and a good day." (*Notes*, viii. 16, 17.) And when they prevailed in the contest in all parts of the empire, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, they with one common impulse observed the fourteenth as a festival, with joy and gladness. But the Jews at Shushan were, on that day likewise, engaged in conflict, and the fifteenth of the month was their day of rest and joy and festivity. (17—19.) Mordecai therefore wrote to his people in every place, proposing the observance of both these days annually, in commemoration of their deliverance, by Jews and proselytes, throughout their dispersions, and to all future generations. And upon the receipt of these letters, the Jews every where consented to the proposal. Yet it seems, that they afterwards grew negligent: and therefore *a second letter* was written, with all authority, by Esther and Mordecai, enjoining the observance; which was accompanied "with words of peace "and truth" (30); that is, with affectionate good wishes,

CHAP. X.

The greatness of Ahasuerus, and the advancement and usefulness of Mordecai, 1—3.

AND the king Ahasuerus [a] laid a tribute upon the land, and *upon* [b] the isles of the sea.

[a] i. 1. viii. 9. Luke ii. 1.
[b] Gen. x. 5. Ps. lxxii. 10. Is. xxiv. 15. Dan. xi. 18.

prayers, and congratulations; and with wholesome counsels and instructions. The festival therefore was appointed by authority and by royal proclamation, yet under the direction and according to the mind of the Spirit of God. It was evidently proper to perpetuate the memory of so extraordinary a deliverance: and no doubt Esther and Mordecai did right in requiring the Jews on this great occasion, thus to keep it in remembrance, and transmit the memorial of it to their posterity. It was appointed that these days should be spent in feasting and joy, in hospitality and liberality to the poor. But, as the prayers, which without doubt attended the fasting of the Jews in Shushan, are not mentioned; (*Note*, iv. 13, 14;) it cannot reasonably be questioned but that praises and thanksgivings to God at first attended their feasting and rejoicing, though not recorded. Even to this day the Jews are used to assemble, at the time appointed, in their synagogues, to read over this book of Esther, and to perform some acts of religious worship: but the feast has long since degenerated into a season of riot and excess.—The word *Purim* signifies *the lots*, (being the plural of the word *Pur*,) in remembrance of the lots cast by Haman, by which the day was deferred till time was allowed for defeating the whole design, and all his tokens were frustrated. (*Note*, iii. 7.) The fastings, lamentations, and prayers, which preceded the deliverance, were to be remembered with peculiar joy and gratitude (31). Some think it was intended, that the thirteenth day should be observed as a day of fasting and prayer, as an introduction to the festival; and the Jews at present profess to observe it as such: but the decree does not admit of this construction. Finally, the decree was added to this book of Esther, in which the history of these transactions was recorded, that the institution might never be forgotten.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The obstinate enemies and persecutors of the church are often left to act in the most infatuated manner; being urged on by malice, in opposition to the most evident dictates of prudence. (*Notes, Ex.* xiv. 5—9. 21—23.) For the records of history shew, that when the enemies of God's people have "hoped to have power over them," it has generally been "turned to the contrary," and they have gained the advantage "over them that hated them." Yet, neither observation, nor experience, nor demonstration, can subdue the enmity of the carnal mind, which seizes every opportunity of exerting itself: and even the protection of the ruling powers, if not very decisive, has generally been found insufficient to repress the spirit of persecution; though men commonly fear the displeasure of a king, or of powerful courtiers, far more than the wrath of almighty God.—The aggressor is answerable for all the blood shed in unjust war; provided the advantages gained by those, who stand in their own defence in a good cause, be not pushed on with revenge and cruelty: and when *whole nations* are attacked on account of religion, they have as good a right to defend themselves, as when the assault is made on any other unrighteous pretext.—But in every case the servants of God should manifest a disposition to humanity and disinterestedness: and frequently they ought to decline advantages, which might *legally* be obtained.—Prosperous sinners often bequeath their vices and enmities to their posterity; the effects of which remain, when their ill-gotten or abused affluence is dissipated: but children will never be *ruined* by the crimes of their parents, unless they imitate them. (*Notes, Ex.* xx. 5. *Ez.* xviii. 2—4. 14—17.)—The pertinacity of some offenders renders it necessary for the most merciful rulers to use severity: and the enmity and obstinacy of wicked men will display the justice of God in their final and eternal destruction, when the whole world will know all their crimes. But what dire effects to thousands may result from one malicious, or even incautious action! (*Notes*, iii. 8—11.)

V. 17—32.

When the sense of recent mercies is lively in our hearts, we should hasten to pour out our praises to the Lord. Gratitude to him, when united with temperance and liberal kindness to the poor, will sanctify our rejoicing, and render a day of feasting a good day to our own souls, and to our brethren. (*Notes, Neh.* viii. 9—12. *P. O.* 9—18.)—In reviewing our mercies, we should advert to our previous fears and distresses: we should consider, how our "sorrow hath been turned into joy;" what imminent danger of death or destruction we have escaped; what cries, prayers, confessions, and vows we have made; and with what remarkable circumstances our deliverances have been attended, our enemies disappointed, and our comforts renewed. When our mercies are personal, we should be careful that we do not by forgetfulness lose the comfort of them, and withhold from our God the glory due unto his name. When they are very publick and remarkable, rulers in church or state should unite authority, with admonitions and "words of peace and truth," to prevent the memorial of them from perishing; and that all, who shall eventually share the advantages, may join in rendering praise unto the Lord. But alas! the best institutions are liable to be perverted by human depravity; and to degenerate, not only into a form, but into an occasion of sin. Holy joy in God is supplanted by sensual indulgence and carnal mirth: under pretence of celebrating great deliverances, or even of commemorating the mysteries of redemption, professed Christians often behave, as if they were the devotees of Bacchus or of Momus; and, instead of "a good day" and a feast unto the Lord, they imitate the worshippers of the golden calf, and "sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play?" (*Note, Ex.* xxxii. 1. *P. O.* 1—14.) Nothing more deeply disgraces religion, or more injuriously stupifies the conscience, than such abuses. May the Lord then teach us to rejoice with that holy joy, which anticipates and prepares for the felicity of heaven!

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—3. These verses close the narrative, as it stands in the original Hebrew; and are very impro-

c 1 Kings xi. 41. xxii. 39.

2 And [c] all the acts of his power, and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, where-

a Heb. *made him great.* viii. 15. ix. 4. Ps. xviii. 35.

unto the king [a] advanced him, *are* they

d ii. 23. vi. 1. 1 Kings xiv. 19

not written [d] in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?

e Gen. xli. 40. 1 Sam. xxiii. 17. 2 Chr. xxviii. 7.

3 For Mordecai the Jew *was* [e] next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and [f] accepted of the multitude of his brethren, [g] seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

f iii. 2. Rom. xiv. 18.

g Neh. ii. 10. Ps. cxxii. 8, 9. Rom. ix. 2, 3. x. 1.

perly detached from the preceding chapter. As, however, they here stand, they begin another chapter, which is continued in the apocryphal supplement to this book, and opens with the fourth verse of the tenth chapter. The nature of Ahasuerus's *tribute*, and the acts of his power, are not declared in the sacred scripture; but the preferment of Mordecai proved no diminution of the king's greatness, or detriment to his subjects at large; and it was peculiarly advantageous to the Jews. (*Marg. Ref.* f, g.) Mordecai neither concealed his religion, nor grew shy of his people, though they were generally poor and despised. His authority seems to have been durable; and he was greatly honoured by all his brethren: for he used his power to protect them and promote their welfare; and he behaved towards them with all condescension and affection.—This book is placed in our Bibles the last of the historical records of the Jews; though the events recorded by Nehemiah seem to have occurred subsequent to most, if not all, in this book. (*Note, Neh.* ii. 6.)—However, for above four hundred years, that is, till the coming of the Messiah, the scriptural narrative of that favoured nation is suspended.—A compendious view of the most material events which are transmitted to us by other writers, is added, at the close of this book, in order to connect the Old Testament with the New.—It has been observed, that no pagan writer mentions any of the events recorded in the book of Esther: but, in fact, little comparatively is known concerning the Persian kings, or the Medo-Persian empire, except as connected with the history of Greece, and as recorded by Grecian historians: and it cannot be supposed, that the concerns of the Jews, as dispersed through the vast Empire of Persia, would at all attract the attention of that proud people, who considered all nations, except themselves, as Barbarians; and who peculiarly despised the Jews, as a bigotted and narrow-minded race; because they would not conform to any of their varied idolatries, or embrace any of their systems of sceptical philosophy.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The concerns of the despised worshippers of God are deemed more important by the Spirit of inspiration, than the greatest exploits of the most illustrious monarch upon earth.—Those who enjoy the benefits of civil government, are reasonably required to contribute to the expense of it: but it is happy for the people when taxes are imposed with justice and equality; and the advancement of wise and good men forms the most honourable part of the conduct of powerful princes.—Rulers should consult the advantage of all their peaceable subjects: but they are peculiarly required to seek the welfare of the church, by protecting it from oppression, and encouraging the worship and ordinances of God.—That greatness is truly honourable which is usefully employed: and when those fill exalted stations, who behave with humility and condescension, and who manifest a due regard to religion, and affection for their inferiors; they will be most likely to escape envy, and to be honoured and accepted by the multitude of their brethren.—Contentment, diligence, and fidelity in lower employments, form a hopeful presage of good conduct in more important and exalted situations: and though men of superior talents and excellency may for a season appear to be buried in obscurity; yet, if the Lord have work for them to do, he will bring them forth to more extensive usefulness. We should be thankful for equitable and peaceful rulers and temporal privileges; but all earthly grandeur is passing away:—may we then seek those riches and that glory, which shall endure to all eternity!

EPITOME

OF

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS,

AND

THE SURROUNDING NATIONS, AS FAR AS CONNECTED WITH THE JEWS,

FROM THE CLOSE OF THE SACRED CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

SOON after the events, recorded by Nehemiah and in the book of Esther, or perhaps before the close of them, Artaxerxes Longimanus died, and was succeeded by Darius Nothus. (B. C. 423.) He dying, was succeeded by Artaxerxes Mnemon; (B. C. 405;) in whose time, Johanan, the high priest, murdered his brother Joshua in the temple, and the nation was fined by the Persians. After some other successions, of little consequence to the narrative, in our present view of it, Darius Codomannus, the last king of the Medo-Persian empire, ascended the throne. (B. C. 336.) During all these years the Jews were entirely a province of the Medo-Persian empire.

Xerxes, the father of Artaxerxes Longimanus, had before this unsuccessfully attempted to subjugate Greece. (*Note, Dan.* xi. 2—4.) This so exasperated the Greeks, that they long meditated a design of subverting the Persian empire. —Various events, not material in this epitome, made way for Alexander the great, king of Macedon, to be appointed commander of a Grecian army, which was raised, for the purpose of invading the Persian dominions. With about thirty thousand select troops, he passed over into Asia; (B. C. 334;) and, with a celerity, unexampled in history, having vanquished the immense armies of Darius, in three pitched battles, the last of which was followed by the murder of Darius by his own servants, he terminated the Medo-Persian empire, and assumed the dominion over all the nations contained in it. (B. C. 330.) (*Notes, Dan.* ii. 39. vii. 6. viii. 5—7. xi. 2—4.) In a short time Alexander, having still more enlarged his dominions, died at Babylon; and after many severe and bloody contests, his empire was divided into four kingdoms, Macedonia, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt. (B. C. 323.) (*Notes, Dan.* vii. 6. viii. 8.)— The Jews, however, had little concern, for some ages, with any of these, except the kings of Syria, and of Egypt, called by Daniel, the king of the north, and the king of the south. (*Note, Dan.* xi. 2—6.) Judea lay between the dominions of the successive rulers of these kingdoms; and was, for a long time, under the power of one or the other of them; (*Notes, Dan.* xi. 5—20;) and exposed to the ravages of the armies, which marched through the land. At first they formed a part of the kingdom of Egypt, under Ptolemy Soter: after his death, Ptolemy Philadelphus, his son and successor, shewed them much favour; and during his reign, the Hebrew scriptures began to be translated into Greek, for the benefit of the Jews, who lived in Egypt and other places, where the Greek was known.—This translation is called the Septuagint; and by means of it, many of the learned Gentiles acquired considerable acquaintance with the Old Testament.

The Jews, having been cruelly oppressed by Ptolemy Philopater, (who, attempting to enter into the holy of holies, was opposed and hindered by the priests and rulers, which he indignantly resented;) revolted from him, and submitted to Antiochus the Great, king of Syria. But Antiochus, having rashly engaged in war with the Romans, was vanquished, and reduced to make an inglorious peace; which gave the Romans, the fourth kingdom, their first entrance into the dominions of the Grecian empire, or the third kingdom. (*Notes, Dan.* ii. 39—43. vii. 7, 8. xi. 17—19. 31.) After the death of Antiochus the great, and the inglorious reign of his son, Seleucus Philopater; (*Note, Dan.* xi. 20;) Antiochus Epiphanes, called by Daniel "a vile person," succeeded, and most cruelly oppressed and persecuted the Jews, causing all the worship at the temple to cease, and even dedicating it to his own idol. (*Notes, Dan.* viii. 9 —12. xi. 21—30.) But Mattathias, a priest, and his sons called the Maccabees, opposed him; and being wonderfully assisted and prospered, in many bloody contests, under Judas Maccabœus, the power of Antiochus was overthrown, his persecution terminated, the temple was recovered and its service restored; and Antiochus soon came to a miserable end. These events are recorded, in the books of Maccabees, the first of which especially is allowed to contain authentick history. (*Notes, Dan.* xi. 31—35.) From about this time, (B. C. 153,) the Jews, taking advantage of the enfeebled state of the contending kingdoms, (Syria and Egypt,) became independent under the government of the Maccabees, who united in general the high priesthood with the sovereign authority; but without the name of king, till the time of Aristobulus, son of Hyrcanus. (B. C. 107.) This epitome must exclude the notice of the intestine contests of the different parties, among the Jews; which were many, fierce, and often bloody.

At length, however, the Romans greatly extending their conquests, the kingdom of Syria was reduced into the form of a Roman province, by Pompey the great. He not long after besieged Jerusalem; and having taken it, he

entered into the holy of holies; (B. C. 63;) but after that, he never prospered. (*Note, Dan.* xi. 31, *conclusion.*)—From this time, the Jews became dependent on the Romans.—At length Antipater, the father of Herod the great, an Edomite, by the favour of Julius Cæsar, (who had prevailed against Pompey, and obtained dominion at Rome,) was made ruler in Judea. (B. C. 47.) After Antipater's death, Herod his son, called by Matthew, "Herod the king," by the favour of the Romans, and by force of arms, obtained possession of Jerusalem, and was established in regal authority; being by birth an Edomite, but proselyted to Judaism; which authority was at length confirmed by Augustus Cæsar. (B. C. 30.) This dignity he maintained with great ability, but most atrocious cruelties, in his own family, as well as among others, till the birth of Christ. In this interim, he had built many cities, and almost rebuilt the temple. (*Notes, Hag.* ii. 6—9. *Matt.* xvi. 13—16. *John* ii. 18—22. *Acts* xxiii. 35.) His atrociously cruel attempt to murder the infant Saviour, is recorded by the evangelist; and soon after he died most miserably. (*Notes, Matt.* ii.) After some years, in which the dominions of Herod were divided into four Tetrarchies under the sons of Herod, (*Note, Matt.* xiv. 1, 2,) Judea became a Roman province; the sceptre departed from Judah, for *Shiloh* was come; (*Note, Gen.* xlix. 9, 10;) and under Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, the successor of Augustus, the Lord Jesus was crucified.—Galilee, however, still remained under the government of Herod the Tetrarch, son of Herod the king, who beheaded John Baptist: but after some other changes, at length the whole Jewish state was subverted under Titus the son of Vespasian. (A. D. 79.)

END OF VOL. II.

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